

THE PRELUDE TO BOLSHEVISM: THE KORNILOV RISING

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649678792

The Prelude to Bolshevism: The Kornilov Rising by A. F. Kerensky

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

A. F. KERENSKY

**THE PRELUDE TO
BOLSHEVISM: THE
KORNILOV RISING**

THE PRELUDE TO BOLSHEVISM



GENERAL KORVILOV



A. F. KERENSKY

THE PRELUDE TO BOLSHEVISM

THE KORNILOV RISING

BY

A. F. KERENSKY

Former Prime Minister of Russia, Minister of
War and Marine and Commander-in-
Chief of the Russian Army

WITH FRONTISPIECE



NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY
1919

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

PRESERVATION
COPY ADDED
ORIGINAL TO BE
RETAINED

1916-5

DK 265

K4

1919

PUBLISHED, 1919, IN U. S. A.,
By DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY, INC.

IN MEMORIAM

JESSICA PELLOTTO

NO. 17411
JAN 19 1919

A. F. KERENSKY'S PREFACE TO THE KORNILOV AFFAIR

DEAR FRIENDS,

I send you the stenographic copies of my fundamental statement on the Kornilov affair which have been saved from destruction, with supplementary remarks and explanations which I have now made. I place this manuscript at your disposal and ask you if possible to publish it, but exactly in its present form. This is necessary, though I myself see all its imperfections from a literary point of view. But this is not a literary production, not "memoirs" for history, not the fruit of my unfettered creative faculty. This is only a document, a bit of real life, a document which can give to those who are really anxious to discover the truth about the Kornilov affair, more information than a whole volume of "memoirs," because, without forcing any one to form an opinion, it gives every one the opportunity of acting on the lines of a commission of inquiry, of doing the work of such a commission himself, sorting out the most important facts of the Kornilov affair, and drawing his own conclusions about it.

To enable the reader to judge fairly is my only desire. My latest notes supplement the statement received by the Commission of Inquiry with additional matter which may in part have been forgotten by or unknown to those who will read the official report of my examination.

Certainly in these notes I have been unable to confine myself all the time strictly to the mere facts of the case, and to the narrow limits of the story of Kornilov's attempt, though I tried my best to refrain from all digression,

and especially from argument and deductions. I tried to restrain myself because I found that for me at this moment any other language than that of facts and documents was out of place.

Why? You know that better than I. You know better than I how the enemies of the February revolution, my enemies from the Right and from the Left, took advantage of the Kornilov affair, and how large was the number of those whose faith weakened before the persistent attacks of my slanderers. It was not for those who deliberately slandered, not for those who deliberately lied, that I wrote. It is impossible to convince them of anything. They themselves knew perfectly well that they were distorting and making a mockery of the truth.

I wrote for those who knew little or nothing, who in the end gave credence to what was so insolently described as "truth" in the Kornilov affair. I do not want to convince them. Let them, dispassionately and calmly, after acquainting themselves with the facts, not from the words of others, but by their own reasoning, discover the truth for themselves if not of the whole Kornilov affair, at least of my connection with it.

It is not personal interest that urges me at this terrible time to think and to write of the Kornilov affair. No; I have seen and studied too many people, not to know the real value of popular love and hatred. At the time when I was at my height, and the crowd bowed before me, I quietly said to my friends: "Wait, and they will come and smite me." So it always has been, and so it always will be. No personal motive, I say, but a public one impelled me to write. For now, when the enemies of Russia and of the freedom of all peoples have attained their shameful aims, when our Motherland lies prostrate in the mud, dishonoured and lacer-

ated, when utter despair has seized those who have any honours and conscience left—now those who have attained their aims must not be allowed to justify their Judas-like crime by hypocritically imputing it to “the treason of others,” and the memory of the great Russian Revolution, which created a new life of truth and sincerity, must not be shadowed by even the smallest doubt as to the honesty of those who strove for it in life and death.

I want to say a few more words about General Kornilov. I have written many things against him. But I do not desire that more should be found in my words than I intended to say, and that is why I feel obliged to say emphatically that I have never doubted his love for his country.

I saw not in bad intention but in a *lack of understanding*, and in great political inexperience, the cause of his actions, which menaced Russia with such a vast upheaval. I saw, and many times I tried to check him, instigated as he was by the cunning enemies of freedom, or by mere political sharpers.

I did not succeed; the man who in his own way loved Russia passionately was doomed by some power to bring about the victory of those who hated and despised her.

A. KERENSKY.

PS.—A few words about the stenographed copy. I gave evidence on October 8, 1917. It took several days to decipher the notes of the evidence, and only five or six days before October 25th I received it to revise and sign. I had not time to do so. The final official text of my evidence before the Commission of Inquiry was not ready when the Bolshevik havoc began.

Having at length an opportunity to look through this text, I felt I had the right to correct it editorially and stylisti-