лагерю, оказались в нем изгоями, так как их призывы к восстановлению в России самодержавия весьма существенно расходились с политическими симпатиями большинства лидеров антибольшевистского движения.

- ¹ См.: *Иванов А. А.* Консервативные партии // Россия в годы Первой мировой войны: экономическое положение, социальные процессы, политический кризис / Отв. ред. Ю. А. Петров. М., 2014. С. 519–559.
- ² Цит. по: *Пыжигов А. В.* Питер — Москва. Схватка за Россию. М., 2014. С. 125–126.
- ³ Записка П. Н. Дурново // Свет и тени Великой войны. М., 2014. С. 58–73.
- ⁴ См.: *Иванов А. А.* «Черная сотня сгинула в подполье»: русские правые и революция 1917 года // Российская история. 2017. № 2. С. 42–59.
- ⁵ Российское законодательство X–XX вв.: В 9 т. Т. 9: Законодательство эпохи буржуазно-демократических революций. М., 1994. С. 122–123.
- ⁶ *Марков Н. Е.* Войны темных сил: Статьи. 1921–1937. М., 2002. С. 396.
- ⁷ Там же.
- ⁸ Заговор монархической организации В. М. Пуришкевича // Красный архив. 1928. Т. 1 (26). С. 170.
- ⁹ *Павлов В. П.* Мои воспоминания о «Крестах» // Красная летопись. 1922. № 2–3. С. 148.
- ¹⁰ Цит. по: *Куняев С.* «Умоляю вас о помощи...» (Женские судьбы в эпоху большого террора) // Наш современник. 1992. № 6. С. 157.
- ¹¹ Цит. по: *Степанов С. А.* Черная сотня. Изд. 2-е, доп. и перераб. М., 2005. С. 462.
- ¹² Цит. по: *Репников А. В.* Консервативные концепции переустройства России. М., 2007. С. 446.
- ¹³ Монархист и Советы. Письма Б. В. Никольского к Б. А. Садовскому 1913–1918 // Звенья. М.; СПб., 1992. С. 371–372.
- ¹⁴ *Винберг Ф. В.* В плену у «обезьян». (Записки «контрреволюционера») // Верная гвардия. Русская смута глазами офицеров-монархистов. М., 2008. С. 101.
- ¹⁵ *Марков Н. Е.* Войны темных сил. С. 374.
- ¹⁶ Там же.

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Alternatives to October: the Liberal Perspective

To understand the quest of Russian liberals for an alternative to October and a dictatorship based on partisan conceptions of social class, one has to establish first what it meant to be a liberal in revolutionary Russia, whether we are considering realistic or theoretical alternatives, and what moment in the long revolutionary process we are talking about. As we know, Russian liberalism developed along two different paths. One was

that of intellectuals and professionals who considered themselves part of the westernizing efforts to bring imperial Russia onto the paths of western European modernization. At its root was a core system of beliefs based on familiar enlightenment values, civil liberties, individual rights, and a pervasive belief in reason and rationality as the drivers of progressive historical development. This strain of liberalism emerged first in the 1840s with the Westernizers, and then forcefully during the 1860s with the passage of judicial reform and the recognition by leading members of the tsarist regime of the importance to modernization of western legal principles. It was centered especially around jurists like Boris Chicherin and others on the juridical faculties of universities in Moscow and St Petersburg, but embraced professionals in other fields as well, especially history, where Rankean notions of progress through reason also took firm hold. Here, of course, the best known figure was Pavel Miliukov, the future leader of the Kadets. In its various reflections, this strain of Russian liberalism struggled to move Imperial Russia towards a rule of law that embraced civil liberties and forms of representative governments that were reflected in European constitutional monarchies like Great Britain.

The second strand of Russian liberalism also emerged during the heady years of the Great Reforms. This broader group of liberals had its roots in the *zemstvo* movement, where “liberals” defined a diverse group of progressive activists especially in provincial areas who struggled in the new *zemstvos* and city *dumas* to improve the wellbeing of peasants and others and to develop these institutions into functional and effective instruments of both social mediation and social change. “*Zemstvo* liberals”, exemplified by people like I. I. Petrunkevich in Tver also hoped to demonstrate to the regime that representative government even in limited forms held real promise for imperial Russian development.

Central to both strands of Russian liberals was the conviction that the Russian state itself could be the principal agent of progressive change in Russia, as it seemed to be in the 1860s. This conviction separated liberals clearly both from radical groups like “Zemlia i Volia”, and assaults on the state and its representatives by the Narodovoltsy of the 1870s. Liberal hopes centered on progressive minded statesmen like Mikhail Loris-Melikov, and, in the dismal aftermath of 1881, when liberal professionals and *zemstvo* liberals were both reduced to “small deeds” activism, with the accession of Nicholas II in 1894, of the great “modernizer” Sergei Witte. While liberal ideas and values continued find expression in the professions and *zemstvos*, there was no effort to organize a coherent political party as the Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries were doing until 1905, when the possibility of representative government brought liberals of both strands together in the Party of People’s Freedom (or Constitutional Democratic Party) in order to pursue liberal goals in the new State Duma. Henceforth the Kadet Party presumed to speak for most

Russian liberals whether or not they were formally party members, although many of its members in Russia's cities were quite close in outlook to Alexander Guchkov's Octobrists and the Progressists headed by P. P. Riabushinskii and A. I. Kononov, while liberals in the provinces had close ties with moderate Social Democrats, Trudoviki, and right SRs.

This was so because the Kadet Party was not a political organization in the contemporary sense of the term. Although it had a strong Central Committee after 1906 and elected a substantial delegation to the First Duma, liberals did not consider themselves partisan politicians. Their fundamental commitment was to the wellbeing of Russian society as a whole, rather than to the advancement of any particular social class or socioeconomic interest. From the first, the Kadet Party — the Party of People's Freedom — was committed to what Kadet literature described as *надпартийность* and *надклассность*. As an important party pamphlet explained in both 1905 and 1917, the Party of People's Freedom was distinguished from all other parties in that it struggled for all citizens, and not for one particular class. It was a party not only for workers and peasants, but for the welfare, rights, and prosperity of all classes, of the entire Russian state. In other words, the Party of People's Freedom had a non-class (*всеклассовый*) character, neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but national (*всенародный*)¹.

Although ridiculed by Social Democrats and others as a camouflage for bourgeois capitalist class interests, the concepts of *надклассность* and *надпартийность* lay at the heart of the Kadet party's political program and tactics. Kadets resisted "partisan" positions or programs that favored one set of social interests over another. Especially after more activist members of the party failed to rally the peasants against the closing of the First Duma in 1906, most liberals from the professions in St Petersburg and Moscow insisted as they had in the 1860s and 1870s that progressive liberal reforms had to come from the state itself, although their colleagues in provincial Kadet committees tended toward more activist positions. From 1907 onward, one can distinguish "left" liberals who pressed tactically for political alliances with the moderate left; "right" liberals greatly worried about the destructive potential of popular uprisings, and "centrists" like the party stalwarts Miliukov and Shingarev who bent all of their efforts in the Third and Fourth State Duma's to pull the tsar and his regime back onto the path of constitutionalism. For all strands of liberalism, however, conflicts over a range of vital issues, from land usage and ownership to forms of ownership of the means of production and the rights of Russia's nationalities were to be negotiated and adjudicated according to constitutional norms and the rule of law. Here liberals were also joined by a broad nationalism that found expression in their common belief in the centrality of the imperial Russian state to Russia's further modernization, its international interests, and legitimate and effective governance (*государственность*). In these beliefs, those with more conservative political inclinations like Peter Struve and Nikolai Maklakov, joined "centrists" like P. Miliukov and A. Shingarev, and left leaning liberals like Nikolai Nekrasov and

Nikolai Astrov, even as these different strands within the party argued forcefully among themselves about whether their common goal of transforming the autocracy into a constitutional monarchy would be better advanced by tactic political alliances with democratic socialists or moderate conservatives.

By 1914, the liberals popularity in cities and urban centers suggested the Kadet party also reflected the goals and values of Russia's developing professional "middle class", although the party's leadership was steadfast in insisting the role of liberals was to defend general rather than particularistic interests, as arbiters among Russia's social classes and representatives of none. (In this, incidentally, they differed from the "bourgeois" orientation of English liberals, with whom they otherwise liked to identify.) Especially with the outbreak of war in 1914, liberals veneration of the state as the key to progressive change only increased, despite what they increasingly saw as the abject failure of the government itself. Most liberals agreed with Herbert Spenser that the world was an arena of competitive national struggle. Like others before and since, they feared Russia would be "beaten for its backwardness" if the state itself proved too weak to advance its international interests. Conceptually, in other words, the Russian state was quite distinct from the specific regime Nicholas had chosen to govern it. Even for philosophical pacifists like the statist historian Miliukov, the liberals' first duty was to preserve the unity and integrity of Imperial Russia no matter what their attitude was toward the government's domestic policy². In this respect as well, the creation of the Progressive Bloc in the Duma during the summer of 1915 and its demand for a government of intelligent, rational, capable, and "responsible" men epitomized the fundamental liberal strategy of achieving necessary social and political reforms "from above", rather than "from below". In contrast to the Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries, not to mention Internationalist Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, the liberals primary goal was to secure fundamental civil liberties for all citizens, freedom of conscience, religion, the press, assembly, movement, domicile, and petition, and the end of any restrictions based on class, nationality or religion. Almost all of the major legislative projects liberals initiated each of the four Duma sessions were broad based civil liberties bills whose goals were incorporated into the program of the Progressive Bloc. In February 1917, they were finally enacted as the founding principles of the new Provisional Government.

The pressing question for liberals in February 1917, however, was how to turn these principles into effective governance and enduring state institutions. In this Russia's liberals in 1917 were very much like their latter day counterparts during and after *perestroika*. They knew clearly, what they wanted in terms of individual rights, civil liberties, and effective representative government; and they admirably rejected the pursuit of social interests that could only be realized by violating the rights of others. Although Kadets and other liberals were quickly labeled in 1917 as representing Russia's bourgeoisie, the foundation for liberals of democratic practice were enforceable laws that respected common civil liberties and individual

rights, including of course the right of private property ownership, along with other ownership forms. Most important to effective governance, moreover, was the institutionalized *mediation* of social grievance based on a mutual respect for these laws. For liberals in and outside of the Kadet party in 1917 as well as in 1989, democratic participation in governance was more important than the abstract ideal of “democracy” itself because it allowed the articulation of individual and social needs and desires, not because it produced their immediate gratification.

Almost immediately in February and early March 1917, liberals of all tendencies and persuasions thus found themselves in circumstances that challenged their commitments to political legitimacy, constitutional authority, civil rights, and a strong functional state. Despite the fact that the Provisional Government was chosen and approved by an extraordinary committee of the Duma, there was no escaping the fact that its authority was self-proclaimed, or as Miliukov put it after Grand Duke Mikhail Aleksandrovich refused the throne, elected by the revolution itself. In a constitutional sense, the Provisional Government was just a bit more “legitimate” than the Petrograd Soviet, which was also “elected” by the revolution. Indeed, the resulting *двоевластие* more closely resembled the constellation of actual socio-political forces in 1917 than *единовластие* invested in the Provisional regime, a condition that was recognized by the formation of coalition government in May. From the very beginning, however, liberals were forced to struggle with perceptions of the government’s own illegitimacy, which greatly affected its authority and power, and the growing belief that its defense of property and other individual rights was a way of defending “bourgeois” and “capitalist” interests, rather than “non-partisan” ones. The search for an alternative to October for liberals thus began in February itself with efforts to convene a Constituent Assembly that was universally recognized as the legitimate expression of Russian popular will.

Almost immediately as well in 1917, however, liberals of all tendencies and persuasions also found themselves caught in the predicament in which liberals have always found themselves revolutionary situations, including that of the late 1980s: participatory government in such circumstances tends to give the strongest representation to those who argue for specific social and political goals, not the less definable objectives of a “rule of law” or “constitutional authority”. Revolutions by definition are effects of both institutionalized powers like that invested in the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet, and the quite different power reflected in social protests and popular uprisings. Both have the potential to create effective new institutions, but what will constitute “effective” in institutional terms will depend on how well these institutions satisfy the hopes and needs that bring them into being. In moments of socioeconomic crisis like 1917 (and 1989), democratic practices only strengthen the claims of those who argue that those exercising institutionalized power will not or cannot meet popular demands and expectations, strengthening the claims to power through democratic practices of more radical and less practical parties and figures.

Thus, even the joint efforts of leading democratic liberal and democratic socialist figures in 1917 to establish universal civil liberties and individual rights did not serve to strengthen the authority of the Provisional Government or strengthen the Russian state when the government in each of its successive constellations proved unable to solve the pressing needs of popular social welfare or bring Russia effectively out of the war. Liberal ministers joined democratic socialists in pressing immediate social reforms. They empowered workers to negotiate with their employers, created representative committees to address the land question, engaged railroad workers and other workers in the mutual tasks of resolving deficits in goods of “*первые потребности*”, improving transport, and maintaining industrial production. They struggled to resolve the problems of inflation and industrial capitalization in a way that met broad social as opposed to class needs. And not least, they acquiesced to the need to bring the war to a quick and successful conclusion in defense of the revolution, although Miliukov and others continued to believe that annexations and indemnities were important to maintaining Russia’s economic and political well being in the postwar world. With Lenin’s return to Russia and the further radicalization of the *Bolsheviks*, the continued failure of both democratic liberals and democratic socialists in both the government and the soviets to achieve these goals tipped the “balance” between institutionalized power and that inherent in social protest increasingly in favor of the latter. When both forms proved unable to bring needed and anticipated relief, the way was clear for Lenin to seize institutional power in October and build an authoritarian Bolshevik regime. What is remarkable about October in this respect is not only the inability of Kerensky’s regime to mobilize even 300 men to defend it, as one liberal figure lamented, but that even with the resistance in Moscow, there were no large scale popular demonstrations against them that could not be rather easily repressed by the *Bolsheviks’* own armed supporters.

How then, in the fall of 1917, could liberals create an alternative to October? Already after the July Days, many believed an “October” was possible, even likely, and sought ways to prevent it. Conservative liberals were ready to place the need to rebuild a Great Russian state above the values and practices of liberal democracy, as often happens in revolutionary situations. Left leaning liberals, especially in Moscow and the provinces, remained committed to democratic principles. Those in the center understandably wavered, hoping for a stronger regime devoted to Russia, One and Indivisible, but also able forcefully if necessary to create and maintain a viable constitutional governance. All three tendencies can be seen in the liberal’s reaction to Kornilov. In the mutiny’s demonstration of soviet power, if not that of Kerensky’s regime, liberals were effectively left with *no* alternatives to October except trying to create some form of constitutional democratic regime by force.

However, liberals of all tendencies also confronted a corollary to the democratic predicament they faced after February: how to assure *anti-Bolshevik* forces would try to rebuild the state by authoritarian means that themselves trampled on liberals’

values and a rule of law. This, of course, was precisely the dilemma liberals faced under Nicholas II after 1906, and in the early 1980s, when, paradoxically, democratic reform could only come from an authoritarian party. When liberal delegates to the Constituent Assembly were arrested, Shingarev and Kokoshkin murdered in their hospital beds, and the Constituent Assembly forcibly disbanded on the day it convened, many liberals in and outside the Kadet party understood that there was no liberal alternative to October without armed force. Many, of course, soon left. By 1918, those who stayed had only to decide which *anti-Bolshevik* force to work with and how this support might be used to restore a great and indivisible Russian state based on constitutional foundations and liberal principles.

The very diversity of Russian liberalism even among those who identified themselves as Kadets helps explain why different party members pursued the tactic of “state revolution” in a variety of compromising ways. For a few, this seemed best pursued by working with the remnants of the Constitutional Assembly in Ufa and Omsk before Admiral Kolchak’s “coup d’état”, although this effort did not have the support of local Kadet party groups, who believed the time for charming myths and illusions had passed, as the Omsk party chairman V. A. Zhardetskii put it³. Rightist liberals in and outside the party supported Kolchak, accepted with regret his loose alliance with murderous fanatics like Ataman Semenov as unavoidable, and eventually managed if they were fortunate to flee Russia from the east. Similar compromises were made by those who joined General Denikin’s administration under the banner “Russia One and Indivisible”. Here even Miliukov, who lost his son in the war, was persuaded Denikin should take arms from the Germans (cleansed he mockingly suggested by being dipped in the Dnepr). The law of national self-preservation, as he wrote General Alekseev, stood higher in his view than any moral commitments to former allies⁴. Other Kadet Central Committee members like N. I. Astrov and K. N. Sokolov played active roles in Denikin’s regime, however much they may have protested the horrific White massacres of Jews throughout South Russia and Ukraine. Only the noble efforts of M. M. Vinaver, V. D. Nabokov, and several other prominent liberals to form a constitutional regime in Crimea might be said to reflect traditional liberal principles during the civil war in an uncompromised way. However, here their regime was short on force, and it’s “model” republican experiment even shorter.

¹ Лосский Н. О. Чего хочет партия народной свободы (Конституционно-демократическая)? СПб., 1905. С. 6.

² Миллюков П. В. Воспоминания. Т. 2. New York, 1955. С. 190.

³ Заря (Омск). 1918. 18 июля.

⁴ Miliukov archive // Columbia University. Box 8161. Folder 13.