



Seventeen Moments in Soviet History

1917: Peasant Revolution

The Peasant Revolution

Petrograd Telegraph Agency, Agrarian Disturbances. Fall 1917

Extracts from Official Reports of the Petrograd Telegraph Agency.

Original Source: A. L. Popov, *Oktiabrskii perevorot: fakty i dokumenty* (Petrograd, 1918), pp. 81-83.

Kishinev, September 26. Local reports testify to the growth of agrarian disturbances in all uyezds. Fear is expressed that the sowing will not be done in time or properly.

Tambov, September 27. Accurate information about the disorders in Kozlov Uyezd has not been received up to the present time. It is definitely known that one estate has been pillaged and twenty-five have been burned. Besides, many peasants, living on separate farms, " [Under the Agrarian Law of November 9, 1906, peasants who desired might demand their share of the communal land in the form of a permanent homestead free from reallocation and independent of the village commune.] have suffered.

Tambov, September 27. An expeditionary detachment dispatched from Moscow arrived to quell the uprising. Representatives of the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies also arrived. According to information from them, the disturbance in Kozlov Uyezd continues. At the moment of their departure from Kozlov, disorders broke out in a new place, forty versts from Kozlov. The village of Yaroslavka is burning.

Tambov, September 29. In Sofinskaia Volost, Kirsanov Uyezd, agrarian disorders have started.

Taganrog, October 2. In the volosts of Taganrog Okrug 12 [12 Term used in Cossack areas in Southern Russia and Siberia for the administrative divisions corresponding to the uyezd elsewhere.] agrarian disturbances have arisen. Representatives of the okrug government and of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies went to the okrug.

Saratov, October 5. In Serdobskaa Uyezd the estates of Baroness Cherkasov and of Azarevich have been destroyed by the peasants. The commander of the Serdobskaa garrison has been instructed to move a detachment to the uyezd to restore order.

Saratov, October 10. The agrarian disturbances in Serdobskaa Uyezd embrace a large district. Peasants are stealing cattle, dividing the land and forests, and carrying off the grain. The uyezd officials appealed for the aid of troops. It is feared that a great store of government liquor will be pillaged. The uyezd executive committee proposes to transfer all privately owned land to the land committees. The disorder has spread to Atkarskaa Uyezd.

Kishinev, October 10. Peasants of Megura village, Beletskii Uyezd, influenced by propaganda, began to divide among themselves the land and pastures of the neighboring estates of Borchel and Slobodzei.

Odessa, October 12. Word has been received of the alarming situation in Akkerman and Orgeev, and also of the increased agitation of the ignorant elements in Berezovka. In Sorokovskii Uyezd agrarian disturbances continue.

Zhitomir, October 12. A number of dispatches have been received by the guberniia commissar about disturbances in the guberniia. Forests and crops are being destroyed. Troops have been sent to quell the disorders ...

Voronezh, October 20. In Zadonskii Uyezd in the district of the village of Zhivotinskii, the estates of Chertkov and other landowners have been partially destroyed by the peasants. More than 60,000 poods of wheat and other grain have been burned. Valuable old furniture has been destroyed ...

Zhitomir, October 23. After returning from a journey to Volhynia the assistant commissar gave a report on the situation. According to him, Volhynia is in a state of complete anarchy. In many uyezds there is general destruction of the forests and seizure of privately owned land. In Staro-Konstantinovskii Uyezd the Bolsheviks have seized power.

Nikolaevsk (Samara Guberniia), October 24. The executive committee, fearing that the numerous disorders in the uyezd would destroy valuable estates, declared all privately owned estates public property and began their immediate confiscation ...

Chernigov, October 26. Disorder in the guberniia continues. In the uyezds of Sosnitsk and Surazhsk forests and crops are being destroyed.

Penza, October 26. In Novocherkassk Uyezd eight estates have been destroyed. Cavalry has been sent to stop the disorder. In Krasnoslobodskii Uyezd the estate of Madame Lebedev and in Insarskii Uyezd the estate of Andronov have been pillaged.

Spassk, October 27. A wave of destruction swept over the whole uyezd. Felling and stealing of trees is going on. The estate of Shreder has been pillaged and set on-fire. The estate of Count Grabbe has been destroyed, including his valuable library.

Nizhnii-Novgorod, November 1. According to the latest information the uprising has spread over six uyezds, in which many estates have been pillaged and burned. The greatest disorder took place in Lukianovskii Uyezd, where, according to the commissar, everything valuable is being ruthlessly destroyed ...

Source: James Bunyan and H.H. Fisher, ed., *Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1918; Documents and Materials* (Stanford: Stanford University Press; H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1934), pp. 31-33.