

Section A

Nominated topic: The Revolutions of 1917

- 1 Study all the following documents and answer the questions which follow. In evaluating and commenting on the documents, it is essential to set them alongside, and to make use of, your own contextual knowledge.

A *General Kornilov issues an appeal to the people of Russia.*

Our great country is dying. The hour of its end is near. I, General Kornilov, declare that the Provisional Government, under the pressure of the Bolshevik majority of the Soviets, is acting in complete accord with the plans of the German General Staff. At the time when enemy troops are landing on the Riga coast, the government is killing our troops and shaking the foundations of the country. A grave sense of the inevitable ruin of the country commands me, at this threatening moment, to call upon all Russian people to save the dying country. Pray to the Lord to grant the greatest miracle of saving our native land and defeating its enemies. I swear then to allow the people to decide their own fate and to choose a Constituent Assembly to decide how Russia is ruled.

Kornilov, *Appeal*, 27 August 1917.

B *A member of the committee of investigation into the Kornilov affair recalls the committee's meeting with General Kornilov in September 1917.*

Kornilov gave a convincing account of why he acted: the disintegration of the army; the malicious agitation of the Soviets against the war, and the failure of the government to continue it. But he was powerless to protect the government against the Bolsheviks. Finally he came to the most important part, a part so unexpected that it staggered us. He informed us that in the interests of maintaining order in the capital he had reached an agreement with Kerensky to move a large military force to Petrograd, so that disturbances could be suppressed immediately. By suppression of disturbances he meant the suppression of the Soviets. To confirm this, he took from his desk a tape with a record of his conversation by direct wire with Kerensky. We had clear-cut evidence that the cavalry corps had moved on Petrograd with the knowledge and permission, if not of the whole government, then of its head, Kerensky.

N Ukraintsev, *New Russian Word*, October 1956.

C *Writing in exile in the USA, Kerensky gives his view of the Kornilov affair.*

Kornilov's adventure, though predestined to fail, played a fatal part in Russia's destiny, as it shook profoundly and painfully the consciousness of the masses. This shock was the more serious as it was unexpected. An adventure of a small group was transformed in the inflamed imagination of the masses to a conspiracy of the whole of the bourgeoisie and of all the upper classes against democracy and the working masses. The Bolsheviks, who up to August had been impotent, became masters in the Petrograd Soviet, gaining a majority there for the first time. Massacres of officers again began; again the commanding officers lost all their authority. Throughout the whole country, spontaneous organisations appeared which seized the functions of governmental power under the pretext of fighting counter-revolution. Among the soldiers and workmen, the authority of the leaders who were fighting against the cry of 'All authority to the Soviets' and who were defending the idea of a democratic government, was annihilated. The wave of anarchy broke the Russian front and overflowed into the state. There was a fatal link between the military coup of 27 August and the October Revolution.

Alexander Kerensky, *The Prelude to Bolshevism*, 1919.

D *Lenin is critical of Kerensky's government.*

The Russian Revolution has reached a turning-point. In a country of peasants, we see a peasants' rebellion against Kerensky's revolutionary Republican government. We have always maintained that the policy of the famous 'Coalition' with the bourgeoisie was a policy of an imperialist war, a policy of protecting capitalism and the privileged classes from the people. The Revolutionary Socialists, who suffer Kerensky in their midst, have sunk to the level of a party hostile to the people. Why should we be surprised that in Russia, with all the wretchedness brought by the continuation of the imperialist war upon the nation, a peasants' rebellion should break out and spread? The final stage of the crisis is at hand.

Lenin, *Appeal for Revolt*, 20 October 1917.

E *A modern historian reflects on Kerensky's policy towards his enemies.*

The attempted takeover by the Bolsheviks in July 1917 imbued Kerensky with an obsessive fear that the right would exploit the Bolshevik threat to stage a monarchist coup. Like many socialists he is said to have been alarmed rather than gratified by the zeal with which loyal troops had suppressed the July riots. His tolerant treatment of the Bolsheviks who had almost overthrown him and his government contrasted sharply with the way he dealt with General Kornilov in August 1917. He lost a unique opportunity to liquidate the genuine 'counter-revolution' from the left out of fear of an imaginary 'counter-revolutionary' right. The Bolsheviks soon recovered and resumed their bid for power. As Trotsky wrote, 'Our enemies had neither logical consistency nor determination'.

Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, 1990.

- (a) To what extent does Document B corroborate the views of Document A about the reasons for Kornilov's actions in August 1917? [10]
- (b) How convincing is the evidence provided in this set of documents that Kerensky was responsible for his own downfall in October 1917? In making your evaluation, you should refer to contextual knowledge as well as to all the documents in this set (A–E). [20]

Section B

Answer **one** of the following questions. Where appropriate, your essay should make use of any relevant documents you have studied as well as contextual knowledge.

- 2 Assess the view that, in the years 1905 to 1914, the Tsarist state strengthened and stabilised the regime. [30]
- 3 How important were the military failures suffered by Russia in the First World War in bringing about the fall of the Tsar? [30]
- 4 Was the establishment of a communist dictatorship the direct result of the Civil War? [30]

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