

THE MASONIC PLOT AGAINST TSAR NICHOLAS II

If the October revolution was largely engineered by Bolshevik Jews, the February revolution which preceded it and made it possible was engineered by Masonic Russians under the directions of the Grand Orient of Paris.

The Bolsheviks were not in general Masons (after the revolution they suppressed Masonry in Russia), but played the same role as the Illuminati in the French revolution – that of ultimate victors. But the question arises: were any of the leading Bolsheviks also Masons? According to Subdeacon Konstantin Preobrazhensky, formerly a lieutenant-general of the KGB: “One of the leaders of the KGB Intelligence, Colonel Lolliy Zamoisky, was also a famous journalist and writer. He was studying masons on his own. Once I invited him to read a lecture on them for us, less than ten officers, members of Group ‘A’ of Directorate ‘T’ of the KGB First Directorate. Group ‘A’ was a group of assistants to the head of scientific and technical intelligence, Major General Leonid Zaitsev. Zamoisky told a lot of interesting things. In particular, he said that Lenin has left his signature in the visitors book of one of the Masonic lounges in Switzerland, introducing himself as ‘brother-visitor’.”¹

I.L. Solonevich sees the Masonic aristocracy as no less guilty of the revolution than the Jews: “The whole of the nineteenth century was filled with the struggle of the autocracy against the aristocratic elite. In this struggle both warring sides perished. However, the monarchy perished with some chance of resurrection, but the aristocracy – with absolutely no chance (I am speaking of the destruction of the aristocracy as a ruling class).

“The roots of this struggle go deep into the past – perhaps as far as Kalita and the Terrible one. But we shall not descend to the depths of the ages. We shall only recall that while the mystical beginning of the Russian revolution is usually ascribed to the Decembrists, there were no Jews among them. Then there came Belinsky and Chernyshevsky and Bakunin and Herzen and Plekhanov and Lavrov and Milyukov and Lenin and many other sowers of ‘the rational, the good and the eternal’. In the course of a whole century they shook and undermined the building of Russian statehood. All this work was covered by the moral authority of Prince Peter Alexeyevich Krapotkin, who had not been bought by the Jews, and Count Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy, who, although taking no bribes from the Jews, undermined both the State and the Church and even the family very thoroughly.

“And any Berdichev chemist from the [Jewish] Bund or from the Bolsheviks, in his struggle against the order created by history, could have taken me by the lapel and said: ‘Listen, are you an intelligent person? Can’t you see that I am walking in the steps of the best lights of Russian thought?’

¹ Preobrazhensky, personal communication, July 26, 2014.

“And what could I as ‘an intelligent person’ reply to this chemist? Truly he was walking in their steps! And Chernyshevsky really was a ‘light’...

“If we, out the whole of this extraordinarily complicated combination of factors that was making and supporting the revolution, concentrate our fire only on one – on Jewry, - then we have lost the plot. It’s all not so simple. They say: the Jew Jacob Schiff gave money for the Russian revolution. Yes, he did. But [the Old Ritualist] Savva Morozov also gave money for the same revolution. And Germany gave more than any – not the Germany of Weimar and Ebert, and still less Hitler, but the Germany of the Hohenzollerns... It’s no secret for anybody that all these ‘entrenched truths’ were published on German money, while in the Kshinskaya palace German marks were valued above all... But if you simplify the matter to such a degree that one can make a revolution in the world with money, then the October revolution was made on German money. À la guerre comme à la guerre. However, it was with the closest and most powerful participation of almost the whole of Russian Jewry...

“And so: the elite of the aristocracy laid the main weight of the struggle against the monarchy on their own shoulders. Then they were joined by the ‘raznochintsy’, and by the very last decades of the past century this anti-monarchist front received powerful support from the whole of Russian Jewry.”²

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “Soon after the manifesto of October 17, 1905 which gave certain freedoms, legal Masonic lodges, which before had been banned, began to appear. And although, practically speaking, secret Masonry never ceased to exist in Russia, the absence of legal lodges was for the Masons a great obstacle... A ‘reserve’ was being prepared in France by the ‘Grand Orient’. Already in the 60s some Russians had entered French Masonry in Paris. Among them was the writer I.S. Turgenev, later – Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich (the ‘Bixiot’ lodge), and then the philosopher V. Vyrubov, the psychiatrist N. Bazhenov, the electrophysicist P. Yablochkov, the historian M. Kovalevsky. In 1887 the ‘Cosmos’ (no. 288) lodge was founded for Russians – the writer A. Amphiteatrov, the zemstvo activist V. Maklakov and the activist of culture V.N. Nemirovich-Danchenko. From 1900 the Masonic Russian School of social sciences began its work in Paris, and there arose yet another Russian lodge, ‘Mount Sinai’.³ At the beginning of 1906, with the agreement of the ‘Grand Orient of France’, M. Kovalevsky opened a lodge of French obedience in Russia. The first such lodge was joined by the already mentioned

² Solonevich, “Rossia, Revoliutsia i Yevrejstvo” (Russia, the Revolution and Jewry), *Rossia i Revoliutsia* (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, pp. 26-27.

³ Both ‘Cosmos’ and ‘Mount Sinai’ were under the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, according to the Mason Boris Telepneff, Russian Assistant Consul in Paris in 1922 (*An Outline of the History of Russian Freemasonry*). (V.M.)

Kovalevsky, Bazhenov, Maklakov, Nemirovich-Danchenko, and also new people such as S. Kotlyarovsky, E. Kedrin (the jurist), the historian V.O. Klyuchevsky, Prince S. Urusov, the Jewish doctor and lawyer M. Margulies, the diplomat I. Loris-Melikov and others. This lodge had two main affiliates: in Moscow – ‘Regeneration’, and in St. Petersburg – ‘Polar Star’. They were ‘opened’ by two high-ranking Masons, Senchale and Boulet, who came specially from France. Later, in 1908, they gave ‘Polar Star’ the right to open new lodges in Russia without the prior agreement of the French. Many lodges with various names appeared [such as ‘the Iron Ring’ in Nizhni], but the leading role continued to be played by ‘Polar Star’, which was led by Count A. Orlov-Davydov, and only Masons of no lower rank than the 18th degree were admitted into it. The Masons were also joined by the Cadet A. Kolyubakin, Prince Bebutov, Baron G. Maidel, the public library worker A. Braudo, the historians N. Pavlov-Silvansky and P. Schegolev, the lawyers S. Balavinsky and O. Goldovsky, the Octobrist A.I. Guchkov, his comrade in the party M.V. Rodzyanko, the Cadet N.V. Nekrasov, the workers’ party A.F. Kerensky (in 1912, through the ‘Ursa Minor’ lodge⁴), the Mensheviks A. Galpern, Chkheidze, the Bolsheviks Trotsky, Lunacharsky, Skvortsov-Stepanov, Krasin, Boky, Sereda, Chicherin, the millionaires N.I. Tereschenko, A. Konovalov, P.P. Ryabushinsky (with his two brothers), Prince V. Obolensky, Countess S.V. Panina, Baron V. Meller-Zakomelsky (not to be confused with the general), M. Gorky, his wife E. Peshkova, his godson the Jew Zenobius Peshkov (the brother of Ya. Sverdlov), their friend E.D. Kuskova (a female Mason of the higher degrees), her husband S. Prokopovich, Prince G. Lvov (president of the Zemstvo and City Unions), Prince A. Khatistov (the city commandant of Tiflis), Prince P. Dolgorukov, Major-General P. Popovtsev (of the 33rd degree), Mark Aldanov, Fyodorov, Chelnokov, the Menshevik G. Aronson, the artist Mark Chagall, the cadet V. Velikhov and very many other prominent activists of that time. The lists of Russian Masons do not contain the name of the Cadet historian P. Milyukov (he even concealed his Masonry), but only because he had for a long time been in purely French Masonry... Masonic lodges appeared and functioned also, besides Moscow and Petersburg, in Kiev, Odessa, Nizhni-Novgorod, Minsk, Vitebsk, Tver, Samara, Saratov, Tiflis, Kutaisi and other cities. In the words of Kuskova, before 1917 the whole of Russia was covered by a net of Masonic lodges of which many thousands of people were members.”⁵

The Mason Boris Telepneff wrote: “The existence of Masonic Lodges was discovered by the Russian Government in 1909; it also became known to the

⁴ According to George Sprukts, Kerensky also belonged to the “Grand Orient of the Peoples of Russia” and the Scottish Rite (32nd degree) (“Re: [paradosis] Re: White army”, orthodox-tradition@yahoogroups.com, June 9, 2004). (V.M.)

⁵ Lebedev, *op. cit.* “Telepneff reported that two Russian Lodges had been formed in Paris under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of France while a Russian Lodge existed in Berlin, the Northern Star Lodge, under a warrant of the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes.” (Richard Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, a paper read at the Orient Lodge no. 15 on June 29, 1996, <http://members.aol.com/houltonme/rus/htm>).

authorities that they were of French origin. It was then decided by the Russian Lodges to suspend work... This was done accordingly until 1911, when some of their members decided to renew their activities with due prudence. One would not call these activities Masonic in any sense, as their chief aim was purely political – the abolition of the autocracy, and a democratic regime in Russia; they acknowledged allegiance to the Grand Orient of France. This political organization comprised about forty Lodges in 1913. In 1915-1916 disagreements arose between their members who belonged to two political parties (the constitutional democrats and the progressives) and could not agree on a common policy. Ten Lodges became dormant. The remaining thirty Lodges continued to work, and took part in the organization of the 1917 March revolution and in the establishment of the Provisional Government. Their political aim being attained, the organisation began to decay; twenty-eight Lodges existed on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution, and since then most of their members have left Russia.”⁶

Lebedev continues: “Besides lodges of the ‘Polar Star’ structure there also existed lodges of a mystical tendency. Among them were the *Martinists* (old-style) headed by a ‘Great Master’, Count Musin-Pushkin, which was joined by many from the aristocracy and even from the Imperial Family – Great Princes Nicholas Nikolayevich [supreme commander of the Russian armed forces in 1914-15], Peter Nikolayevich and George Mikhailovich.⁷ Among them at one time was the noted Mason and occultist Papius, who was very active. Papius even hoped to draw his Majesty Nicholas II, but was not successful! Among the mystics were the Masons *Philaletes*, who were joined by Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich (the brother of George) and a string of aristocrats, about one thousand people in all. Their main occupation was spiritist séances (supposed ‘communion’ with the spirits and souls of the dead), which quite a lot of the intelligentsia were interested in at that time.⁸ Finally, there was the directly *Satanist* lodge ‘Lucifer’, which included many from the ‘creative’ sort, basically decadents such as Vyacheslav Ivanov, V. Bryusov and A. Bely...

⁶ Telepneff, *op. cit.*

⁷ Telepneff also reported that “an independent lodge of the so-called Martiniste Rite was formed among the entourage of Czar Nicholas II under the name of ‘The Cross and the Star’,... which suspended its work in 1916.” Perhaps Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich Romanov, the Chairman of the Russian History Society, was a member of this lodge. Edvard Radzinsky (*The Last Tsar*, London: Arrow Books, 1993, p. 111) writes that he “was a mystic, a mason, and a freethinker... In the family he was called Monsieur Egalité, as the eighteenth-century liberal, the Duc d’Orléans, was called.” (V.M.)

⁸ “Other Martiniste lodges opened ... ‘Apollonius’ in St Petersburg (1910), ‘St John’ in Moscow (1911), ‘St Andrew’ in Kiev (1912). A very curious lodge existed among the Russian Navy League, calling themselves ‘Philaletes’; beside philanthropic and intellectual work, it pursued a political aim in opposition to that of the Grand Orient lodges, namely the support of the monarchy of Nicholas II. Probably this movement arose in connection with the Paris branch of the Swiss Order of the Chevaliers ‘Philaletes’ which established two lodges in St Petersburg: ‘The Pyramid of the North’ and ‘The Star of the North’. Both pursued studies of mysticism and symbolism.” (Telepneff, quoted in “Russian Freemasonry” by Worshipful Brother Dennis Stocks, Barron Barnett Lodge. <http://www.casebook.org/dissertations/freemasonry/russianfm.html>). (V.M.)

“On the direct *orders* of the ‘Grand Orient of France’, Masonry extended its tentacles into the State apparatus, into the diplomatic corps. Thus according to the data of N. Verberova in her book, *People and Lodges*⁹, the Masons in the diplomatic service were: K.D. Nabokov (England), A.D. Kandaurov (France), G.P. Zabello (Italy), A.V. Nekludov (Sweden), I.G. Loris-Melikov (Norway), K.M. Onu (Switzerland), B.A. Bakhmetev (USA), N.A. Kudashev (China), A.I. Scherbatsky (Brazil), etc.

“All the Masonic lodges in Russia were linked and communicated with each other and with foreign centres, first of all with the ‘Grand Orient of France’. And all of them together were ruled by the *purely Jewish* community (called sometimes a ‘lodge’ and sometimes an ‘order’) *Bnai Brith*, which was at the head of united world Zionism, with its centre in the USA.

“For the western centres, the most important thing from a political point of view was Russian *political Masonry* of the ‘Polar Star’ structure. In 1909 it declared that it was liquidating itself. This was a manoeuvre, well-known from the times of [the Decembrist] P. Pestel, whose aim, on the one hand, was to get rid of ‘ballast’ and spies that had penetrated into its midst, and on the other hand, to create a new secret union for the political struggle that would not be subject to the suspicion and danger its legal ‘brothers’ were in. Thus in the same year of 1909 a deeply conspiratorial ‘Military lodge’ was formed headed by A.I. Guchkov, and in 1910 – the ‘Ursa Minor’ lodge for work with ‘state’ society, in which the main roles gradually came to be played by Prince G. Lvov, M.V. Rodzyanko, A.F. Kerensky, N.V. Nekrasov, P.P. Ryabushinsky, M.I. Tereschenko and A. Konovalov... Over them, that is, over the whole of Russian Masonry of this tendency, there weighed the Masonic *oath of fidelity* to the ‘Grand Orient of France’, which was given already in 1908 in the form of a special document called ‘Obligation’. This oath-obligation was kept faithfully both before and after the ‘self-liquidation’ and the emergence of a new leadership and a new structure. In 1910 this leadership declared its formal *independence* from Russian Masonry – but with the *agreement* of the French of the ‘Grand Orient’. The new leadership significantly simplified the reception of new members, it rejected (for conspiratorial reasons) many elements of Masonic symbolism and ritual, and thereby became, in the language of the Masons, ‘unlawful’. But all this was part of the conspiracy (so that in the event of something World Masonry could declare its complete ‘non-involvement’ in the conspirators and the conspiracy). In actual fact the whole course of the conspiracy was led and controlled precisely through *foreign Masons* (through the embassies of Germany, England and France in Russia). In 1910 Guchkov, a long-time member of the State Council and the Third State Duma, became the president of the Duma. However, in 1911 he voluntarily resigned from this post, which was immediately taken by his ‘brother’ Rodzyanko. In 1913 Guchkov and other ‘brothers’ created a secret

⁹ Nina Berberova, *Liudi i Lozhi: russkie masony XX stoletia*, New York, 1986. (V.M.)

‘Supreme Council of Peoples of Russia’, which was joined by up to 400 members. But the presidents of the lodges knew only its secretaries – Nekrasov, Kerensky, Tereschenko. Each new lodge consisted of no more than 12 members. The Council and its ‘Convent’ coordinated the actions of the ‘Military Lodge’ and the structures of ‘Ursa Minor’. At this time Guchkov headed the military committee of the State Duma, and was in charge of defence questions. ‘In accordance with service obligations’, he was linked with the General Staff, and the most prominent military men, diplomats and industrialists. Gradually, one by one, Guchkov attracted into his ‘Military Lodge’ Generals N.N. Yanushkevich, A.S. Lukomsky, A.A. Polivanov, A.Z. Myshlayevsky, V.I. Gurko, Colonel Baron Korf, and then Generals A.V. Alexeyev, N.V. Ruzsky, A.M. Krymov, L.G. Kornilov, A.A. Brusilov, A.A. Manikovsky, V.F. Dzhunkovsky and many other eminent officers.

“In essence, in the years 1909-1913 Guchkov had already prepared a general plan of action, which he borrowed from the ‘Young Turk’ Masons in 1908 in Turkey, where he went specially to study the experience of the Turkish revolution. The essence of the plan consisted in the higher military officers, including those in the Tsar’s closest entourage, being able, at the necessary moment, to *isolate* their Monarch from all the levers of administration and *force* him to whatever deed or word the conspirators needed at that moment.

“As we can see, Masonry contained prominent activists and members of the leadership of almost *all the parties* and major organizations. Kerensky later recalled that in Masonry they almost never allowed themselves to violate the unity of the ‘brotherhood’ by party disagreements. But ‘in public’ a sharp polemic between the parties went on, a struggle that sometimes seemed irreconcilable to the public (the ‘profanes’)! So that whatever party came to power in the event of the revolution, there would *in any case* be ‘brother-masons’ at the helm of this power!”¹⁰

Yana Sedova writes: “This group of Masons – about 300 people – had absolutely no interest in the [official] aims of Masonry and rituals. They had their own clearly defined aim – to gain political power in the Russian Empire...”¹¹ Their numbers were too small to effect a revolution on their own; but they were hoping that a coming Great War would make their task easier...

But this raised a problem: would not nationalist rivalries between different national lodges endanger the enterprise? After all, as Thus Oleg Platonov points out, “all the main Masonic orders of the warring countries were in favour of war: the Great national lodge of England, the Grand Orient of

¹⁰ Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 448-451.

¹¹ Sedova, “Byl li masonskij zagovor protiv russkoj monarkhii?” (Was there a masonic plot against the Russian Monarchy?), *Nasha Strana*, November 24, 2006, N 2808, p. 4.

France, the Grand Orient of the nations of Russia, the Old Prussian lodges and the Great lodge of Hamburg. The latter was the foundation of the Great Serbian lodge, members of which were involved in the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo.”¹²

However, whatever their personal nationalism, the Masons of different countries were united in their desire to destroy the monarchy in its traditionally Orthodox, autocratic form; and, as we shall see, this overriding aim proved stronger than any national war aim in 1917...

The man to watch here was A.I. Guchkov the Old Ritualist and Masonic leader of the Octobrists. “Armis”, a pseudonym for a Duma delegate and a former friend of Guchkov, wrote: “Already in 1909, in the Commission of State Defence, its president, the well-known political and social activist Guchkov declared that it was necessary to prepare by all means for a future war with Germany.

“In order to characterize this activist it is necessary to say that in order to achieve his ends he was never particularly squeamish about methods and means. In the destruction of Russia he undoubtedly played one of the chief roles.

“In the following year, 1910, the newspaper *Novoe Vremia* became a joint-stock company, and a little later Guchkov was chosen as president of its editorial committee. From this moment there began on the columns of *Novoe Vremia* a special campaign against the Germans and the preparation of public opinion for war with Germany.

“Guchkov wrote to the workers of *Novoe Vremia*, *Golos Moskvy* and *Golos Pravdy*, which were unfailingly ruled by his directives:

“‘Rattle your sabres a little more, prepare public opinion for war with the Germans. Write articles in such a way that between the lines will already be heard peals of weapon thunder.’

“People who know Guchkov well say that in his flat, together with the well-known A. Ksyunin, he composed articles of the most provocative character in relation to Germany.

¹² Platonov, *Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, p. 344. “In the course of the investigation into the case of the murder of the Archduke Ferdinand it emerged that the assassins Princip and Gabrilovich were Masons. The plan of the assassination was worked out by the political organization, ‘The People’s Defence’. Later, already in 1926, a representative of the Masonic circles of Serbia, Lazarevich, at a masonic banquet in the House of the Serbian Guard in Belgrade, officially recognized that ‘Masonry and “The People’s Defence” are one and the same’” (op. cit., p. 344). See also V.F. Ivanov, *Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnei* (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, pp. 395-398.

"In 1912, during a reception for an English military mission, Guchkov turned to those present with the following toast:

""Gentlemen! I drink to the health of the English army and fleet, who are not only our friends, but also our allies.'

"And within the close circle of the members of the Commission of State Defence, he declared: 'Today Germany has suffered a decisive defeat: war is inevitable, if only the Tsar does not stop it.'

"In March, 1914, Guchkov at one dinner warned his acquaintances that they should not go abroad in the summer, and in particular – not to Germany.

""I don't advise you to go abroad. War will unfailingly break out this summer: it has been decided. Germany can turn as she wants, but she cannot turn away from war.' And at these words Guchkov smiled.

"To the question of one of those present: who needed a war?, Guchkov replied:

""France must have Alsace-Lorraine and the Rhine; Russia – all the Slavic lands and an exit from the Black Sea; England will lap up the German colonies and take world trade into her hands.'

"To the objection that the Russian and German emperors would hardly enter such a dangerous world war, there followed Guchkov's bold reply:

""We have foreseen this... and we shall arrange it so that both of them will find themselves before a fait accompli.

"Then it was pointed out to Guchkov that the Triple Alliance represented a formidable military power, to which Guchkov objected:

""Italy, in accordance with a secret agreement with England, will not be on the side of Germany and Austria, and if the war goes well can stab them in the back. The plan of the future war has already been worked out in detail by our allied staffs (English, French and Russian), and in no way will the war last for more than three months.'

"Then Guchkov was asked: 'Tell us, Alexander Ivanovich, don't you think that the war may be prolonged contrary to your expectations? It will require the most colossal exertion of national nerves, and very possibly it will be linked with the danger of popular discontent and a coup d'etat.'

"Smiling, Guchkov replied: 'In the extreme case, the liquidation of the Dynasty will be the greatest benefit for Russia...'"¹³

Guchkov's prognosis was extraordinarily accurate. This leads us to conclude that war in Europe and revolution in Russia were, if not "inevitable", as many thought, at any rate to a large degree determined by the Masonic solidarity of the elites in all the combatant powers. Only one human actor, as Guchkov admitted, could still say no and stop it – the Tsar; and only the one Divine Actor could prevent it if the peoples were worthy of it – He Who said of Himself: "I am He Who makes peace and creates wars..." (Isaiah 45.7)

In this connection, it is important to take into account a conversation that the Tsar had with a member of the Rothschild banking family – which was, of course, both Jewish and Masonic – at a ceremonial dinner in Dunkirk in 1901. "The billionaire Rothschild suggested that Russian debt to France could be written off in exchange for the Jews being given equal rights in Russia. The Tsar refused, saying that the Russian people was very trusting, and in conditions of equal rights would quickly fall into the Jewish cabal. On leaving Rothschild the Tsar said: Now I have signed my death sentence..."¹⁴

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The Tsar knew that there was a plot to overthrow him long before it was put into action. The Tsaritsa urged him to act against the plotters. The question arises, therefore: why did he not immediately imprison them?

Archpriest Lev Lebedev supposes that the Tsar, too, was tempted to deal with them "simply and speedily. We remember his words, that 'with men who have become bestial there is not, and cannot be, any other means of struggle' (*besides shooting them*) and that 'only the execution of a few can prevent a sea of blood'. But there appeared before the Tsar at that time in the persons of Lvov, Rodzyanko, Guchkov, etc. not 'bestialized' criminal murderers like the Bolsheviks, but respectable people with good intentions! Yes, they were *in error* in thinking that by removing the Tsar from power they rule Russia better [than he]. But this was a *sincere error*, they *thought* that they were truly *patriots*. It would have been wrong to kill *such* people! *Such* people should not even have been sent to Siberia (that is, into prison). It was necessary to *show* them that they *were mistaken*. And how better to show them than by *victory* over the external enemy, a victory which was already in their hands, and would be inevitable in four or five *months*! The tsar *did not know* that his closest generals had already prepared to arrest him and deprive him of power on February 22, 1917. And the generals did not know that they were

¹³ "Skrytaia Byl'" (A Hidden Story), *Prizyv'* (Summons), N 50, Spring, 1920; in F. Vinberg, *Krestnij Put'* (The Way of the Cross), Munich, 1920, St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 167-168.

¹⁴ Reminiscence of E.I. Balabin, an officer of a Cossack light-guards regiment. See https://sergedid.livejournal.com/417307.html?utm_source=fbsharing&utm_medium=social

doing this precisely in order that in four or five months' time *there should be no victory!* That had been decided in Bnai-Brith, in other international Jewish organizations (Russia must not be 'among the victor-countries!'). Therefore through the German General Staff (which also *did not know* all the plots, but thought only about its own salvation and the salvation of Germany), and also directly from the banks of Jacob Schiff and others (we shall name them later) huge sums of money had already gone to the *real murderers* of the Tsar and the Fatherland - the Bolsheviks. This was *the second echelon* [of plotters], it hid behind the first [the Russian Masons]. It was on them (and not on the 'noble patriots') that the world powers of evil placed their hopes, for they had no need at all of a transfigured Russia, even if on the western ('their') model. What they needed was that Russia and the Great Russian people should *not exist* as such! For they, the powers of evil, *knew Great Russia better* (incomparably better!) than *the whole* of Russian 'society' (especially the despised intelligentsia). Did Guchkov know about the planned murder of the whole of Great Russia? *He knew!* The Empress accurately called him 'cattle'. Kerensky also knew, and also several *specially initiated* Masons, who hid this from *the overwhelming majority* of all the 'brothers' - the other Russian Masons. The specially initiated had already for a long time had secret links (through Trotsky, M. Gorky and several others) with Lenin and the Bolsheviks, which *the overwhelming majority* of the Bolsheviks, too, *did not know!*

"And what did his Majesty know? He knew that society was eaten up by Judaeo-Masonry, that in it was *error* and cowardice and deception. But he *did not know* that at the base of the error, in its secret places, was *treason*. And he also *did not know* that treason and cowardice and deception were all around him, that is, everywhere throughout the higher *command* of the army. And what is the Tsar without an army, without troops?! Then there is the question: could the Tsar have learned in time about the treachery among the generals? Why not! Let's take, for example, Yanushkevich, or Gurko, or Korfa (or all of them together), whom Sukhomlinov had pointed to as plotters already in 1909 (!). In prison, *under torture* - such torture as they had with Tsars Ivan and Peter - they would have said everything, *given up all the rest...*! But then he, Nicholas II, would have needed to be truly like Ivan IV or Peter I from the beginning - that is, a *satanist* and a born murderer (psychologically), not trusting *anyone*, suspecting *everyone*, sparing *nobody*. It is significant that her Majesty joined to the names of these Tsars the name of Paul I. That means that she had in mind, not Satanism and bestiality, but only *firmness...* But she *felt* with striking perspicacity that her husband was 'suffering for the mistakes of his royal *predecessors*'. Which ones?! Just as we said, first of all and mainly for the 'mistakes' *precisely of Ivan IV and Peter I*. Not to become like them, these predecessors, to overcome the temptation of *replying to evil with evil means* - that was the task of Nicholas II. For *not everything is allowed*, *not all means* are good for the attainment of what would seem to be the most important ends. *The righteousness of God* is not attained by diabolic methods. Evil is not conquered by evil! There was a time when they, including also his Majesty

Nicholas II, suppressed evil by evil! But in accordance with the Providence of God *another time* had come, a time to show where the Russian Tsar could himself become *a victim of evil* – voluntarily! – and endure evil *to the end*. *Did he believe* in Christ and *love Him* truly in such a way as to suffer voluntarily *like Christ*? The same Divine providential *question as was posed for the whole of Great Russia!* This was the final test of faith – *through life and through death*. If one can live only by killing and making oneself *one* with evil and the devil (as those whom one has to kill), then it would be better *not to live!* That is the reply of the Tsar and of Great Russia that he headed! The more so in that it was then a matter of earthly, *historical* life. Here, in *this* life and in *this* history to die in order to live again in the eternal and new ‘history’ of the Kingdom of Heaven! For there is no other way into this Kingdom of Heaven – *the Lord* left no other. He decreed that it should be experienced only *by this* entry... That is what turned out to be His, God’s will!

“We recall that his Majesty Nicholas II took all his most important decisions after ardent prayer, having felt *the goodwill of God*. Therefore now, on considering earnestly why he then, at the end of 1916 and very beginning of 1917, did not take those measures which his wife so warmly wrote to him about, we must inescapably admit one thing: he *did not have* God’s goodwill in relation to them! Her Majesty’s thought is remarkable in itself, that the Tsar, if he had to be ruled by anyone, should be ruled only by one who was himself ruled by God! But there was no such person near the Tsar. Rasputin was *not that* person. His Majesty already understood this, but the Tsaritsa did not yet understand it. In this question he was condescending to her and delicate. But, as we see, he did not carry out the advice of their ‘Friend’, and did not even mention him in his replies to his wife. The Tsar entrusted all his heart and his thoughts to God and was forced to be ruled by Him alone.”¹⁵

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There is much of value in Lebedev’s hypothesis, but it is too kind to the Masonic plotters. Yes, they were “sincere” – but so were the Bolsheviks! It seems unlikely that the Tsar should have considered the Bolsheviks worthy of punishment, but the Masons not.

More likely, in our opinion, is that he thought that acting against the Masons would bring forward the revolution at precisely the moment when he wanted peace in the rear of the army.

It must be remembered the Masons controlled the public organizations, like the Military-Industrial Committee, whose leader was the industrialist and conservative parliamentarian, A.I. Guchkov, and the zemstvos, whose leader was Prince George Lvov (who also happened to be the leader of Russian Masonry). These, in spite of their disloyalty, were nevertheless making their

¹⁵ Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 473-475.

contribution to providing ammunition for the army and helping the wounded. The Emperor held the opinion that “in wartime one must not touch the public organizations”.¹⁶ And so it was the war that both created the conditions that made the revolution possible, and prevented the Tsar from taking the steps that were necessary in order to crush it...

Many people think that the Russian revolution was the result of an elemental movement of the masses. This is not true – although the masses later joined it. The February revolution was a carefully hatched plot involving about three hundred Masons; its organizer was Guchkov.

The plot was successful. But it succeeded in eventually bringing to power, not the Masonic plotters, but the Bolsheviks, who destroyed all the plotters and all their Masonic lodges, forcing the Masons themselves to flee back to their mother lodges abroad... Thus in October Kerensky and his Masonic colleagues fled to France, where they set up lodges under the aegis of the Grand Orient.¹⁷

Yana Sedova writes: “Already in 1906, after a meeting with the Emperor, A.I. Guchkov came to the unexpected conclusion: ‘We are in for still more violent upheavals’. Then he wanted ‘simply to step aside’. But already in those years he began to talk about a ‘coup d’état’.

“In the next few years Guchkov’s attention was temporarily occupied by work in the State Duma. But in 1911 after the murder of Stolypin, as he later recalled, there arose in him ‘an unfriendly feeling’ towards the Emperor Nicholas II.

“At the beginning of 1913, at a meeting in his Petersburg flat, Guchkov talked about a military coup in Serbia. The discussion moved to a coup in Russia. At this point one of the participants in the meeting said that ‘the party of the coup is coming into being’.

“Several months later, at a congress of his [Octobrist] party in Petersburg, Guchkov proclaimed the principle by which he was governed in the next four years: ‘the defence of the monarchy against the monarch’.

“The next year, during the ‘great retreat’, Guchkov created the Military-Industrial Committees, an organization whose official task was to help provide the army with ammunition. In fact, however, the committees turned out to be an instrument for the preparation of a coup.

¹⁶ Sedova, “Ne Tsar’, a Ego Poddanie Otvetsvenny za Fevral’skij Perevorot 1917 Goda” (Not the Tsar, but his Subjects were Responsible for the Coup of 1917), *Nasha Strana*, N 2864, March 14, 2009, p. 3.

¹⁷ G. Katkov, *Fevral’skaia Revoliutsia* (The February Revolution), Paris, 1984, pp. 175-82.

"However, Guchkov would probably have continued to the end of his life only to 'platonically sympathize' with the coup, and do nothing himself, if once there had not appeared in his flat the Russian masonic leader, N.V. Nekrasov.

"The two of them became the 'initiators' of a plan: 'a palace coup, as a result of which his Majesty would be forced to sign his abdication passing the throne to his lawful Heir'.

"Soon another Mason, M.I. Tereschenko, joined the plot, and, as Guchkov recalled, 'the three of us set about a detailed working out of this plan'."¹⁸

On September 8, 1915 a "Committee of National Salvation" issued "Disposition Number 1". "It affirmed," writes N. Yakovlev, "that there were two wars going on in Russia – against a stubborn and skilful enemy from outside and a no less stubborn and skilful enemy from inside. The attainment of victory over the external enemy was unthinkable without a prior victory over the internal enemy. By the latter they had in mind the ruling dynasty. For victory on the internal front it was necessary... immediately to appoint a supreme command staff, whose basic core consisted of Prince G.E. Lvov, A.I. Guchkov and A.F. Kerensky."¹⁹

Shtormakh considers that the main plotters were Guchkov, Prince G.E. Lvov, Nekrasov and Tereschenko, all later ministers in the Provisional Government.²⁰ Lvov was leader of the Union of the Zemstva and Cities.

Some of the plotters may have considered regicide. Thus Shtormakh writes: "'In 1915,' recounts the Mason A.F. Kerensky in his memoirs, 'speaking at a secret meeting of representatives of the liberal and moderate conservative majority in the Duma and the State Council, which was discussing the Tsar's politics, V.A. Maklakov, who was to the highest degree a conservative liberal, said that it was possible to avert catastrophe and save Russia only by repeating the events of March 11, 1801 (the assassination of Paul I).' Kerensky reasons that the difference in views between him and Maklakov came down only to time, for Kerensky himself had come to conclude that killing the Tsar was 'a necessity' ten years earlier. 'And besides,' continues Kerensky, 'Maklakov and those who thought like him would have wanted that others do it. But I suggested that, in accepting the idea, one should assume the whole responsibility for it, and go on to execute it personally'. Kerensky continued to call for the murder of the Tsar. In his speech at the session of the State Duma in February, 1917 he called for the

¹⁸ Sedova, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁹ Yakovlev, *1 Avgusta, 1914*, Moscow, 1974, p. 13.

²⁰ <http://rushistory.3dn.ru/forum/4-86-1>

‘physical removal of the Tsar, explaining that they should do to the Tsar ‘what Brutus did in the time of Ancient Rome’.”²¹

According to Guchkov, they worked out several variants of the seizure of power. One involved seizing the Tsar in Tsarskoye Selo or Peterhof. Another involved doing the same at Headquarters. This would have had to involve some generals who were members of the military lodge, especially Alexeyev (a friend of Guchkov’s) and Ruzsky. However, this might lead to a schism in the army, which would undermine its capability for war. So it was decided not to initiate the generals into the plot – although, as we shall see, they played a very important role quite independently of Guchkov’s band, prevented loyal military units from coming to the aid of the Tsar, and themselves demanded his abdication.²² A third variant, worked out by another Mason, Prince D.L. Vyazemsky, envisaged a military unit taking control of the Tsar’s train between Military Headquarters and Tsarskoye Selo and forcing him to abdicate in favour of the Tsarevich. Yet another plan was to seize the Tsar (on March 1) and exile him abroad. Guchkov claims that the agreement of some foreign governments to this was obtained.

The Germans got wind of these plans, and not long before February, 1917 the Bulgarian Ambassador tried to warn the Tsar about them. The Germans were looking to save the Tsar in order to establish a separate peace with him. But the Tsar, in accordance with his promise to the Allies, rejected this out of hand. It was then that the Germans turned to Lenin...

Yet another plan was worked out by Prince G.E. Lvov. He suggested forcing the Tsar to abdicate and putting Great Prince Nicholas Nikolayevich on the throne in his place, with Guchkov and Lvov as the powers behind the throne. Lvov had hopes of Nikolasha because in October he and other Romanovs had tried to persuade the Tsar to adopt the constitutional path, while on November 6 he had had a stormy conversation with the Tsar at Stavka during which he had said: “How shameful of you it was to believe that I wanted to overthrow you from the throne!”²³ Then, in a private conversation with his nephew, Prince Andrew Vladimirovich, Nikolasha had confided to him that he had lost all hope of saving the Tsar from his wife and from himself. So on January 1 Lvov sent a friend of his, the Mason A.I. Khatsov, to Tiflis to speak with him and his wife Anastasia (a notorious critic of the Tsarina) about his plot. According to S.S. Oldenburg, the Great Prince rejected

²¹ <http://rushistory.3dn.ru/forum/4-86-1>.

²² Sedova, after arguing that the generals were never initiated into Guchkov’s plot, goes on: “Finally, nevertheless, Guchkov revealed his plan to Ruzsky. But this took place already after the coup. On learning of the plot, Ruzsky cried out: ‘Ach, Alexander Ivanovich, if you had told me about this earlier, I would have joined you.’ But Guchkov said: ‘My dear, if I had revealed the plan, you would have pressed a button, and an adjutant would have come and you would have said: “Arrest him”.’” (“Ne Tsar...”, p. 4)

²³ Katkov, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

the idea on the grounds of the monarchical sentiments of the army.²⁴ Sedova claims that Lvov actually offered the throne to Nikolasha...²⁵ In any case, as Katkov points out, "there are no indications that Nikolai Nikolayevich reported KhatISOV's approach to the corresponding authorities, although this is precisely what duty required. And in this way the Great Prince willingly or unwillingly became a participant in a plot whose aim was to overthrow Nicholas II followed by his own ascent to the throne. That is, there took place precisely that which he had so sincerely renounced with an oath on November 6..."²⁶

At a meeting between members of the Duma and some generals in the study of Rodzyanko in February, 1917 another plot to force the Tsar to abdicate was formed. The leading roles in this were to be played by Generals Krymov and Ruzsky and Colonel Rodzyanko, the Duma leader's son... Finally, the so-called naval plot was formed, as Shulgin recounts, according to which the Tsaritsa was to be invited onto a warship for England.²⁷

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Besides the formal conspirators, there were many others who helped them by trying to undermine the resolve of the Tsar. Thus "before the February coup," writes Yana Sedova, "in the Russian empire there were more and more attempts on the part of individual people to 'open the eyes of his Majesty' to the internal political situation.

"This 'search for truth' assumed a particularly massive character in November, 1916, beginning on November 1, when Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich arrived at Stavka to have a heart-to-heart conversation with his Majesty...

"Very many considered it their duty to 'open the eyes of his Majesty': Great Princes Nicholas and Alexander Mikhailovich, Nicholas Nikolayevich and Paul Alexandrovich, the ministers Ignatiev and Pokrovsky, Generals Alexeyev and N.I. Ivanov, the ambassadors of allied governments Buchanan and Paléologue, the president of the Duma M. Rodzyanko, Protopresbyter of the army and navy G. Shavelsky,... the chief representative of the Red Cross P.M. Kaufmann-Turkestansky, the official A.A. Klopov, the dentist S.S. Kostritsky...

"This is far from a complete list. It includes only conversations, but many addressed his Majesty in letters or try to influence the Empress (Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich both spoke with his Majesty and sent him a very

²⁴ Oldenburg, *Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II*, Belgrade, 1939, vol. II, p. 228.

²⁵ Sedova, "Byl li masonskij zagovor...?" *Nasha Strana*.

²⁶ Katkov, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

²⁷ <http://rushistory.3dn.ru/forum/4-86-1> .

long letter and spoke with the Empress). 'It seemed,' wrote Rodzyanko later, 'that the whole of Russia was beseeching his Majesty about one and the same thing, and it was impossible not to understand and pay heed to the pleas of a land worn out by suffering'.

"But what did 'the whole of Russia' ask about? As a rule, about two things: the removal of 'dark powers' and the bestowing of 'a ministry of confidence'. The degree to which the boundaries between these two groups was blurred is evident from the fact that the Duma deputy Protopopov at first considered himself a candidate for the 'ministry of confidence', but when his Majesty truly appointed him a minister, the name of Protopopov immediately appeared in the ranks of the 'dark powers'. By the 'dark powers' was usually understood Rasputin and his supposed protégés...

"It was less evident what the 'ministry of confidence' was. For many this term had a purely practical meaning and signified the removal from the government of certain ministers who were not pleasing to the Duma and the appointment in their place of Milyukov, Rodzyanko and other members of the Duma.

"But the closer it came to the February coup, the more demands there were in favour of a really responsible ministry, that is, a government which would be formed by the Duma and would only formally be confirmed by his Majesty. That a responsible ministry was no longer a real monarchy, but the end of the Autocracy was not understood by everyone. Nobody at that time listened to the words of Scheglovitov: 'A monarchist who goes with a demand for a ministry of public confidence is not a monarchist'.

"As for the idea of appointed people with no administrative experience, but of the Duma, to the government in conditions of war, this was evidently thought precisely by those people. All these arguments about 'dark forces' and 'a ministry of confidence' first arose in the Duma and were proclaimed from its tribune. Evidently the beginning of the mass movements towards his Majesty in November, 1916 were linked with the opening of a Duma session at precisely that time. These conversations were hardly time to coincide with the opening of the Duma: rather, they were elicited by the Duma speeches, which were distributed at the time not only on the pages of newspapers, but also in the form of leaflets. 'We,' wrote Shulgin later, 'ourselves went mad and made the whole country mad with the myth about certain geniuses, 'endowed with public confidence', when in fact there were none such...'

"In general, all these conversations were quite similar and usually irrelevant. Nevertheless, his Majesty always listened attentively to what was expressed in them, although by no means all his interlocutors were easy to listen to.

"Some of them, like many of the Great Princes and Rodzyanko, strove to impose their point of view and change his political course, demanding a ministry endowed with confidence or even a responsible ministry. His Majesty listened to them in silence and thanked them for their 'advice'.

"Others, like General Alexeyev or S.S. Kostritsky, were under the powerful impression (not to say influence) of the Duma speeches and political agitation, which the truly dark forces who had already thought up the February coup were conducting at the time. Those who gave regular reports to his Majesty and whom he trusted were subjected to particularly strong pressure. If they began a heart-to-heart conversation, his Majesty patiently explained to them in what he did not agree with them and why.

"There existed a third category which, like P.M. Kaufmann, got through to his Majesty, even though they did not have a report to give, so as to tell him 'the whole bitter truth'. They did not clearly know what they wanted, and simply said 'everything that had built up in their souls'. Usually they began their speeches with the question: could they speak to him openly (as if his Majesty would say no to such a question!), and then spoke on the same two subjects, about the 'dark powers' and the government, insofar as, by the end of 1916, the same things, generally speaking, had built up in all their souls. The speech of such a 'truth-seeker' usually ended in such a sad way (Kaufmann just said: 'Allow me: I'll go and kill Grishka!') that his Majesty had to calm them down and assure them that 'everything will work out'.

"One cannot say that his Majesty did not listen to his interlocutors. Some ministers had to leave their posts precisely because of the conversations. For example, on November 9, 1916 his Majesty wrote to the Empress that he was sacking Shtürmer since nobody trusted that minister: 'Every day I hear more and more about him. We have to take account of that.' And on the same day he wrote in his diary: 'My head is tired from all these conversations'.

"By the beginning everyone noticed his tiredness, and his interlocutors began more often to foretell revolution to him. Earlier he could say to the visitor: 'But you've gone out of your mind, this is all in your dreams. And when did you dream it? Almost on the very eve of our victory?! And what are you frightened of? The rumours of corrupt Petersburg and the babblers in the Duma, who value, not Russia, but their own interests?' (from the memoirs of Mamantov). And then the conversation came to an end. But now he had to reply to the most senseless attacks. And he replied. To the rumours of betrayal in the entourage of the Empress: 'What, in your opinion I'm a traitor?' To the diagnosis made by the Duma about Protopopov: 'When did he begin to go mad? When I appointed him a minister?' To the demand 'to

deserve the confidence of the people': 'But is it not that my people has to deserve my confidence?' However, they did not listen to him..."²⁸

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The Masons began to execute their plans in January, 1917. In that month, there arrived in Petrograd an Allied Commission composed of representatives of England, France and Italy whose purpose was to plan combined Allied strategy for the coming year. After meeting with Guchkov, who was president of the Military-Industrial Committee, Prince George Lvov, president of the State Duma Rodzyanko, General Polivanov, Sazonov, the English ambassador Buchanan, Milyukov and others, the mission presented the following demands to the Tsar:

- (i) The introduction into the Staff of the Supreme Commander of allied representatives with the right of a deciding vote.
- (ii) The renewal of the command staff of all the armies on the indications of the heads of the Entente.
- (iii) The introduction of a constitution with a responsible ministry.

The Tsar replied to these demands, which amounted to a demand that he renounce both his autocratic powers and his powers as Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armies, as follows:

- (i) "The introduction of allied representatives is unnecessary, for I am not suggesting the introduction of my representatives into the allied armies with the right of a deciding vote."
- (ii) "Also unnecessary. My armies are fighting with greater success than the armies of my allies."
- (iii) "The act of internal administration belongs to the discretion of the Monarch and does not require the indications of the allies."

When this truthful and courageous reply was made known to the plotters, they assembled in the English Embassy and decided: "To abandon the lawful path and step out on the path of revolution".²⁹ Thus "the English Embassy," wrote Princess Paley, "on the orders of Lloyd George, became a nest of propaganda. The liberals, and Prince Lvov, Milyukov, Rodzyanko, Maklakov, etc., used to meet there constantly. It was in the English embassy that the decision was taken to abandon legal paths and step out on the path of revolution."³⁰

²⁸ Sedova, "'Razgovory po dusham' Fevral'skikh Impotentov'" ('Heart-to-heart Conversations of the February Impotents'), *Nasha Strana* (Our Country), N 2834, December 29, 2007, p. 7.

²⁹ Armis (a Duma delegate), "Skrytaia Byl'" (The Hidden Story), *Prizyv'* (Summons), N 50, Spring, 1920; in F. Vinberg, *Krestnij Put'* (The Way of the Cross), Munich, 1920, St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 165-166.

³⁰ Paley, *Souvenir de Russie, 1916-1919*, p. 33.

On January 27, on the basis of reports from the Petrograd Okhrana, the members of a working group of the Military-Industrial Committee which served as a link with the revolutionary workers' organizations, were arrested. The documents seized left no doubt about the revolutionary character of the working committee... But the new Prime Minister, Prince Golitsyn, softened the sentences of the plotters.³¹ And so "the sessions of the workers in the Committee continued. However, the Okhrana department lost its informers from the workers' group."³²

At the beginning of February the Tsar summoned N.A. Maklakov and entrusted him with composing a manifesto for the proroguing of the Duma – in case it should step out on the path of open revolution.³³ When the State Duma reassembled on February 14, Kerensky proclaimed this aim openly: "The historical task of the Russian people at the present time is the task of annihilating the medieval regime immediately, at whatever cost... How is it possible to fight by lawful means against those whom the law itself has turned into a weapon of mockery against the people?... There is only one way with the violators of the law – their physical removal."³⁴ Kerensky also took a significant step away from the bloc and towards Lenin's position, denouncing the bloc's "imperialist" war aims and declaring that the war should be "liquidated".

"In the middle of 1916," writes Lebedev, "the Masons had designated *February 22, 1917* for the revolution in Russia. But on this day his Majesty was still at Tsarksoye Selo, having arrived there more than a month before from Headquarters, and only at 2 o'clock on the 22nd did he leave again for Mogilev. Therefore everything had to be put back for one day and begin on *February 23*.³⁵ By that time special trains loaded with provisions had been *deliberately* stopped on the approaches to Petrograd on the excuse of heavy snow drifts, which immediately elicited a severe shortage of bread, an increase in prices and the famous 'tails' – long queues for bread. The population began to worry, provocateurs strengthened the anxiety by rumours about the approach of inevitable famine, catastrophe, etc. But it turned out that the military authorities had reserves of food (from 'N.Z.') that

³¹ Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 233.

³² Sedova, "Ne Tsar...", p. 3.

³³ Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 233.

³⁴ Kerensky, in *Voprosy Istorii* (Questions of History), 1990, N 10, p. 144. Kerensky's real name was Aaron Kirbits (Voeikov, *So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria* (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 260).

³⁵ There is conflicting evidence on this point. Sedova writes: "Later Guchkov said that the coup was planned for March-April, 1917. However his comrades in the plot were more sincere. In Yekaterinoslav, where Rodzyanko's estate was situated, there came rumours from his, Rodzyanko's house that the abdication of the Tsar was appointed for December 6, 1917. At the beginning of 1917 Tereschenko declared in Kiev that the coup, during which the abdication was supposed to take place, was appointed for February 8" ("Ne Tsar...", p. 3). (V.M.)

would allow Petrograd to hold out until the end of the snow falls.³⁶ Therefore into the affair at this moment there stepped a second very important factor in the plot – the soldiers of the reserve formations, who were in the capital waiting to be sent off to the front. There were about 200,000 of them, and they since the end of 1916 had been receiving 25 roubles a day (a substantial boost to the revolutionary agitation that had been constantly carried out among them) from a secret ‘revolutionary fund’. Most important of all, they did not want to be sent to the front. They were reservists, family men, who had earlier received a postponement of their call-up, as well as new recruits from the workers, who had been under the influence of propaganda for a long time. His Majesty had long ago been informed of the unreliability of the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison and had ordered General Alexeyev to introduce guards units, including cavalry, into the capital. However, Alexeyev *had not carried out the order*, referring to the fact that, according to the information supplied by the commandant of the Petrograd garrison General Khabalov, all the barracks in the capital were filled to overflowing, and there was nowhere to put the guardsmen!... In sum, against 200,000 unreliable reservists who were ready to rebel the capital of the Empire could hardly number 10,000 soldiers – mainly junkers and cadets from other military schools – who were faithful to his Majesty...

Four days later, after the collapse of military discipline in the capital, *“It was all over with the government of Russia.* On the evening of the 27th... there took place the first session of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies, who elected Chkheidze as their president. They also elected a ‘literary commission’ and ordered the publication of the Soviet’s *Izvestia*. At that point, on the night from the 27th to the 28th, the Provisional Committee of the State Duma began to try and persuade Rodzyanko ‘to take power into his hands’, since, in the words of Milyukov, ‘the leaders of the army were in cahoots with him’. 15 minutes of tormented waiting passed. Finally, Rodzyanko agreed. The Provisional Committee proclaimed itself to be the ‘power’ of Russia. But..., as became clear, with the prior agreement of the Soviet’s Executive Committee! From that moment all the members of the Provisional Government, that is, the first ‘echelon’, would be led by the leaders of the Soviet, that is, the second ‘echelon’ of the revolution, although few knew about that.

“On February 28th the uprising spread to the suburbs of Petrograd. In Kronstadt drunken soldiers killed Admiral Viren and tens of officers. In Tsarkoye Selo the troops who were guarding the Family of his Majesty [under Great Duke Kyril Vladimirovich] declared that they were ‘neutral’.

³⁶ As General Voeikov wrote: “From February 25 the city’s public administration had begun to appoint its representatives to take part in the distribution of food products and to oversee the baking of bread. It became clear that in Petrograd at that time there were enough reserves of flour: in the warehouses of Kalashnikov Birzh were over 450,000 pounds of flour, so that fears about a lack of bread were completely unfounded” (*op. cit.*, p. 161). (V.M.).

“At 6 o’clock in the morning of February 28, 1917 Rodzyanko twice telegraphed General Alexeyev in Headquarters. The first telegram informed him that ‘power has passed to the Provisional Committee’, while the second said that this new power, ‘with the support of the troops and with the sympathy of the population’ would soon instil complete order and ‘re-establish the activity of the government institutions’. It was all a lie!...”³⁷

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The last stage of the coup was carried out by the Masonic generals...

On February 28, the Tsar set off by train from Army Headquarters to his family in Tsarskoye Selo. But then, in accordance with Guchkov’s plan, the train was stopped first at Malaya Vishera, then at Dno. This was supposedly because the stations further down the line were in the hands of the rebels.

The Russian word “Dno” means “bottom” or “abyss” – it was precisely at this spot that Imperial Russia reached the bottom of her historical path, and Orthodox Russia stood at the edge of the abyss...

Lebedev continues: “Movement along the railway lines was already controlled by the appointee of the Masons and revolutionary Bublikov (a former assistant of the Minister of Communications).³⁸ Incidentally, he later admitted: ‘One disciplined division from the front would have been sufficient to put down the rebellion’. But Alexeyev, Brusilov and Ruzsky *did not allow even one* division as far as Petrograd, as we shall now see! It was decided to direct the Tsar’s train to Pskov, so as then to attempt to get through to Tsarskoye Selo via Pskov. The Tsar hoped that the whole situation could be put right by General Ivanov, who at that moment was moving towards Tsarskoye Selo by another route. So everything was arranged so that his Majesty should be in Pskov, where the Headquarters of the Commander of the Northern Front, General Ruzsky, was. The Tsar was very much counting on him. Not knowing that he was one of the main traitors... It has to be said again that this lack of knowledge was not the result of bad work on the part of the police. The Masons had done their conspiring well. Moreover, it did not enter the heads either of the police or of his Majesty that fighting generals, commanders of fronts, the highest ranks in the army, ‘the most noble gentlemen’ from the Duma, the ministries and institutions could be plotters!...

“After the departure of his Majesty from Stavka General Alexeyev at 1.15 a.m. on March 1, without the knowledge of the Tsar, sent General Ivanov

³⁷ Lebedev, op. cit., pp. 477-481.

³⁸ “The plotters had earlier prepared a group to seize the train from among the reserve Guards units in the so-called Arakcheev barracks in Novgorod province. That is why the train had to be stopped nearer these barracks, and not in Pskov” (Sedova, “Ne Tsar...”, p. 4). (V.M.)

telegram No. 1833, which for some reason he dated February 28, in which he held Ivanov back from decisive actions by referring to 'private information' to the effect that 'complete calm had arrived' in Petrograd, that the appeal of the Provisional Government spoke about 'the inviolability of the monarchical principle in Russia', and that everyone was awaiting the arrival of His Majesty in order to end the matter through peace, negotiations and the averting of 'civil war'. Similar telegrams with completely false information were sent at the same time to all the chief commanders (including Ruzsky). The source of this lie was the Masonic 'headquarters' of Guchkov. 'Brother' Alexeyev could not fail to believe the 'brothers' from the capital, moreover he passionately *wanted to believe*, since only in this could there be a 'justification' of his treacherous actions. General Ivanov slowly, but surely moved towards the capital. The railwaymen were forced, under threat of court martial, to carry out his demands. At the stations, where he was met by revolutionary troops, he acted simply – by commanding them: 'On your knees!' They immediately carried out the command, casting their weapons on the ground..."³⁹

"Meanwhile, the Tsar arrived in Pskov. On the evening of March 1, 1917 there took place between him and General Ruzsky a very long and difficult conversation. N.V. Ruzsky, who thought the same about the situation in the capital as Alexeyev, on the instructions of Rodzyanko kept saying unashamedly to the members of the royal suite: *'It remains only to cast ourselves on the mercy of the conquerors'*, supposing that 'the conquerors' were the Masonic 'Progressive Bloc' of the State Duma... Unexpectedly for Nicholas II, Ruzsky 'heatedly' began to demonstrate to him the necessity of a 'responsible ministry'.⁴⁰ His Majesty calmly objected: *'I am responsible before God and Russia for everything that has happened and will happen; it does not matter whether the ministers will be responsible before the Duma and the State Council. If I see that what the ministers are doing is not for the good of Russia, I will never be able to agree with them, comforting myself with the thought that the matter is out of my hands.'* The Tsar went on to go through the qualities of all the main actors of the Duma and the 'Bloc', showing that none of them had the necessary qualities to rule the country. However, all this was not simply an argument on political questions between two uninvolved people. From time to time in the course of this strange conversation his Majesty received witnesses to the fact that this was the position not only of Ruzsky, but also of Alexeyev. The latter sent a panicky telegram from Headquarters about the necessity *immediately* of bestowing 'a responsible ministry' and even sent him

³⁹ Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 477-482.

⁴⁰ "One must accept the formula 'the monarch reigns but the government rules', explained Ruzsky.

"This, explained the emperor, was incomprehensible to him, and he would need to be differently educated, born again. He could not take decisions against his conscience." (Montefiore, *op. cit.*, p. 619). The Tsar rejected the idea of a constitutional monarchy to the very end. But he was prepared to abdicate in favour of another true autocrat, his successor in the Russian autocracy. (V.M.)

the text of a *royal manifesto* composed by him to this effect! Besides, it turned out that his Majesty *could not* even communicate with anyone by direct line! The Tsar sent [V.N.] Voeikov (the palace commandant) to telegraph his reply to Alexeyev. Voeikov demanded access to the telegraph apparatus from General Davydov (also a traitor from Ruzsky's headquarters). Ruzsky heard the conversation and declared that it was impossible to hand over the apparatus. Voeikov said that he was only carrying out 'the command of his Majesty'. Ruzsky said that 'he would not take such an insult (!), since he, Ruzsky, was the commander-in-chief here, and his Majesty's communications *could not* take place through his headquarters without his, Ruzsky's, knowledge, and that at the present worrying time he, Ruzsky *would not allow* Voeikov to use the apparatus at all! The Tsar understood that practically speaking *he was already separated from the levers and threads of power*. The members of his suite also understood this. One of them recalled that the behaviour and words of Ruzsky (on casting themselves 'on the mercy of the conquerors') 'undoubtedly indicated that not only the Duma and Petrograd, but also the higher commanders at the front were acting *in complete agreement* and had decided to carry out *a coup*. We were only perplexed when this took place.'⁴¹ It began 'to take place' already in 1915, but *the final* decision was taken by Alexeyev and Ruzsky during a telephone conversation they had with each other on the night *from February 28 to March 1*. I. Solonevich later wrote that 'of all the weak points in the Russian State construction *the heights of the army* represented *the weakest point*. And all the plans of his Majesty Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovich were shattered *precisely at this point*'.

"In view of the exceptional and extraordinary importance of the matter, we must *once again* ask ourselves: why was it precisely this point in the 'construction' that turned out to be the weakest? And once again we reply: because it was eaten up from within by the rust of *Masonry*, its propaganda. Then there is one more question: how did this become possible in the Russian Imperial army? And again the reply: only because, since the time of *Peter I*, through the implanting of *Masonry* into Russia, the ideological *idol* of 'service to Russia and the Fatherland' was raised in the consciousness of the nobility, and in particular the serving, *military* nobility, *above* the concept of service to God and the Tsar, as was demanded by the direct, spiritual-mystical *meaning of the Oath* given by the soldiers *personally*, not to some abstraction, but to a given, concrete *Sovereign before God!* The emperors of the 19th century did not pay due attention to this danger, or were not able to destroy this idol-worship. In truth, the last of them, his Majesty Nicholas II, was now paying in full for this, '*suffering for the mistakes of his predecessors*'.

"Seeing the extreme danger of the situation, at 0.20 a.m. on the night from March 1 to March 2 the Tsar sent this telegram to General Ivanov, who had

⁴¹ As we have seen, however, Guchkov claimed that the generals were not initiated into the plot, but acted independently. Sedova agrees with this assessment, as, it would seem, did Oldenburg. (V.M.)

already reached Tsarskoye Selo: 'I ask you to undertake no measures before my arrival and your report to me.' It is possible that, delighted at this text, Ruzsky, behind the back of his Majesty, *on his own authority* and against the will of the Tsar, immediately *rescinded* the sending of soldiers of the Northern Front to support Ivanov and ordered them to *return* the military echelons which had already been sent to Petrograd. *At the same time* Alexeyev from Headquarters, *in the name of his Majesty, but without his knowledge and agreement*, ordered all the units of the South-Western and Western fronts that had earlier been sent to Petrograd to return and stop the loading of those who had only just begun to load. The faithful officers of the Preobrazhensky regiment recalled with pain how they had had to submit to this command. They did not know that this was not the command of the Tsar, but that *Alexeyev had deceived* them!

"After this everything took place catastrophically quickly. His Majesty agreed to a 'responsible government'.⁴² But when Rodzyanko was told about this in Petrograd, he replied that this was already not enough: for the salvation of Russia and the Dynasty, and the carrying through of the war to victory, *everyone* (who was everyone?) was demanding the *abdication* of his Majesty Nicholas II in favour of his son, the Tsarevich Alexis, with Great Prince Michael as regent over him. Moreover, Rodzyanko again, without any gnawing of conscience, *lied* to Alexeyev and Ruzsky that the Provisional Government had complete control of the situation, that 'everybody obeyed him (i.e. Rodzyanko) alone'... He was hiding the fact that 'everyone' (that is, the Soviet first of all) *was frightened*, as of fire, of the return of the Tsar to the capital! For they were not sure even of the mutinous reservists, and if even only one warlike unit (even if only a division) were to arrive from the front – that would be the end for them all and for the revolution! We can see what the real position of the Provisional Government was from the fact that already on March 1 the Soviet had *expelled* it from its spacious accommodation in the Tauris palace, which it occupied itself, into less spacious rooms, and refused Rodzyanko a train to go to negotiate with the Tsar. So Rodzyanko was compelled to *beg*. The Soviet gave him two soldiers to go to the post, since on the road the 'ruler of Russia', whom everyone supposedly obeyed, might be attacked or completely beaten up... One of the main leaders of the Soviet in those days was Sukhanov (Himmer). In his notes he conveyed an accurate general picture of the state of things. It turns out that the 'progressivists' of the Duma on that very night of March 1 in a humiliating way *begged* Himmer, Nakhamkes and Alexandrovich to *allow* them to create a 'government'. Himmer wrote: 'The next word was mine. I noted either we could restrain the masses or nobody could. The real power, therefore, was with us or with nobody. There was only one way out: agree to *our* conditions and accept them as *the government programme*.' And the Provisional Committee (the future 'government') *agreed*! Even Guchkov (!) refused to take part in such a

⁴² But not a constitutional monarchy. What he agreed was "to appoint Rodzyanko prime minister, *retaining autocratic power*" (Montefiore, *The Romanovs*, p. 619). Italics mine (V.M.).

government. He joined it later, when the Bolsheviks *allowed* them to *play a little* at a certain self-sufficiency and supposed 'independence' before the public.

"... But Rodzyanko lied and *deceived the generals*, since it was his direct responsibility before the 'senior brothers' by all means not to allow the arrival of military units and the Tsar into Petrograd at that moment!

"At 10.15 a.m. on March 2 Alexeyev on his own initiative sent to all the front-commanders and other major military leaders a telegram in which, conveying what Rodzyanko was saying about the necessity of the abdication of his Majesty for the sake of *the salvation of the Monarchy*, Russia and the army, and for victory over the external foe, he added *personally on his own part...*: 'It appears that the situation does not allow any other resolution.' By 2.30 on March 2 the replies of the commanders had been received. Great Prince Nicholas Nikolayevich replied, referring to the 'fateful situation': 'I, as a faithful subject (?!), consider it necessary, in accordance with the duty of the oath and in accordance with the spirit of the oath, *to beseech Your Imperial Majesty on my knees*' (... to abdicate). General Brusilov (the future Bolshevik 'inspector of cavalry') also replied that without the abdication 'Russia will collapse'. General Evert expressed the opinion that 'it is impossible to count on the army in its present composition for the suppression of disorders'. This was not true! The army as a whole, and some units in particular, was devoted to his Majesty. Masonic and revolutionary propaganda was indeed being carried out in it, but it did not have the necessary success *as long as the Tsar remained at the head of his Army*. General Sakharov, while reviling the Duma for all he was worth ('a thieving band of men... which has taken advantage of a propitious moment'), nevertheless, 'sobbing, was forced to say that abdication was the most painless way out'... To these replies Alexeyev appended his own opinion, which was also in favour of the abdication of the Tsar. Only the commander of the Guards Cavalry, General Khan-Hussein of Nakhichevan (a Muslim) remained faithful to the Russian Orthodox Autocrat! 'I beseech you not to refuse to lay at the feet of His Majesty the boundless devotion of the Guards Cavalry and our readiness to die for our adored Monarch', was his reply to Alexeyev. But the latter *did not pass on* this reply to the Tsar in Pskov. They also did not tell him that Admiral Rusin in Headquarters had more or less accused Alexeyev and his assistant General Lukomsky of 'treason' when they had suggested that the admiral sign the text of a general telegram to his Majesty in the name of all the commanders expressing the opinion that abdication was necessary. Then Rusin voluntarily refused to serve the enemies of Russia and resigned his post. So at that time there were still leaders who were completely faithful to the Tsar, and not only traitors like Alexeyev, Lukomsky, Ruzsky and Danilov, or like Generals Brusilov, Polivanov, Manikovsky, Bonch-Bruyevich, Klembovsky, Gatovsky, Boldyrev and others, who tried to please the Bolsheviks. At 10 a.m. on March 2 his Majesty was speaking to Ruzsky about the abdication: 'If it is necessary

that I should step aside for the good of Russia, I am ready, but I am afraid that the people will not understand this'... At this point they brought the text of Alexeyev's telegram to the commanders. It was decided to wait for the replies. By 3 p.m. the replies had arrived from Headquarters. Ruzsky, accompanied by Danilov and Savich, came with the text of the telegram to his Majesty's carriage. The Tsar, as Danilov recalled, 'seemed calm, but was paler than usual: it was evident that he had passed most of the night without sleep. He was dressed in a dark blue Circassian coat, with a dagger in a silver sheath in his belt.' Having sat down at the table, his Majesty began to listen to Ruzsky. He informed him of the events of the past hours and handed the Tsar the replies of the commanders. The Tsar read them. Ruzsky, 'emphasizing each word', began to expound his own opinion, which consisted in the fact that his Majesty had to act *as the generals advised him*. The Tsar asked the opinion of those present. Danilov and Savich said the same as Ruzsky. 'A deathly silence ensued,' wrote Danilov. 'His Majesty was visibly perturbed. Several times he unconsciously looked at the firmly drawn window of the carriage.' His Majesty's widowed mother, Empress Maria Fyodorovna, later, from the words of her son, affirmed that Ruzsky had even dared to say: 'Well, decide.'

"What was his Majesty thinking about at that moment? According to the words of another contemporary of the events, the Tsar 'clearly understood that General Ruzsky would not submit to his command if he ordered him to suppress the mutiny raging in the capital. He felt that a secret *betrayal was encompassing him like a sticky spider's web*.' Immediately the Empress learned that his Majesty was in Pskov, she expressed herself with maximum accuracy: 'It's a trap!' Danilov continues: 'Then, standing up and turning quickly towards us, [the Tsar] crossed himself and said: "I have decided... I have decided to renounce the Throne in favour of my son Alexis!..."'⁴³

The Tsar wrote in his diary-entry for March 2: "My abdication is necessary. Ruzsky transmitted this conversation [with Rodzianko] to the Staff HQ, and Alexeyev to all the commanders-in-chief of the fronts. The replies from all arrived at 2:05. The essence is that that for the sake of the salvation of Russia and keeping the army at the front quiet, I must resolve on this step. I agreed. From the Staff HQ they sent the draft of a manifesto. In the evening there arrived from Petrograd Guchkov and Shulgin. I discussed and transmitted to them the signed and edited manifesto. At one in the morning I left Pskov greatly affected by all that had come to pass. All around me I see treason, cowardice, and deceit."

Commenting on these words, Fr. Lev writes: "The Tsar was convinced that this treason was personally to him, and not to the Monarchy, not to Russia! The generals were *sincerely* convinced of the same: they supposed that in betraying the Tsar they were not betraying the Monarchy and the Fatherland,

⁴³ Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 481-486.

but were even serving them, acting for their true good!... But betrayal and treason to *God's* Anointed is treason to everything that is headed by him. The Masonic consciousness of the generals, drunk on their supposed 'real power' over the army, could not rise even to the level of this *simple* spiritual truth! And meanwhile the traitors had already been *betrayed*, the deceivers *deceived*! Already on the following day, March 3, General Alexeyev, having received more detailed information on what was happening in Petrograd, exclaimed: 'I shall never forgive myself that I *believed* in the sincerity of certain people, obeyed them and sent the telegram to the commanders-in-chief on the question of the abdication of his Majesty from the Throne'... In a similar way General Ruzsky quickly '*lost faith* in the new government' and, as was written about him, 'suffered great moral torments' concerning his conversation with the Tsar, and the days March 1 and 2, 'until the end of his life' (his end came in October, 1918, when the Bolsheviks finished off Ruzsky in the Northern Caucasus). But we should not be moved by these belated 'sufferings' and 'recovery of sight' of the generals (and also of some of the Great Princes). They did not have to possess information, nor be particularly clairvoyant or wise; they simply had to be *faithful to their oath* – and nothing more!..

"... At that time, March 1-2, 1917, the question was placed before the Tsar, his consciousness and his conscience in the following way: the revolution in Petrograd is being carried out under *monarchical* banners: society, the people (Russia!) are standing for the preservation of tsarist power, for the planned carrying on of the war to victory, but this is being hindered only by one thing – general dissatisfaction *personally* with Nicholas II, general distrust of his *personal* leadership, so that if he, for the sake of the good and the victory of Russia, were to depart, he would *save* both the Homeland and the Dynasty!

"Convinced, as were his generals, that everything was like that, his Majesty, who never suffered from love of power (he could be powerful, but not power-loving!), after 3 o'clock in the afternoon of March 2, 1917, immediately sent two telegrams – to Rodzyanko in Petrograd and to Alexeyev in Mogilev. In the first he said: '*There is no sacrifice that I would not undertake in the name of the real good of our native Mother Russia.* For that reason I am ready to renounce the Throne in favour of My Son, in order that he should remain with Me until his coming of age, under the regency of My brother, Michael Alexandrovich'. The telegram to Headquarters proclaimed: 'In the name of the good of our ardently beloved Russia, her calm and salvation, I am ready to renounce the Throne in favour of My Son. I ask everyone to serve Him faithfully and unhypocritically.' His Majesty said, as it were between the lines: 'Not as you have served Me...' Ruzsky, Danilov and Savich went away with the texts of the telegrams.

"On learning about this, Voeikov ran into the Tsar's carriage: 'Can it be true... that You have signed the abdication?' The Tsar gave him the telegrams lying on the table with the replies of the commanders-in-chief, and said:

‘What was left for me to do, when they have all betrayed Me? And first of all – Nikolasha (Great Prince Nicholas Nikolayevich)... Read!’”⁴⁴

As in 1905, so in 1917, probably the single most important factor influencing the Tsar’s decision was the attitude of his uncle and the former Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich Romanov, “Nikolasha” as he was known in the family. It was indeed the case that there was very little he could do in view of the treason of the generals and Nikolasha.⁴⁵ He could probably continue to defy the will of the social and political élite, as he had done more than once in the past – but not the generals...⁴⁶

On the night of the abdication the Duma representatives Guchkov and Shulgin came to the Tsar with their own abdication text. But the Tsar in his last act as Sovereign was not to be dictated to; he had written his own manifesto, which he gave them. And Shulgin had to admit: “How pitiful seemed to me the sketch that we had brought him...”⁴⁷

S.S. Oldenburg writes: “One can speculate whether his Majesty could have not abdicated. With the position taken by General Ruzsky and General Alexeyev, the possibility of resistance was excluded: the commands of his Majesty were not delivered, the telegrams of those who were loyal to him were not communicated to him. Moreover, they could have announced the abdication without his will: Prince Mark of Baden announced the abdication of the German emperor (9.11.1918) when the Kaiser had by no means abdicated! His Majesty at least retained the possibility of addressing the people with his own last word... His Majesty did not believe that his opponents could cope with the situation. For that reason, to the last moment he tried to keep the steering wheel in his own hands. When that possibility had disappeared – it was clear that he was in captivity – his Majesty wanted at least to do all he could to make the task of his successors easier... Only he did not want to entrust his son to them: he knew that the youthful monarch could not abdicate, and to remove him they might use other, bloody methods. His Majesty gave his opponents everything he could: they still turned out to

⁴⁴ Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 486-488; Voeikov, *op. cit.*, p. 212; Mark Steinberg and Vladimir Khrustalev, *The Fall of the Romanovs*, Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 89-90, citing State Archive of the Russian Federation, document f.601, op. 1, d. 2102, 1.1-2.

⁴⁵ Nikolasha was blessed by Metropolitan Platon, Exarch of Georgia to ask the Tsar to abdicate. Platon later became the founder of a large schism in the Russian Church, the American Metropolia. See N.K. Talberg, “K sorokaletiu pagubnogo evlogianskogo raskola” (On the Fortieth Anniversary of the Destructive Eulogian Schism”), *Pravoslavniy Put’* (The Orthodox Way), Jordanville, 1966, p. 36; Groyan, *op. cit.*, p. CLXI, note.

⁴⁶ Apart from General Khan-Hussein, General Theodore Keller, who was later martyred, was also faithful, as were Adjutant-General Nilov and General Voejkov.

⁴⁷ Oldenburg, *Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II*, Washington, 1981, vol. 2, p. 253.

be powerless in the face of events. The steering wheel was torn out of the hands of the autocrat-‘chauffeur’ and the car fell into the abyss...”⁴⁸

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After the abdication of the Tsar, and the installation of the Masonic Provisional Government, almost all the plotters later repented of their actions. Thus “in the summer of 1917,” writes F. Vinberg, “in Petrograd and Moscow there circulated from hand to hand copies of a letter of the Cadet leader Milyukov. In this letter he openly admitted that he had taken part, as had almost all the members of the State Duma, in the February coup, in spite of the fact that he understood the danger of the ‘experiment’ he had undertaken. ‘But,’ this gentleman cynically admitted in the letter, ‘we knew that in the spring we were about to see the victory of the Russian Army. In such a case the prestige and attraction of the Tsar among the people would again become so strong and tenacious that all our efforts to shake and overthrow the Throne of the Autocrat would be in vain. That is why we had to resort to a very quick revolutionary explosion, so as to avert this danger. However, we hoped that we ourselves would be able to finish the war triumphantly. It turned out that we were mistaken: all power was quickly torn out of our hands by the plebs... Our mistake turned out to be fatal for Russia’...”⁴⁹

So we must conclude that it was *both* stupidity *and* treason that manifested themselves in the actions of the February plotters. They were undoubtedly traitors in violating their oath of allegiance to the Tsar. But they were also stupid because they did not understand what the overthrow of the Tsar would lead to...

July 25 / August 7, 2018.

⁴⁸ Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 641-642.

⁴⁹ Vinberg, *op. cit.*, p. 151.