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Relations between Soviet Agencies in Petrograd in the Period of Their Formation: Based an
Archival Documents and the Biography of A. V. Khrulev

Abstract

The problem of relations between various structures of Soviet power in the period of its formation is raised in this article for the first time. Until now, researchers a priori proceeded from the fact that struggles during this period was either of class nature (bourgeoisie against proletariat; landowners against peasants) or of party nature (Bolsheviks against Mensheviks against Left Social Revolutionaries, etc.). The controversy and even opposition between various organs of Soviet power have not yet been researched in the historiography. The author considers the issue on the example of Soviet law-enforcement agencies of the Porokhovsky district: she studies their interactions among themselves and with the central authorities of Petrograd. The article analyzes contradictions and conflicts of the Soviet authorities of the Porokhovsky district: the Revolutionary Guard of Petrograd, the Executive Committee of the Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies Soviets, and the Military Commissariat. It draws on materials from the Central State Archive of St. Petersburg and the Central State Archive of Historical and Political Documents associated with Andrey Vasilyevich Khrulev. In 1917-1919, he was Commandant of the Revolutionary Guard, from 1919, Head of the Militia of the Porokhovsky district. The article provides new data on A. V. Khrulev's conscription to the Red Army. Archival materials draw a complex picture of relations between the organs of Soviet government, especially its power structures. The author provides examples for major types of contradictions and conflicts: the Executive Committees of the Soviets and the structures of the RCP (B) clashed on personnel issue; the Central Commandant's Office complained of lack of clarity in upholding departmental interests, incorrect management of cases, etc.; the Military Commissariat fought for delineation of authority with the Revolutionary Guard and was concerned for the status of guardsmen. The author concludes that causes of conflicts were associated with a number of factors: uncertainty of the power structures' statuses, overlapping of activities, lack of management experience that was exacerbated by availability of weapons and tendency to solve problems by force.

Keywords

Archive, historical source, Revolutionary Guards, Petrograd, Porokhovsky district, A. V. Khrulev, Military Commissariat, Soviet Power, biography.

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