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The Kazan Judicial Chamber in the Days of Revolutionary Events of 1917-1918

### Abstract

Drawing on numerous archival sources the article analyses activity of the Kazan Judicial Chamber and the judiciary in the Kazan gubernia in the days of revolutionary events of 1917–1918. The article draws on both unpublished and published sources, and also on the print media of the period. To eliminate the defects of tsarist judiciary after the February Revolution of 1917 the Russian Provisional Government formed a committee for restoration of the basic principles of the Regulations of 1864 under the Ministry of Justice. The committee also reviewed issues related to the activities of the Judiciary Chambers. Overall, the February events brought no significant changes in structure, composition and directions of activities (except in dealing with political cases) of the judicial institutions in Russia, including Kazan gubernia. Judicial and prosecutorial officials of Kazan and those of the Kazan Judicial Chamber and District Court swore a loyalty oath to the Provisional Government. Administration of justice continued as

before. On the account of the First World War, the heads of the Kazan Judicial Chamber had to deal with issues not related to administration of justice, such as conscription or appraisal of material situation of the judicature. Profound changes occurred only after the October Revolution of 1917. Immediately after coming to power, the Bolsheviks appealed to the judicature of Kazan to use their legal experience under new conditions, that is, in their desired drift. This, however, proved counterproductive. Members of the Kazan Judicial Chamber, as well as the majority of judicial and prosecutorial officials of the Kazan gubernia refused to serve the new regime. Moreover, employees of the Kazan Judicial Chamber and District Court actively boycotted the Soviet government resolutions and decisions on establishment of a new judicial system. In the end, the Kazan Judicial Chamber was abolished by the Bolsheviks, the building sealed off by armed soldiers. Capture of Kazan by the divisions of the Czechoslovak Corps resulted in a temporary return of judicial and prosecutorial officials to their office. After the restoration of Soviet power, there was no question of restoration of the Kazan Judicial Chamber.

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### Keywords

Archival documents, sources, February revolution of 1917, Provisional Government, October revolution of 1917, judicial district, Kazan Judicial Chamber, Commissariat of Justice.

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