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## N. A. Miliutin and the St. Petersburg Municipal Act of 1846: A Study in Reform Under Nicholas I

Beginning with Catherine II's Municipal Charter of April 21, 1785, Russia's statesmen made repeated efforts to improve the ineffective and antiquated manner in which urban affairs were administered in the Russian Empire.<sup>1</sup> By the beginning of the 1840s, however, the problem of modernizing the administration of Russia's cities was no nearer to a practical solution than it had been a half-century earlier. The growing number of administrative duties which fell upon the shoulders of city authorities sometimes made urban officeholding nearly a full-time responsibility, and Russia's urban classes were understandably reluctant to serve in elective offices which took so much time away from their personal business affairs and offered so little prospect of reward.

Indeed, more powerful merchants often left the administration of city affairs to less prominent members of the trading community whom they could control through economic pressure. But these lesser merchants also were reluctant to let their business affairs languish while they assumed the role vacated by their economic superiors, particularly since they lacked the education and training needed to carry out the required tasks. Therefore, elected city officials (and there were more than six hundred in St. Petersburg alone in the early 1840s)<sup>2</sup> ceased to perform their assigned tasks, and as a result city government in the empire became increasingly ineffective. The military governor of Kazan complained that that city's gentry were systematically

1. *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii*, 1st ser. (St. Petersburg, 1830), vol. 22, p. 358, no. 16,188 (hereafter cited as *PSZ*). Catherine's charter marked a significant effort to organize city administration along more efficient social and economic lines and to incorporate the new social groups (particularly the gentry), which had emerged in Russia during the eighteenth century, into the structure of city government. The empress proposed to create an all-class municipal governing body with some limited rights of self-government. But the all-class principle which she incorporated into her charter existed only in the imperial statute books; elective city offices in the empire continued to be controlled (though often not filled) by powerful merchants who used them primarily to advance their private economic interests.

2. N. A. Miliutin, "O preobrazovanii gorodovogo obshchestvennago ustroistva," Apr. 7, 1844, TsGIAL, fond 1287, opis' 37, delo no. 738/10.

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barred from urban affairs and that the better-trained merchants constantly evaded service in elective offices. Most public positions were filled by persons who were ignorant, untrained, and often nearly illiterate. The burden of day-to-day administration, therefore, was left to a very few minor bureaucrats—the secretaries of the various agencies of city administration—who often were inefficient and frequently engaged in all sorts of graft and corruption.<sup>3</sup> Reports from the governors of Saratov, Tula, and Poltava indicated that the situation was equally bad in other provincial areas.<sup>4</sup> As the Slavophile I. S. Aksakov later wrote to his superior in the Provisional Section of the Ministry of the Interior's Economic Department, "out of every hundred elected officials, two-thirds are swindlers, and out of every hundred minor bureaucrats, one cannot find even two honest ones."<sup>5</sup>

Confusion in Russia's urban administration was further aggravated by the conflicting nature of the empire's laws. Because individual precedents and customs had assumed the force of law over the years, the 1842 edition of the *Digest of the Laws of the Russian Empire* imposed limitations on the participation of social classes in city affairs which directly contradicted the provisions of Catherine's charter. In particular, it limited the right to hold elective municipal offices and to participate in city elections to "city residents in particular" (merchants, *meshchane*, and artisans), while gentry city residents, who clearly had been included in the municipal corporate body by Catherine's charter, were classified in 1842 as "city residents in general" and thus were excluded from any participation in city administration.<sup>6</sup>

If the situation was bad in the provinces, it was not much better in St. Petersburg, which was one of the few cities in the empire where the new institutions called for by Catherine's charter had been created. Not a single municipal office in Russia's northern capital had retained the function or all-class composition assigned it by the Charter of 1785, and the city's administration continued to be monopolized by the merchants. Furthermore, the City Council's executive branch had taken on so many tasks over the years that its members could not even begin to read all of the papers which required their signatures. The quantity of paperwork had reached staggering proportions indeed. In 1842 alone, the Council received 31,223 separate communications

3. "Vsepoddanneishii raport Kazanskago Voennago Gubernatora o sdellanom im obozrenii vverennoi upravleniiu ego Gubernii," TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 120/1-2.

4. "Vsepoddanneishie raporty Saratovskago, Tul'skago, i Poltavskago Gubernatorov o sdellanom imi obozrenii vverennoi upravleniiu ikh Guberniiakh," TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 120/6-9.

5. I. S. Aksakov to N. A. Miliutin, May 31, 1850, TsGIAL, fond 869, op. 1, d. 818/10.

6. "O preobrazovanii prav gorodskago sostoianii i dokazatel'stvakh onago," *Svod zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii* (St. Petersburg, 1842), vol. 9, nos. 458-60, 513, 516.

and sent out 46,369. Faced with such an avalanche of routine correspondence, its members simply could not provide the supervision and guidance their subordinates needed, and St. Petersburg's city administration had ceased to function effectively.<sup>7</sup> City finances also were in disarray. Budgets were never complete or accurate, and often were not drawn up until long after they were due. Antiquated and inefficient methods of property assessment<sup>8</sup> and tax collection caused municipal income to fall so far short of the amount needed that the state itself was forced to provide subsidies to support the construction and maintenance of the necessary public works and services in its capital.<sup>9</sup>

In an effort to find a solution to these many problems, Nicholas I created the Provisional Section for the Reorganization of Municipal Government and Economy on March 27, 1842.<sup>10</sup> Directorship of this bureau, which a few years later became a permanent part of the Ministry of the Interior's Economic Section, was given to N. A. Miliutin, a young ministry official who had recently come to the attention of his superiors as an unusually efficient administrator.<sup>11</sup> For some years before his appointment Miliutin had undertaken a number of statistical studies in connection with his duties in the Economic Department,<sup>12</sup> and he knew well how difficult it was to obtain reliable statistical data on local conditions. He was fully aware that requests for information from central government agencies to provincial offices often were set aside for months because of local officials' indifference, incompetence, suspicion of the central government, or, in some cases, overwork.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, Miliutin himself had risen above

7. "Sostoianie obshchestvennago upravleniia stolichnago goroda S.-Peterburga (iz revizii, proizvedennoi v 1843 godu Sanktpeterburgskim Grazhdanskim Gubernatorom)," TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738a/196-98.

8. In 1843 Miliutin forced through the first reassessment of real estate in St. Petersburg since 1821. In the process, he uncovered a multitude of abuses, dishonest schemes, and outright tax evasion, with the result that the new assessment of real estate exceeded the figure the St. Petersburg authorities had themselves proposed in late 1842 by more than 61 percent. "Vedomost' o deistviiakh otsenochnykh kommissiakh uchrezhdennykh v Sanktpeterburge," 1843, TsGIAL, fond 869, op. 1, d. 343/34-36.

9. "O merakh k ustroistvu gorodskago khoziaistva v S.-Peterburge," 1853, TsGIAL, fond 869, op. 1, d. 340/95; I. I. Ditiatin, *Stoletie S.-Peterburgskago gorodskago obshchestva* (St. Petersburg, 1885), pp. 110-11.

10. *PSZ* (2nd ser.), vol. 17, no. 15,432.

11. At the time of his appointment as director of the Provisional Section, Miliutin was not yet twenty-four years old. "Delo o sluzhbe N. A. Miliutina," TsGIAL, fond 1162, op. 6, d. 335/49.

12. In addition to his work in the Economic Department, Miliutin had also been a contributor to the *Zhurnal Ministerstva Vnutrennikh Del*, had served as its deputy editor, and, beginning in early 1837, had worked with several other officials and statisticians on *Biblioteka kommercheskikh znaniï*, where his efforts had been concentrated on questions of urban trade and economy.

13. For a number of examples of difficulties in provincial bureaucratic offices see Hans-Joachim Torke, "Das russische Beamtentum in der ersten Hälfte des 19.

the lesser officials in his department precisely because he had succeeded in obtaining reliable statistical data on local conditions where the normal channels of communications between central and provincial agencies had failed to provide it.<sup>14</sup>

Yet even though Miliutin's early experience in the central bureaucracy had shown him that accurate statistical information on local conditions was hard to come by, he was convinced that it must be obtained if administrative reforms were to succeed. Therefore, his first task as director of the Provisional Section was to launch an extensive investigation of urban conditions in the empire.<sup>15</sup> During the next decade he sent some of his most trusted associates in the Provisional Section into Russia's provincial towns and cities to undertake detailed studies of their economic and administrative structure.<sup>16</sup> Such studies ideally would have provided Miliutin's bureau with the information about urban conditions needed to plan an empire-wide reform of municipal administration, but he soon encountered a number of difficulties which caused him to alter his plans. His first problem was to find men who would ask questions that most bureaucrats feared to ask about the situation in Russia's cities, men who would report shortcomings without being concerned about damaging the reputations of senior provincial officials. Some of the men he first selected could not break sufficiently with the formalism usually required of them in the civil service, and the result was that their reports on provincial urban conditions were sometimes so trivial as to be virtually worthless.<sup>17</sup> But even when Miliutin finally found the kind of officials he wanted, the woefully inadequate provincial municipal archives often required his investigators to spend long periods of time away from the capital to obtain the required information. Miliutin himself had participated in a fact-finding survey in Taurida Province during

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Jahrhunderts," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, 13 (1967): 214-15; I. Blinov, *Gubernatory: Istoriko-iuridicheskii ocherk* (St. Petersburg, 1905), pp. 161-63; S. Frederick Starr, *Decentralization and Self-Government in Russia, 1830-1870* (Princeton, 1972), pp. 44-50.

14. In the winter and early spring of 1841, Miliutin had investigated the effectiveness of state relief measures in the famine-stricken areas between St. Petersburg and Moscow, and his report had made a highly favorable impression on Minister of the Interior Count A. G. Stroganov. For a copy of this report see N. A. Miliutin, "Donesenie Gospodinu Upravliaiushchemu Ministerstvomu Vnutrennikh Del ot sluzhashchago v Khoziaistvennom Departamente Tituliarnago Sovetnika Miliutina," April 1841, TsGIAL, fond 869, op. 1, d. 725/88.

15. Miliutin, "O preobrazovanii," d. 738/3.

16. For a revealing commentary on local municipal conditions see especially the following letters: A. K. Giers to N. A. Miliutin, 1842-54, TsGIAL, fond 869, op. 1, d. 880; I. S. Aksakov to N. A. Miliutin, 1849-50, TsGIAL, fond 869, op. 1, d. 818; P. G. Redkin to N. A. Miliutin, 1851-52, TsGIAL, fond 869, op. 1, d. 1044.

17. For some examples of this sort of bureaucratic pedantry that Miliutin confronted in this task see especially TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 39, d. 20-45.

the late 1830s which had taken nearly a year to complete,<sup>18</sup> and the experiences of his investigators throughout the 1840s were similar. He soon realized, therefore, that a number of years would be needed to complete the ambitious task that his Provisional Section had begun.

Unable to await the results of these more detailed studies, Miliutin conducted a brief preliminary investigation of urban conditions himself in late 1842 and early 1843. The results convinced him that his original plan first to draft reform measures for St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, and Riga, and then to work out a reform for the remaining Russian towns and cities, was too ambitious, because the nature of municipal administrations in the empire varied widely. At one end of the spectrum was the city government of St. Petersburg, which, disorganized as it was, came the closest to reflecting Russia's current municipal laws. At the other extreme was the type of administration found in the towns and cities of the Baltic provinces, where powerful families ruled with an authority which, though unchallenged and sanctified by time, had no legal basis.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, because each city's problems seemed too complex for the application of any general administrative rules, and because it would take a number of years to obtain the necessary information about urban conditions, Miliutin decided in mid-1843 to concentrate first on preparing a reform for St. Petersburg.

Miliutin's conviction that reformers should clearly understand the problems which they were trying to solve guided his approach to the St. Petersburg reform. In October 1843 he requested all agencies of the city government to supply him with detailed accounts of their functions as well as statements about what they considered to be the most significant shortcomings in city administration.<sup>20</sup> These reports provided him with a startling picture of city-wide disorder but offered little of the factual information he needed to draft a reform plan. Moreover, Miliutin found it impossible to obtain the necessary information from the city archives himself because of their extreme disorder and confusion.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, in order to understand more precisely the difficulties that the St. Petersburg city government faced, and to identify clearly the shortcomings of earlier reform efforts, he reviewed all previous proposals

18. Between April 1837 and May 1838, Miliutin and the academician and statistician P. I. Keppen surveyed conditions in foreign settlements and state domains properties in Taurida Province. "Delo o sluzhbe N. A. Miliutina," d. 335/47.

19. N. A. Miliutin, "Ob ustroistve gorodskikh obshchestv v Rossii," 1842–46, TsGIAL, fond 869, op. 1, d. 258/81.

20. Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del, Departament Khoziaistvennyi, Vremennoe Otdelenie, stol 1, Oct. 14, 1843, no. 466, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 737/283.

21. "Sostoianie obshchestvennago upravleniia stolichnago goroda S.-Peterburga," d. 738a/211–16.

for municipal reform that were to be found in the central government's archives.<sup>22</sup>

A study of these earlier reform plans provided Miliutin with additional information about the shortcomings of city government in Russia's capital, and also revealed several pitfalls in previous approaches that he now took care to avoid. While earlier plans had stressed that the key to solving the municipal crisis was to create new institutions, Miliutin proposed instead to make the all-class institutions of the 1785 Municipal Charter function more effectively. Like his mentors Minister of State Domains P. D. Kiselev and Minister of the Interior L. A. Perovsky, Miliutin at this point still thought of reform as an administrative matter in which change could be effected by making the machinery of government function more efficiently rather than by formulating and implementing broad principles of change.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, Miliutin opposed earlier reform proposals to give the gentry a dominant position in urban affairs.<sup>24</sup> While he believed that St. Petersburg's powerful merchants ought not to retain their monopoly of city administration, he insisted that the gentry should not be allowed to replace them.

After concluding that previous reform plans had not taken the right approach to eliminating class monopolies, corruption, administrative chaos, and financial instability in St. Petersburg's affairs, Miliutin set about formulating a series of proposals which he hoped would correct these abuses. He realized that it was first necessary to improve the quality of elected city officials. This was a difficult task which ideally required that city residents alter their view that elective service was either an unwanted burden or, at best, a way of advancing an officeholder's personal economic interests. Yet it was difficult to instill a sense of civic responsibility in St. Petersburg's citizenry when they were surrounded by state civil servants who were both corrupt and irresponsible. Miliutin therefore sought to prevent city residents from shirking their civic duties by combining coercion with the prospect of greater rewards. The

22. Miliutin, "O preobrazovanii," d. 738/5. For a discussion of the more important of these earlier proposals see my article, "The Russian State and Its Cities: A Search for Effective Municipal Government, 1786–1842," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 17, no. 4 (December 1969): 531–41.

23. Miliutin, "Ob ustroistve gorodskikh obshchestv," d. 258/77–78. For a brief discussion of the impact of Kiselev's and Perovsky's reform views on Miliutin and some other "enlightened" bureaucrats see my article, "Russia's 'Enlightened' Bureaucrats and the Problem of State Reform, 1848–1856," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, 12, no. 4 (October–December 1971): 413–14.

24. Miliutin, "O preobrazovanii," d. 738/22–25. The state had been moving toward giving the gentry a decisive voice in St. Petersburg city affairs since 1828, and in 1837 a Ministry of the Interior committee had proposed that the gentry be given a dominant position in the city's Assembly of Deputies.

laws which required city residents to participate in city government should be enforced, he argued, but at the same time officeholding should be made more attractive by raising the prestige of elective offices in the capital.<sup>25</sup>

If participation in city government was to be required of St. Petersburg's residents, then it was first necessary to decide which groups must serve in elective offices and what their responsibilities should be. Miliutin insisted that five classes of city residents should be given a voice in St. Petersburg's administration: the *meshchane*, the artisans, the merchants, the gentry, and all other resident property holders who were not subject to the soul tax. Only persons who belonged to one of these five categories, who held taxable capital or real estate valued at not less than three hundred rubles, who were over the age of twenty-five, and who were of "honorable standing in the community" would be eligible to vote in general city elections.<sup>26</sup>

Miliutin also believed it important to reduce the number of elected officials, define administrative duties more precisely, establish clear lines of accountability and responsibility, and eliminate useless paperwork in order to improve administrative efficiency.<sup>27</sup> Like the empire's capital and provincial bureaucracy, city officials were burdened with many administrative tasks that were outdated or served no useful purpose.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, to avoid taking on new responsibilities, elected officials had created new offices whenever possible to deal with any new tasks assigned them by the central government. As a result, the number of elective offices in St. Petersburg had burgeoned to more than six hundred in the half-century since the Charter of 1785, and city officials had failed to establish any educational or proficiency requirements for those who served in them. Thus few elected officials had the requisite knowledge to carry out their official duties, particularly in the offices which dealt with urban finances.<sup>29</sup>

Miliutin's conviction that public officials should serve the state rather than particular interest groups dictated his approach to the problem of restructuring city administration. His first concern was to provide St. Petersburg with a well-ordered, efficient administrative apparatus that would put the city administration and finances on a sound basis. Therefore, while paying lip service to the elective principles of Catherine's charter, he proceeded to

25. Ibid., d. 738/26; N. A. Miliutin, "Glavnye osnovaniia dlia nachertaniia proekta ob obshchestvennom ustroistve stolichnago goroda Sanktpeterburga," Apr. 7, 1844, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 1, d. 738/54.

26. Miliutin, "Glavnye osnovaniia," d. 738/54.

27. Miliutin, "O preobrazovanii," d. 738/28.

28. A striking example of useless reports was the City Council's insistence that reports on prices of all articles for sale in St. Petersburg be submitted each week by some forty-eight different officials. "Sostoianie obshchestvennago upravleniia stolichnago goroda S.-Peterburga," d. 738a/196-201.

29. Miliutin, "O preobrazovanii," d. 738/10.

violate them in cases where he believed it would benefit the state and lead to efficient administrative practice. Most important, he insisted that trained officials from the central bureaucracy must take part in the administration of city affairs in order to provide badly needed expert advice.<sup>80</sup>

After defining the responsibilities of the municipal citizenry more precisely, Miliutin proceeded to deal with the central policy-making and administrative organs of the city government in the same manner. The City Registry (a list of those entitled to vote in general elections, as well as those who simply qualified as members of the municipal corporate body) was to be maintained by an Assembly of Deputies, which would be composed of five members selected from each of the five classes represented in the General City Council.<sup>81</sup> The General City Council itself, which was to be limited to not more than five representatives for every hundred eligible voters, was to be divided by classes into five sections.<sup>82</sup> Each section generally would decide matters concerning its own class but also would be empowered to consider broader questions which could be resolved only by the agreement of several classes of the municipal corporate body.<sup>83</sup>

Miliutin further proposed to create a City Administrative Council to deal directly with municipal finances. The Council would have either one or two elected representatives from each class (depending on which number proved most workable in conducting city business), and only persons whose taxable capital or real-estate holdings for the previous six years had been at least three thousand rubles would be eligible for membership. To discuss budgets, accounts, and other important matters, the Council would meet in general session. On other occasions it would meet as two separate sections; the Civil Affairs section would be responsible for levying taxes, and the Accounting Office would control tax collections, the drafting of city budgets, and all other fiscal matters. At all sessions a representative of the imperial bureaucracy would be present to review city accounts and to ensure that business was conducted according to established legal and administrative procedures.<sup>84</sup>

The City Administrative Council also would have control of the Trusteeship Council, a new body composed of state officials and representatives from the General City Council which Miliutin proposed first to deal with the eco-

30. *Ibid.*, d. 738/29–30.

31. Miliutin, "Glavnye osnovaniia," d. 738/42–43.

32. *Ibid.*, d. 738/39–40. To be eligible to sit on the General City Council a resident would need to have had a taxable capital (or real estate) of an assessed value of 600 rubles for at least three years.

33. *Ibid.*, d. 738/40–41. So that the duties of the General City Council would interfere as little as possible with the private business affairs of its members, up to one-third of its membership was to be permitted to leave the city at any one time, since the Council would not be in continuous session.

34. *Ibid.*, d. 738/44–46.



conomic and social problems of laborers and hired servants in the city and also to settle disputes between them and their employers. Under its supervision, elected representatives of St. Petersburg's wage laborers and servants also would meet in an organization of their own.<sup>35</sup> Provision for St. Petersburg's laborers had not been included in reform proposals advanced earlier in the century, and it was an important innovation that Miliutin proposed at this point. It would be an overstatement, however, to say that he was motivated by any purely humanitarian concerns, for St. Petersburg's lower classes had only recently become a subject of serious concern for Russian state authorities. Investigations begun in 1840 had made it clear that the wretched condition of the capital's urban masses demanded improvement for reasons of public health and for the maintenance of order.<sup>36</sup> Miliutin apparently shared this view, for like many state reformers he feared any threat of a mass movement in either the city or the countryside. It would seem that this outlook led him to conclude that the potentially disruptive social elements in the capital should be more closely controlled, and the causes of their discontent reduced if possible. He therefore proposed to create the Trusteeship Council to serve these ends.

Miliutin sent his reform proposals to a group of the capital's leading merchants for their comments before he prepared a final draft for the State Council's consideration. Their response was far from helpful, however. In a violent criticism of his entire plan, the city merchants rejected any effort to regularize St. Petersburg's administration on the grounds that it would be an unwarranted violation of the established order. Because their replies were to be forwarded to the minister of the interior, they attempted to scuttle Miliutin's proposals by playing on the government's fears of social unrest. The well-being and tranquillity of the urban masses, they insisted, depended not on reform but on preserving the present state of affairs. In an effort apparently calculated to arouse the suspicions of an emperor who had no love for the regime of Louis Philippe in France, the merchants accused Miliutin of using the French Chamber of Deputies as a model for the proposed reform. The entire plan, they argued, was in accordance with neither the principles of autocracy nor

35. *Ibid.*, d. 738/34–35, 37–47, 50–51.

36. According to an investigation carried out at the suggestion of Count Benkendorff of the Third Section in 1840, the common laborers lived under almost intolerable conditions. An extreme (though not isolated) example of crowded housing for these people was an instance in which the investigators found more than fifty transient laborers living in a room that was approximately 6.5 meters square. "Ob ustroistve byta chernorabochikh v S.-Peterburge," *TsGIAL*, fond 869, op. 1, d. 350/15–17. For a recent and very useful study of the workers in St. Petersburg see Reginald E. Zelnik, *Labor and Society in Tsarist Russia: The Factory Workers of St. Petersburg, 1855–1870* (Stanford, 1971).

with the spirit of the people, and it violated the fundamental laws of the empire.<sup>37</sup>

The city merchants' criticisms of Miliutin's proposals embodied a view that had much in common with that of the rank and file in the Russian bureaucracy.<sup>38</sup> Like the mass of lesser state officials, it seems that the merchants opposed any form of change at least in part because they feared that any innovation would burden them with tasks for which they were ill-prepared. Russian city administration was even more tradition-bound than was the central state bureaucracy, and even in the few cities where an effort had been made to establish the new offices called for by Catherine's charter, old functions had in many cases simply been transferred to new institutions.

In retrospect, it would seem that the merchants' opposition to change had a lasting impact on Miliutin's view of how reform work should proceed and further strengthened his belief that reform could only be achieved by a progressive bureaucracy working with the support of the autocrat. He would soon conclude that only competent and farseeing officials, backed by the power of Russia's emperor, could neutralize class opposition to change. This was a view which he would carry to his work on the emancipation of 1861. Rather than seek a social base of support for the state's proposals among Russia's liberal gentry minority during the critical period of the Editing Commission's work, he would continually try to minimize gentry participation in drafting the emancipation in the belief that it was unreasonable to expect those with a material stake in the old order to aid the cause of reform.<sup>39</sup>

Criticism from St. Petersburg's merchants, however, did not hinder Miliutin's progress in drafting a reform act for St. Petersburg. Because consultations with the merchants were not a formal part of the reform process in this case (while consultations with the gentry would be in 1859–60), he could for the moment ignore their opposition to his proposals.<sup>40</sup> With the approval of

37. "Zamechanie Sanktpeterburgskago gorodskago golovy i pervostateinykh kuptsov na proekt komiteta ob obshchestvennom ustroistve stolitsy," TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738/118–22.

38. For a concise and excellent discussion of the attitudes of lesser state bureaucrats toward change see Marc Raeff, "The Russian Autocracy and Its Officials," in *Russian Thought and Politics* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), pp. 77–91. The most comprehensive treatment of bureaucratic attitudes during this period is Torke's work, "Das russische Beamtentum." A great deal of useful material on the provincial bureaucracy is to be found in Starr's *Decentralization and Self-Government in Russia*.

39. For Miliutin's attitudes toward the gentry in the months before the Editing Commissions began to meet see N. A. Miliutin to P. D. Kiselev, Mar. 4, 1858, ORGBL, fond 129, karton 17, papka 55, and N. A. Miliutin to D. A. Miliutin, Apr. 19, 1858, ORGBL, fond 169, k. 69, p. 10.

40. Miliutin would again have to face the merchants' wrath in 1846 when they petitioned against the reform act, though once again he was able, for the most part, to ignore their complaints. "Zapiska o pravakh i ob'iazannostiakh obshchestvy: kuptsov,

Minister of the Interior L. A. Perovsky, he proceeded to draft a reform act for the State Council's consideration. Because he lacked the technical expertise to draft the statute himself, Miliutin assigned A. K. Giers, one of his most trusted subordinates in the Provisional Section, who had been conducting a study of municipal conditions in Iaroslavl Province, to help him prepare the reform proposals.<sup>41</sup> He also had two experts on local affairs from the office of the civil governor of St. Petersburg assigned to the Provisional Section.<sup>42</sup>

Miliutin and his associates began their task in mid-April, and by early June 1844 they had completed a draft of the St. Petersburg reform act for the State Council's consideration.<sup>43</sup> Here Miliutin's views were to be put to their first serious test, for the State Council held a significantly different position on the course the state should follow in municipal reform. Whereas Miliutin had firmly rejected the earlier reform commissions' assertion that Catherine II's all-class principle should be abandoned in city government in favor of control by the gentry city residents, the State Council continued to defend this earlier view. Since he could not argue his case before the State Council in person, Miliutin prepared a lengthy statement in defense of his position on urban reform and sent both documents to the Council in hope of overcoming their opposition to his views.<sup>44</sup> Once again he enumerated the shortcomings of the current St. Petersburg administration and summarized the reform measures that were needed. Orderly and rational administrative procedures, he urged, must be instituted immediately, and the all-class principles should be preserved.<sup>45</sup>

When the State Council took up Miliutin's proposals at its meeting on October 4, 1844, they readily agreed on the need to reform the St. Petersburg civil administration, but they continued to insist that the gentry be given a dominant voice in city affairs. In particular, they sought to establish gentry control in St. Petersburg by proposing that membership in the central organs of city government be determined more by property holdings than by election. All city residents with real estate (not trading capital) assessed at a value of

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meshchan, i remeslennikov v S.-Peterburge," Apr. 25, 1846, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 739/25-35.

41. Ofitsial'noe pis'mo Gospodinu chinovniku osobykh poruchenii Nadvornomu Sovetniku Girsu, MVD-DKh-VO, stol 1, Apr. 8, 1844, no. 116, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738/53.

42. Ofitsial'noe pis'mo Gospodinu S.-Peterburgskomu Grazhdanskomu Gubernatoru, MVD-DKh-VO, stol 1, Apr. 8, 1844, no. 115, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738/151.

43. "Polozhenie ob obshchestvennom ustroistve stolichnago goroda Sanktpeterburga," First draft, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738a/22-130.

44. Ofitsial'noe pis'mo Gospodinu Gosudarstvennomu Sekretariu, MVD-DKh-VO, stol 1, June 7, 1844, no. 28, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738a/1.

45. N. A. Miliutin, "S predstavleniem proekta ob obshchestvennom ustroistve stolichnago goroda Sanktpeterburga," MVD-DKh-VO, stol 1, June 7, 1844, no. 27, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738a/13-21.

more than 15,000 rubles, they insisted, should be members of the General City Council, and the elective principle should pertain only to those whose holdings were smaller. In such cases, each group of residents with a total of 15,000 rubles in trading capital or assessed real-estate values could send one delegate to the General City Council. Therefore, while Miliutin had proposed that St. Petersburg's central governing bodies have representation from all recognized classes of urban residents, the State Council proposed property qualifications that would have eliminated nearly three thousand of the smaller property holders from having any effective voice in directing the city's affairs.<sup>46</sup> Faced with the State Council's demands for fundamental changes in his proposals, Miliutin and his associates in the Provisional Section drafted a second report in defense of their original reform plan. Once again they argued that all five recognized classes in St. Petersburg should take an active part in governing the city, that no class should be given a monopoly over city affairs, and that increased efficiency should be the prime consideration in reorganizing all city offices.<sup>47</sup>

Miliutin was partly successful in convincing the State Council to modify its position. In response to the Provisional Section's second report and the urgings of Minister of the Interior Perovsky, the State Council agreed at its session of May 5, 1845, to reduce the property qualifications for membership in the General City Council and to include in it an equal number of representatives from each class in St. Petersburg.<sup>48</sup> But if a gentry monopoly of city government was not possible, the State Council at least hoped to assure the dominance of that class in municipal affairs. They therefore continued to insist that the Administrative Council, which would control city finances (particularly tax levies and property assessments), have a disproportionately large number of gentry members.<sup>49</sup> Unless all delegates from the city trading classes firmly stood together in Administrative Council deliberations, it could be dominated easily by the gentry under the conditions that the State Council proposed.

The unyielding attitude of the State Council on the issue of the gentry's role in city affairs forced Miliutin to compromise. Although he had managed

46. "Po proektu ob ustroistve S.-Peterburgskoi stolitsy," Gosudarstvennyi Sovet, v Soedinennykh Departamentakh Zakonov i Ekonomii, po Otdeleniiu Zakonov, Oct. 4 and 25, Nov. 21, and Dec. 1, 1844, no. 101. A copy of this report can be found in TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738a/277-86.

47. "Ob'iasnenie k zamechaniiam pred'iavlennym v Obshchem Sobranii Gosudarstvennago Soveta," Apr. 1, 1845, TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738a/288-89.

48. "Vypiska iz Zhurnala Soedinennykh Departamentov Zakonov i Ekonomii 5-go maia 1845-go goda," TsGIAL, fond 1287, op. 37, d. 738a/372-78.

49. *Ibid.*, d. 738a/377-78. Because Miliutin had forced a reassessment of real estate in St. Petersburg in 1843, which had vastly increased the property tax that the gentry were obliged to pay, they were now particularly anxious to control property assessments in the capital.

to reorganize municipal government in St. Petersburg on a more efficient basis and had succeeded in reintroducing the all-class principle in the central organs of city government, he did not succeed fully in thwarting the State Council's plans to give the gentry a dominant voice in the body which controlled the capital's economic affairs. With no further opposition from Miliutin's Provisional Section, the new Act on Civil Administration of St. Petersburg was drafted in its final form and published on February 13, 1846.

In some ways the new law was less than Miliutin had hoped for, but despite its shortcomings, he viewed it as a significant document in the history of Russian municipal legislation and hoped that it could serve as a basis for a general reform of all city administration in the empire.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, to some extent the municipal reform act in St. Petersburg was to serve as the basis for an empire-wide reform in 1870, and the degree of its success and popularity can be judged by the fact that within less than two decades both Moscow and Odessa would petition the central government to extend the 1846 reform act to their city administrations. But the overall importance of Miliutin's work on the reform extended well beyond the limits of the municipal question. Its broader significance was twofold. First, it taught Miliutin and his associates how to plan reforms in the face of opposition from powerful elements in Russian society and how to implement their proposals.<sup>51</sup> Equally important, it was in the Provisional Section (both in the provinces and in St. Petersburg) that Miliutin first began to assemble the group of "enlightened" bureaucrats who became most influential in drafting the emancipation of 1861.

It would be an overstatement, of course, to argue that Miliutin had a preconceived plan for using the Provisional Section as a training ground for emancipation work at this time, for even as late as 1855 he held little hope for such a fundamental reform in the near future.<sup>52</sup> But simply because of his insistence on integrity, intelligence, and efficiency, Miliutin gathered around him in the Provisional Section officials who possessed the qualities he respected

50. N. A. Miliutin to P. I. Keppen, June 14, 1846, *Arkhiv Akademii nauk SSSR*, fond 30, op. 3, d. 178/4-5.

51. On the negative side one must remember that Miliutin's encounter with opposition groups led him to develop a very narrow view of the role which those who had a material stake in the established order should play in reform work. Accordingly, when the Editing Commissions were drafting an emancipation law (1859-60) Miliutin would always view the liberal gentry opposition in the worst possible light and would seek to limit their participation in the reform work to providing needed information about local conditions. The impact of this policy on the views which the liberal gentry held about the state would have far-reaching consequences for gentry-state relations during the rest of the nineteenth century. For a discussion of gentry attitudes on this matter see Terence Emmons, *The Russian Landed Gentry and the Peasant Emancipation of 1861* (Cambridge, 1968), particularly chap. 9.

52. K. D. Kavelin to D. A. Miliutin, Jan. 15, 1882, quoted in "Iz pisem K. D. Kavelina k grafu D. A. Miliutinu, 1882-1884 gg.," *Vestnik Evropy*, 255 (1909): 11-12.

most, and they became part of his intimate circle.<sup>53</sup> These men, of course, were not the only ones in the bureaucracy who favored reform, and the Provisional Section was not the only source in the central government from which the reformers of the 1860s came. But the small circle which Miliutin first formed in the Ministry of the Interior during the early 1840s was soon expanded to include other officials from outside the Ministry, as well as some members of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society and, finally, the salon of Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna.<sup>54</sup> In the Editing Commissions of 1859–60, this circle formed a solid bloc of support which made the emancipation of 1861 a certainty.

53. Evidence of this can be found by examining the membership of the Provisional Section during the 1840s. Both I. S. Aksakov and Iu. F. Samarin were among its investigators of provincial urban conditions, while among those who served with the Provisional Section in St. Petersburg one finds K. K. Grot, A. K. Giers, K. D. Kavelin, D. P. Khrushchov, and A. D. Schumacher, all of whom were prominent in the emancipation work in the late 1850s and early 1860s.

54. For a discussion of the way in which the numbers of "enlightened" bureaucrats grew and the importance of the circle in question see the author's articles "The Circle of Grand Duchess Yelena Pavlovna, 1847–1861," *Slavonic and East European Review*, 48, no. 112 (July 1970): 373–87, and "The Genesis of an 'Enlightened' Bureaucracy in Russia, 1825–1856," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 20, no. 3 (September 1972): 321–30.