Unlikely to be enthusiastic about a policy that would threaten their own social position.
They had suspected the Feb Revolution as a political change but not as a social upheaval.
Quite willing to see the estates of the fallen monarchy used to satisfy the peasants’ craving for land, but they had no intention of losing their own possessions in a general redistribution of property.
This had been the thrust of Lenin’s assertion in the “April Theses” that tsardom had been replaced not by a revolutionary but by a bourgeois regime.
Yet there was a sense in which the land issue was equally difficult for the Bolsheviks.
As a Marxist party, they had dismissed the peasantry as lacking true revolutionary initiative.
By definition the proletarian revolution was an affair of the industrial working class.
However, faced with the continuation of peasant land-seizures throughout Russia, Lenin was quite prepared to make a tactical adjustment.
Appreciating that it was impossible to ignore the disruptive behavior of four-fifths of the Russian population, he asserted that the special circumstances of post-tsarist Russia had produced a situation – which for the last time in their history the peasants were acting as a truly revolutionary force.
Modification of Marxist theory thus allowed Lenin to add Russia peasants to the proletarian cause.
He calculated that since the bulk of Russian soldiers were peasants in uniform, wearied with the war and yearning to be home, they were likely to be attracted to his anti-war policy.
At first Lenin had no land policy to offer.
Given its disregard of the peasant questions, Bolsheviks had not bothered to produce one.
Instead he took over land policy of the Social Revolutionaries, the peasant party, using their slogans and often copying their statements word for word.
“Land to the Peasants” became new Bolshevik catchphrase.
Lenin declared what the peasantry had done was in keeping with “revolutionary legality” and therefore irreversible.
This acceptance of peasant position produced a considerable swing to the Bolsheviks in the countryside.
Had a further effect on splitting the SRs, a significant number of whom began to align themselves with the Bolsheviks.
Known as Left SRs, they sided with the Bolshevik Party on all major issues.

- The impact of the Kornilov affair?
  - Provisional Govt became involved in Kornilov Affair in August.
➢ His sense of urgency derived from his anxiety in regard to two events, scheduled to take place in the autumn, which he calculated would seriously limit the Bolsheviks future freedom of action.
➢ One was the meeting of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets in late October.
➢ The other was the November election for the Constituent Assembly.
➢ His conviction was the Bolsheviks would have to take power before these events occurred.
➢ If the Bolsheviks could topple the Provisional Govt before the congress met they could then present their new authority as a fait accompli which the congress would have no reason to reject.
➢ The Constituent Assembly elections presented a somewhat different problem.
➢ This was body on which all progressives and reformers had set their hopes.
➢ Once it came into being its moral authority would be difficult to challenge.
➢ Lenin told his party that since it would be hard to judge how well the Bolsheviks would fare in the elections, they would have to be in power before the results were announced.
➢ This would provide them with the authority to undermine the results should they prove unfavourable.

- The “Pre-Parliament”
  ➢ At same time as Lenin pressed this policy upon the Bolsheviks, Kerensky, in an effort to make his govt’s position less vulnerable, again reshuffled the cabinet, and announced plans for a “Pre-Parliament”, a body intended to fill the interim before the Constituent Assembly came into being.
  ➢ Lenin condemned Pre-Parliament as a manoeuvre to strengthen the bourgeoisie’s grip on the govt.
  ➢ Acting on his orders, the Bolshevik members of the soviet who were entitled to attend the Pre-Parliament first derided it and then walked out.
  ➢ Despite the power with which Lenin put his arguments to his colleagues, there were Bolsheviks on the Central Committee of the party who doubted the wisdom of striking against the Provisional Govt at this point.
  ➢ In an effort to enforce conformity, Lenin slipped back into Petrograd on 7 Oct.
  ➢ His personal presence stiffened Bolshevik resolve, but did not produce total unity.
  ➢ During the next two weeks he spent exhausting hours at a series of Central Committee meetings trying to persuade the waverers to abandon their caution.