CHAPTER 1

AMERICAN RUSSIAN RELATIONS 1917-1920

The abdication of Czar Nicholas II on March 15, 1917, brought an end to the Czarian regime in Russia. United States' relations with Czarist Russia had been amicable till the middle of the 19th century. By that date, the divergences in ideology between the autocracy of the Czsars and the rapidly developing American democracy had gradually begun to reveal themselves.

Czarist repression of opposition groups and the failure to improve the welfare of the masses had led a large number of Russian people to leave their country and emigrate to America. Those happenings had not led to the strengthening of relations between the two countries. On the contrary, United States' relations with Russia from the latter half of the 19th century till the end of the Czarist regime were coldly formal. The idea of a prospective partnership with Czarist Russia was a barrier to America's complete acceptance of the Allied cause during World War I. This was so even when the Kaiser's declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare at the end of January 1917 had made American participation in the war almost inevitable. It was just at this point that Czar Nicholas II abdicated. The fall of the Czarian regime was not the result of any contrived revolution.
It had collapsed from its own weight rather than through any concerted revolutionary programme.

Provisional Government in Russia under Prince Lvov

After the Czar's abdication, a Provisional Government was set up in Russia headed by Prince George E. Lvov. The Americans regarded the establishment of the new government in the former capitol of the Czars as a triumph of those principles which they had cherished since the beginning of their history. In his war message of April 2, 1917, President Wilson spoke of Russia freed from Czarist autocracy as "a fit partner for a League of Honor."(1) Few persons, however, displayed greater enthusiasm over the happenings in Russia than Ambassador Francis who cabled from the Russian Capital on March 18, 1917,

The six days between last Sunday and this have witnessed the most amazing revolution... the practical realization of that principle of government which we have championed and advocated. I now governmen by the consent of the governed.(2)

Ambassador Francis also requested and obtained immediately permission to recognize the new Russian Government on March 22. The United States thereby became the first country to recognize the Provisional Government in Russia.


(2) 1 For. Rols. 1918, Russia (Washington, GPO, 1931) 5-6.
This recognition had a powerful influence in placing America in a position to enter the war against Germany backed by a practically unanimous public opinion. As Francis commented, "there can be no doubt that there would have been serious opposition to our allying ourselves with an absolute monarchy to make war no matter in what cause."(3)

**United States Relations with the Provisional Government under Prince Lvov**

The foremost concern of the United States in her relations with the new government in Russia was to make certain of its continuance in the war against Germany. The Provisional Government agreed to reorganize the fighting front but soon realized the difficult nature of the task. The Russian people had become war-weary and desired a speedy end of the war that promised nothing but suffering and death. The Petrograd Soviet demanded that "the movement for peace, started by the Russian revolution, be brought to a conclusion by the efforts of the international proletariat,"(4) and it appealed to the "proletarians of the world"(5) to unite for this cause.

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(3) Francis, David R., *Russia from the American Embassy, April 1917 - November 1918* (New York, Scribner's, 1922) 94.


(5) Ibid., 19.
The United States realized that the only way to combat the propaganda of the Petrograd Soviet was to convince the Russian people that the kind of peace they desired could be achieved only by the defeat of Germany. For this purpose it was necessary that they should join in the vigorous prosecution of the war.

The United States also made every endeavour to strengthen the Provisional Government so as to enable her to continue the fight against the Germans. The U.S. Government was prepared to extend definite assistance to the Provisional Government in the form of military equipment and supplies and granted a loan of $100,000,000 bearing a three and half percent interest (6) for the purchase of war materials. Despite of this, the Provisional Government found it a stupendous task to instil enthusiasm among the Russian masses to carry on the war. This state of affairs prompted the United States to send a number of Americans to Russia. This was done in the belief that the presence of Americans would be useful either in giving inspiration and encouragement to the Provisional Government or in helping it to cope with various technical problems thought to be associated with its war effort.

The Root Mission. The first American mission to go to Russia after the establishment of the Provisional Government was the one headed by Elihu Root. It reached Petrograd in

(6) For. Relg. (n.2) 9-10. The dispatch speaks of 3 percent interest, but this seems to be a misprint. See Ibid.,8.
the middle of June, 1917. The purpose of the mission was to demonstrate America's sympathy for the "adherence of Russia to the principle of democracy" and to confer with the Russian government about "the best ways and means to bring about effective co-operation between the two governments in the prosecution of the war."(7)

The presence of the Root Mission in the Russian capital, however, had little effect on the course of events in Russia. The mission moved in a circle in which its members saw only their own kind, exchanging views solely among those who already thought as they did. The burden of the many speeches that Root delivered in Russia was to drive home the thought that the degree of American support for the Provisional Government would depend strictly on the vigour of the latter's war effort.

(7) Ibid., 110-111. In addition to the Root Mission, an Advisory Commission of Railway Exports was sent under the leadership of John F. Stevens to aid the Provisional Government in working out the problems resulting from the breakdown of the country's transportation system. A number of private American organizations likewise sent missions to Russia of which the most prominent was the American Red Cross Mission, initially under Dr. Frank G. Billings. Other members of the Red Cross Mission included William Boyce Thompson and Raymond Robins, cf. Kennan, George F., Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1920, Russia Leaves the War (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1956) 21.
The members of the mission had no contact with the Russian masses, with the workers and soldiers. Hence, they remained completely unaware of the position and sentiment of the rank and file. They failed to realize that the Russian middle class which made up the Provisional Government, was poorly organized and comparatively insignificant in numbers. The large masses of dissatisfied peasantry and the growing and well organized proletariat found their spokesmen in the Soviets rather than in the government.

Speaking about the Root mission Raymond Robins said "These men had an indoor mind which shut itself off from the contact of the masses and based its conclusions on the attitude of 7 percent of the population, to the exclusion of the other 93 percent". (8) Root, however, believed that his mission was accomplishing its purpose. When he left Russia in early July, 1917, he was apparently convinced that both the army and the government had been strengthened in morale and effectiveness.

Troubles, however, flared up in Russia soon after Root left the country. A demonstration of soldiers and armed workingmen in Petrograd clashed with the Cossack troops. The resistance of the ultra-radical sailors from Kronstadt precipitated a street battle in which several hundred persons

lost their lives. The government’s forces did succeed in putting down this incipient revolt, but its prestige was badly shaken. (9)

Provisional Government under Kerensky

The Kronstadt rising caused a shift in the Council of Ministers in which Prince Lvov was replaced by the Minister of War, Alexander Kerensky. The change in government marked a moderate swing to the left since the new Premier was a member of a radical agrarian party. The reorganized Provisional Government constituted, in the eyes of foreign observers, a final answer to the menace of Bolshevism. But this view was not shared by Lansing who was very skeptical of Kerensky because the latter compromised too much “with the radical element of the Revolution.” (10)

In the meantime, the Bolshevists’ power in Petrograd was growing day by day. Coupled with the long-standing desire for peace and the absence of any effective opposition, the growing unrest over the land question steadily provided the Bolshevists with raw material for a new revolt. On October 8, 1917, the Provisional Government issued a statement

(9) Francis (n. 3) 136.

that sounded much like a cry of despair,

Great confusion has once more been brought into the life of our country... waves of anarchy are sweeping over the land, the pressure of the foreign enemy is increasing, counter-revolutionary elements are raising their heads, hoping that the prolonged governmental crisis, coupled with the weariness which has seized the entire nation, will enable them to murder the freedom of the Russian people. (11)

This state of affairs in Russia, however, in no way disheartened Ambassador Francis. He was certain that the revulsion of the Russian people against the Bolsheviks would soon assert itself. Events, however, proved otherwise and on November 1, 1917, Kerensky admitted that Russia was "worn out" and confessed that the future was unpredictable. (12)

The Bolsheviks won a majority in the Petrograd Soviet two days later. On November 3, 1917, the State Department issued a statement which did not seem to agree with the Russian situation prevailing at that time. The statement read,

There has been absolutely nothing in the dispatches received... from Russia nor in information derived from any other sources whatever, to justify the impression... that Russia is out of the actual conflict... Our own advice show that the Provisional Government in Petrograd is attacking with great energy the problems confronting it... Premier Kerensky and his Government, far from yielding to discouragement, are still animated by a strong determination to organize all Russia's resources in a wholehearted resistance and carry the war to a victorious conclusion. At the same time this Government, like those of the Allies, is rendering all possible assistance. (13)

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(11) Cumming and Pettit (n. 4) 36-37.
(12) Ibid., 40.
The Provisional Government was fast losing its grips and the final crisis was approaching. Though partly forewarned of the approaching crisis, Secretary Lansing was startled when he read the dispatch of November 7, 1917, from Ambassador Francis which stated in part, "Bolsheviks appear to have control of everything here. Cannot learn whereabouts of any Minister . . . ." (14)

**Assumption of Power by the Bolsheviks**

Within a week after the Petrograd Soviet had overthrown the Provisional Government, Lenin and the Bolsheviks seized power. This event provoked horror and surprise everywhere. (15) The political, economic and social tenets of Bolshevism, with its avowed goal of universalism through world revolution appeared to threaten the security of every other nation. In the United States, public opinion was thoroughly bewildered. Here and there was a note of fear in editorial comments, and the *New York Times* concluded that "the Bolsheviks have put Russia outside the pale of civilized, recognizable government". (16) There still, however, persisted in Washington a

(14) *P.R. Rel. (n. 2) 224.*

(15) Charles R. Crano, who was a member of the Root Mission to Russia, was of the opinion that the situation in Russia after the Bolsheviks came into power was not one of revolution, but one of conquest. Cf. Charles R. Crano to President Coolidge, October 26, 1922, Crano Iss.

hope that when the excited Russian masses calmed down, they would repudiate their new rulers. This belief prompted the United States to keep silent when on November 21, 1917, Leon Trotsky, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, addressed a communication to the diplomatic corps in Petrograd announcing the formation of the Soviet Government and requesting its recognition. (17)

On November 8, 1917, the Congress of Soviets passed a decree of peace proposing "to all belligerent peoples and their Governments the immediate opening of negotiations for a just and democratic peace", by which they meant "an immediate peace without annexations (i.e. without seizure of foreign territory, without the forcible incorporation of foreign nationalities), and without indemnities." (18)

Bolsheviks Make Peace with the Germans

When the Allies refused to pay any heed to the proposal for peace without annexations or indemnities, the Soviets signed an armistice with Germany on December 15, 1917, preparatory to a separate peace. This created the danger that Germany, having come to terms with Russia, would concentrate all its forces on the western front. Furthermore, it was

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(18) Ibid., I.
foresaw that the former would be able to make use of the latter's vast resources for the German war machine thereby weakening the position of the allies.

The peace negotiations which the Soviet Government carried on with the Germans at Brest-Litovsk were interrupted for ten days "to give the last opportunity to the Allied countries to take part in further negotiations". (19) Trotsky made it clear,

If the Allied Governments in the blind stubbornness which characterizes decadent and perishing classes, once more refuse to participate in the negotiations, then the working class will be confronted with the iron necessity of taking the power out of the hands of those who cannot or will not give the people peace. (20)

In the meantime, Trotsky had also published the texts of secret treaties entered into by the Czar's Government with the Allies in which the latter had agreed to divide the spoils of war. Trotsky's disclosures to the whole world of the "documentary truth about the plans forged in secret by the financiers and industrialists together with their parliamentary and diplomatic agents" (21) led to the cry that imperialist ambition alone accounted for the prolongation of hostilities.

(19) Cumming and Pettit (n. 4) 61.
(20) Ibid., 64.
(21) Dogras (n. 17) 8.
To counteract the effect that such disclosure was likely to have upon the morale of the people, President Wilson thought it necessary to state the anti-imperialistic war aims and democratic peace requisites of America. On January 8, 1918, Wilson presented to the American Congress his Fourteen Points in which he pleaded for a just and lasting peace. He referred to Russia specifically in Point VI stating that she be given "an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy. . . . The treatment accorded to Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will . . . and unselfish sympathy." (22)

Wilson's words unfortunately did not have any effect upon the Soviet leaders who continued their negotiations with Germany. The Germans, however, insisted on negotiating a separate peace with the inhabitants of "German-occupied Russian territories." When Trotsky "objected vigorously" to this demand, the Germans refused to "consider the Soviet proposals." At that time there was present at Brest a delegation from the Ukrainian Rada, "empowered to negotiate independently with the Central Powers on behalf of the Ukraine." The Germans turned to

(22) 1 For. Rols. 1918, Supplement I, The World War (Washington, GPO, 1933) 15.
"separate negotiations" with them "as a means of bringing pressure on the Bolsheviks." The Germans finally concluded a separate treaty with the Ukrainian Rada on February 8, 1918. Trotsky reacted by announcing that "the Soviet Government would neither continue the war nor agree to a peace on German terms." (23) The Germans retorted by renewing military operations all along the eastern front. The Soviet leaders were ultimately compelled to submit to the German terms in view of the demobilization of the Russian army and the need for internal consolidation. On March 3, 1918, they signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk by which Russia obtained "a peace dictated at the point of sword." (24) The treaty had still, however, to be ratified, and the Soviets at that time apprehended a Japanese invasion of Siberia in an attempt to obtain control of Vladivostok and the Eastern-Siberian Railway. (25)

The United States Government had "no occasion to react officially to the unfolding of events at Brest-Litovsk."

Since the United States was at war with "one of the parties to the negotiations," and since the other party happened to be "a regime" which it "had not recognized," it was not "under any obligation to concede any international validity" to the actions taken by them. (26)

(23) Kennan (n. 7) 356-368.
(24) Dogras (n.17) 48.
(25) Cumming and Pettit (n. 4) 81.
(26) Kennan (n. 7) 372.
After the signing of the Brest Treaty, however, some Americans, particularly Colonel Raymond Robins, head of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia, sought to persuade the United States Government to extend aid to the Bolsheviks with a view to preventing the ratification of the Treaty. Robins met Trotsky two days after the signing of the Treaty and asked him if he wanted "to prevent the Brest Peace from being ratified?" Trotsky told Robins that Lenin apprehended the renewal of German advance if the Brest peace was not ratified. But if he could get "economic cooperation and military support from the Allies," he would "refuse the Brest peace, retire, if necessary, from both Petrograd and Moscow ... re-establish the front in the Urals, and fight with allied support against the Germans." (27) Later, on Robins' insistence, Trotsky prepared a written statement which read, in part, as follows:

In case (a) the All-Russian congress of the Soviets will refuse to ratify the peace treaty with Germany, or (b) if the German government, breaking the peace treaty, will renew the offensive in order to continue its robbers' raid, or (c) if the Soviet government will be forced by the actions of Germany to renounce the peace treaty—before or after its ratification—and to renew hostilities—

In all these cases it is very important for the military and political plans of the Soviet power for replies to be given to the following questions:

1. Can the Soviet government rely on the support of the United States of North America, Great Britain, and Franco in its struggle against Germany?

2. What kind of support could be furnished in the nearest future, and on what conditions ...?

3. What kind of support would be furnished particularly and especially by the United States?

Should Japan ... attempt to seize Vladivostok and

Robins considered this statement to be significant, and upon his urging, Consul Roger C. Tredwell asked Captain Eugenio Prince of the American Military Mission "to despatch the message directly to the War Department in Washington, for transmission to the State Department." The message was, however, held for clearance with Colonel James A. Ruggles, the American Military Attaché, who for some reason decided "not to despatch it at that time." (29) Ruggles not only held up the despatch of the message, but also he did not inform Tredwell or Robins anything about it. Robins thus remained under the impression that the United States Government had before it Trotsky's questions, and hoped that he could receive an encouraging answer to those questions prior to the opening of the Congress of Soviets which had been postponed to meet on March 14 instead of March 12 as originally scheduled.

Wilson's Message to the Congress of Soviets.

Wilson was quite unaware of the questions which Trotsky had addressed to the United States Government. He was, however,

(28) Gunnings and Pettit (n. 4) 81-82.

(29) Koonen (n. 7) 499-500. The message containing Trotsky's questions did not reach Washington until March 22, 1918, by which time the Brest-Litovsk Treaty had been ratified. Cf. Ibid.
urged by some of his close associates to send a reassuring message to Russia on the eve of the meeting of the Congress of Soviets "in the hope that it might strengthen the hands of the opponents of ratification of the Brest treaty." (30) Wilson, accordingly, sent a message on March 11, 1918. He stated in part,

May I not take advantage of the meeting of the Congress of the Soviets to express the sincere sympathy which the people of the United States feel for the Russian people . . . Although the Government of the United States is unhappily not now in a position to render the direct and effective aid it would wish to render, I beg to assure the people of Russia through the Congress that it will avail itself of every opportunity to secure for Russia once more complete sovereignty and independence in her own affairs . . . The whole heart of the people of the United States is with the people of Russia in the attempt to free themselves forever from autocratic government and become the masters of their own life. (31)

Reaction of the Soviet Congress to Wilson's Message.

Wilson's message, however, evoked in the Soviet leaders "the desire to demonstrate that their ideological convictions were not so frivolous that they could be lulled into abandoning them by honeyed phrases from the other camp." (32)

(30) Ibid., 509. Kennan, however, points out that the aim of the message as it appeared to him from a letter addressed to Wilson by Colonel Edward M. House was to influence the French, British and Japanese with a view to restraining them from acquiescing to a proposed intervention in Siberia to be undertaken by Japan, as a mandatory for the Allies, to occupy the entire Trans-Siberian Railway, and that the hope of affecting ratification of the Treaty, if it was present at all, was quite secondary. Cf. Ibid., 373.

(31) For. Rela. (n. 2) 395.

(32) Kennan (n. 7) 512.
resolution which was described by Gregory Zinoviev, President of
the Petrograd Soviet, as "a slap in the face" of the Presi-
dent of the United States. (33)

In the resolution the Congress expressed its gratitude to
the American people, above all to the working and exploited
classes of the United States, for the message of sympathy ad-
dressed by President Wilson through the Congress of Soviets to
the Russian people, and voiced the hope that "the happy time
is not far distant when the labouring masses of all bourgeois
countries will throw off the yoke of capitalism and establish
a socialist state of society, which alone is capable of securing
just and lasting peace, as well as the culture and well-being
of all who labour." (34) "This reaction, ignoring the President
and the United States Government, addressing itself to the peo-
ples of the warring countries, promising -- and welcoming --
an early overthrow of what, by implication, included the Gov-
ernment of the United States, was meant to be offensive." (35)

The New York Times expressed its dismay at the resolution
of the Congress of Soviets and despair of any hope of agree-ment
with the Bolsheviks. It concluded that "no discussion is possi-
ble" with them "because all their measures are taken with the
belief that the universal revolution must come first." (36)

Ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. The Congress of
Soviets was convened on March 14, and during its

(33) For. Rela. (n. 2) 486.
(34) Degras (n. 17) 63.
(35) Koonan (n. 7) 513.
(36) New York Times (March 17, 1918).
opening session, Lenin delivered a long report in which he stated his arguments for ratification. The next evening (about an hour before midnight) Lenin inquired from Colonel Robins what he had heard from his government? The latter replied "Nothing". Having received a similar reply in regard to the possible news from the British Government, Lenin said, "I am now going to the platform and peace will be ratified." (37) Thus, the Brest Treaty was ratified on March 16, 1918; but Lenin made it clear that they (Bolsheviks) were compelled to adopt this course because they had "no army and because of the extreme exhaustion of the people who received no support from the bourgeoisie and bourgeois intelligentsia, these latter indeed exploited the situation for rapacious class purposes." (38)

The United States, however, completely ignored the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. The official attitude in this respect was set forth by Secretary of State Lansing who stated,

since the so-called Soviet Government upon which Germany has just forced . . . peace was never recognized by the Government of the United States as even a government de facto . . . none of its acts therefore, need be officially recognized by this government. (39)

(37) S. Subcom. on Judiciary, Hearings. (n. 27) 807.
(38) Degras (n. 17) 64.
(39) For. Rela. (n. 2) 397.
Intervention

Until the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the Allies and the United States pursued two contradictory policies in respect of Russia: on the hand, to co-operate with the Soviets for the purpose of stiffening resistance to the Germans; on the other hand, to aid counter-revolutionary groups in Russia "to overthrow the Bolsheviks and re-establish the Eastern Front." (40) The latter policy was the outcome of a disbelief on the part of a number of Allied statesmen (41) in the viability of the Soviet regime. They did not wish it to live, and put their faith in an anti-Soviet Russian Government. As early as January 8, 1918, the French Ambassador in Washington, Jussorand, urged American assent to the "desirability of some joint action" in Russia. (42)

After the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the possibility of co-operation with the Soviets receded, and it was urged with increasing insistence that only military intervention could lead to the consolidation of

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(42) 2 For. Rpts. (n. 2) 21.
the Eastern Front. This argument gained ground when a large number of German soldiers were withdrawn from the Russian Front for being transferred to the Eastern Front. As a matter of fact, the Allies faced at that time what appeared to be a "desperate military situation." (43) Despite this fact, there existed among the Allies two different views in respect of intervention in Russia. The "little interventionists" canvassed intervention in Russia as a strictly anti-German move. (44) They favoured assistance to the Red forces, the landing of small Allied units in Russia with the consent of the Soviet Government, and the evacuation of military supplies from areas exposed to German aggression. Accordingly, a small Allied contingent (45) landed at Humansk in North Russia in March 1918, with the tacit assent of the Soviet Government which did not oppose this move as it "strongly doubted

(43) Unterberger (n. 40) 21.


(45) "The United States contributed some 5,000 troops to the [North Russian] intervention, upon assurance that they were to guard military stores and to render such aid as was acceptable to the Russian people without interference in their internal affairs." The other Allied troops, however, "co-operated with the counter-revolutionaries (Whites) against the Bolsheviks (Reds)." This led to "clashes with the Reds" in which a number of Americans lost their lives. Finally, "the American troops were withdrawn in July 1919, after having suffered more than 500 casualties" Cf. Bailey, Thomas A., American Fears Russia, Russian America Relations from Early Times to our Day (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1950) 242.
the durability of the Front arrangements at that
time. (43) The action in the North of Russia, however,
soon changed its character; from a friendly interven-
tion it developed into hostile interference. This
prompted the cause of the "big interventionists" (47)
who looked upon Bolsheviks as a menace, wished to over-
throw it and set up an Eastern Front against Germany.
As such, they favoured a full fledged military inter-
vention, in league with the anti-Bolshevik clique, and
directed both against the Germans and the Soviets.

The United States was averse to the idea of
large-scale intervention in Russia. She was even opposed
to the idea of Japan undertaking operations in Siberia
"as a mandatory of the Allies." (49) Despite the opposi-
tion of the American Government, however, Japanese troops
disembarked at Vladivostok on April 6, 1918, (49) ostensibly
to protect Japanese life and property, after three Japanese
nationals had been murdered in the city on the
previous day. The British had also landed armed sailors (50)

(43) Kamen, George P., Soviet-American
Relations, 1917-1920, The Decision to Intervene
The durability of the Front arrangements was doubted
by the Soviet Government till official German-Soviet
contacts were resumed in May 1918. Cf. Ibid.

(47) Fischer (n. 44) 100.

(48) Unterberger (n. 49) 25.

(49) NEW YORK TIMES (April 6, 1918).

(50) Ibid (April 7, 1918).
apparently "to protect the British Consulate, but in reality to ensure that any move made would be an Allied one, not an independent Japanese venture." The British Government urged the United States "to land troops and thus insure unity of action." The latter was, however, "unmoved by this appeal." (61) Despite of its mounting hostility toward the Bolsheviks, the United States Government looked with disfavor on all projects of intervention, since Wilson felt that all such plans would be "contrary to America's democratic war aims," and would "fatally compromise the American moral position." (52) Furthermore, Wilson believed that "intervention . . . would serve no serious military purpose and would antagonize the Russian people." (53)

The reluctance of the United States to intervene, however, met with increasing counter-pressure on the part of the Allies who sought to bring about a change in her attitude by seeking to convince her that the presence of American troops in Siberia was likely to moderate Japanese ambition in that direction. Furthermore, the Allies urged that the threatening activities of the Austro-Germans was prisoners in Siberia who, it was feared.

(61) Untorborger (n. 40) 39.
(52) Ibid., 33.
(53) Romanoff (n. 43) 129.
woro being armed by the Bolsheviks, also necessitated intervention. (54)

Allied pleas for action in Siberia continued despite the opposition of the American Government to take part in it. By the end of May 1918, however, there was a growing unanimity among American representatives in the Far East concerning intervention in Siberia. Paul S. Reinsch, American Minister at Peking, suspected that Japan was prepared "to act independently in the Far East," and fearing that "delay" might prove to be "dangerous," he urged immediate Allied action. A similar view was shared by John F. Stevens, Chairman of the Advisory Commission of Railway Experts to Russia, who called for "quick" and "effective" Allied action in Siberia. (55)

American Participation in the Intervention

In the face of persistent pressure of the Allies, the alleged menace of the Austro-German prisoners in

(54) To ascertain the facts regarding the arming of German war prisoners by the Bolsheviks, a special mission of investigation was sent under the leadership of Captain U.B. Webster of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia, and Captain U.L. Hicks, a member of the British Mission in Moscow. They reported that the activities of the war prisoners did not endanger Allied interests. Major Walter S. Drysdale, the American Military Attache in Peking, who was also sent on a similar mission of investigation reported that the prisoners of war were armed in certain localities only. Cf. Fischor (n. 44) 103-104.

(55) Unterborger (n. 49) 49.
Siberia and the apprehension of independent Japanese action, American opposition to intervention gradually weakened. By June 1918, "a new situation arose in Siberia which threatened to draw Wilson into action." The "new situation" occurred because of the threat to some 70,000 Czechoslovak troops on the Russian soil who were returning by way of Vladivostok to fight with the Allies on the Western Front. The lives of these soldiers were endangered by attacks from released German and Austrian war prisoners whom the Bolsheviks had armed. (56) The necessity for immediate action to rescue the Czechs furnished President Wilson with a moral plea for despatching American troops to Siberia.

(56) In March 1918, a force of some 70,000 Czechoslovaks, former prisoners of war and deserters from the Austrian Army, had started to proceed across Siberia with the consent of the Bolshevik Government, expecting to depart from Russia via Vladivostok for service on the Western Front. However, after the Japanese landing in Vladivostok in April 1918, the attitude of the Soviet military authorities changed. They looked upon the Japanese move as the precursor of some full-fledged intervention, and became suspicious of the eastward movement of the Czechs. Further, as a result of misunderstandings between some of the Czech units and local Soviets, the Central Soviet Government ordered the disarming of the Czech troops strung out along the Trans-Siberian Railway route. Soviet military power, however, was too weak to accomplish this task. Hostilities between the Czechs and the Bolsheviks broke out by the end of May 1918, in Central and Western Siberia. As a result, the Czechs in Vladivostok feared for the safe exit of their brothers from the interior, and determined to rescue them from the armed German war prisoners and the Bolsheviks. At the same time, an appeal was made to the Allies for a supporting force to aid them. Cf. Ibid., 54-57.
The danger confronting the Czechs was intimated to the United States Government in a despatch from the Supreme War Council on July 2, 1918. It appealed for immediate action to save the "gallant allies" before they were overwhelmed. It further pointed out that "Allied intervention" was essential "in order to win the war." (57)

In a memorandum of July 4, 1918, Secretary of State Robert Lansing stated that the condition of the Czechs in Siberia had introduced "a sentimental element into the question of our duty. There was now an American responsibility to aid them." It was further pointed out that "furnishing protection and assistance to the Czechoslovaks" was "a very different thing from sending an army into Siberia to restore order or to save the Russians from themselves."

The memorandum also stated United States' intention not to interfere in the "internal affairs of Russia." (58)

Wilson concurred with Lansing's views and decided to despatch an expedition to Siberia "provided the Japanese Government [agreed] to co-operate." (59) Wilson's decision was made known to the Allied envoys

(57) 2 For. Rel. (n. 2) 241-243.
(58) Kennan (n. 46) 395.
(59) 2 For. Rel. (n. 2) 262.
in Washington in an aide-memoire on July 17, 1918.
While officially disclaiming any intention of interfering in Russian affairs, the American Government agreed to limited action in order to support the Czechoslovaks and assist the Russian people in establishing self-government. As Wilson stated, "Military action is admissible in Russia . . . only to help the Czechoslovaks consolidate their forces . . . and to steady any efforts at self-government . . . But . . . the United States Government can go no further . . . It is not in a position . . . to take part in organized intervention . . . or interference of any kind with the political sovereignty of Russia . . . or any impairment of her territorial integrity." (60)

Wilson's decision to intervene in Siberia was, however, made "after it became evident that intervention would take place despite his opposition and probably with Japan in charge of the expedition." (61) His decision was "not determined by any interest in the revolution or in the Moscow regime," (62) He was from the beginning suspicious of Japanese intentions in Siberia and feared

(60) Ibid., 288-290. The other officially adduced reason for military action was the protection of war supplies in Russian ports. Cf. Ibid., 328.

(61) Unterberger (n. 40) 88.

(62) Fischer (n. 44) 132.
unilateral action by her. (63) Wilson was aware of the willingness of Britain and France to sanction Japan's lone entry into Siberia and he apprehended that it might lead to the political and military domination of Eastern Siberia by the Japanese. As a matter of fact, the necessity to watch and restrain the Japanese was, according to some commentators, the basic, though unpublicized reason for the United States' participation in the intervention. (64) In the face of compelling circumstances, Wilson not merely agreed to intervention, but also took the lead in inviting the Japanese to a joint intervention in Siberia.

The reaction of the American Press on the Russian problem "during the last year of the war" was, in general,

(63) When the British Government, in January 1918, proposed that Japan be invited to occupy the Trans-Siberian Railway "as a mandatory of the Allies," Wilson strongly disapproved of the idea as he feared that it would lead to the eventual "control of the Maritime Provinces" by Japan. The Department of State later expressed the view that if the necessity for intervention arose, it was in favour of "joint military action" rather than unilateral action by any one Power. Cf. Unterberger (n. 40) 25-26.

"hesitant and troubled." The U.S. government found in the American press - for the most part - "only the reflections of its own dilemmas and hesitations." The press, like the government, was concerned "primarily with the winning of the war and only secondarily with Russia for its own sake -- and was unwilling to make the problem of policy toward Russia . . . a major issue of difference with the government." (65)

The American Press, however, carried the views of individuals "who enjoyed some special knowledge of Russian conditions," and these constituted "important contribution to thinking about Russian matters." One such individual was George Kennan (66) an expert on Russian affairs. Writing in the Outlook, he advocated "a cautious intervention in Siberia" for the purpose of saving that area from the Bolsheviks, especially since "the best part of European Russia was already lost." He believed that "with the aid of the Japanese and the . . . patriotic Russians" the Americans could "hold Eastern Siberia." (67) The New York Times (68)

(65) Kennan (n. 46) 332-334.

(66) George Kennan (1848-1924) was a first cousin of George F. Kennan, the former American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, and the author of the two volumes on Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1920.

(67) Outlook, cited in Kennan (n. 46) 358.

correspondent in Russia, Harold Williams, held a similar view which was also shared by ex-President William Howard Taft. The latter, in an article in the Philadelphia Ledger in June 1918, called for "immediate action in Russia." (69)

There were, however, other individuals who doubted the advisability of intervention. The Moscow correspondent of the Chicago Daily News (70) Louis Edgar Brown, held this view; so also did Samuel N. Harper of the Chicago University. The latter writing anonymously in the Christian Science Monitor "pleaded" for "economic aid and moral support to the Russian people" rather than intervention. (71) Other periodicals like the Nation (72) and the New Republic also expressed opinions opposing military intervention in Russia. The latter particularly, advocated Wilson's policy of "no interference in Russia's internal affairs." (73)

The opinions expressed through the American Press, however, exercised little influence on the U.S. Government's policy toward Russia, and once the decision to intervene was taken, things began to move quickly leading to the landing of Japanese and American troops in Vladivostok on August 3, 1918. They were preceded by

(69) Philadelphia Ledger, cited in Ibid., 385.
(71) Christian Science Monitor, cited in Ibid.
(72) Nation, cited in Ibid.
(73) New Republic, cited in Ibid.
the British and the French. The Japanese and the Americans were supposed to have detachments of more or less equal size. By the end of 1918, however, Japanese forces had increased considerably and were taking part in the civil strife in Siberia. (74) This brought the Japanese commander into conflict with Major-General William S. Graves, commander of the American expeditionary forces who, in execution of his instructions, refused to use the American troops in support of one or another anti-Bolshevist faction. (75) Graves clearly stated: "The United States is not at war with the

(74) Wilson had originally suggested the despatch of 7,000 Americans and 7,000 Japanese troops to Vladivostok. The Japanese Government, however, refused to agree to this arrangement. It stated that it would send a division -- normally about 12,000 men -- and would reserve the right to send more, if required. As a matter of fact, the Japanese turned out to have in Siberia, some 72,000 troops by the end of 1918, which was ten times the number originally envisaged by Wilson. Cf. Kennan (n. 46) 411-415.

(75) For an account of the situation in which American forces found themselves in Siberia and the problems encountered by General Graves in his dealings with the Japanese, see Graves, William S., America's Siberian Adventure, 1918-1920 (New York, Jonathan Cape, 1931). Graves mentions in his book that Consul-General Harris from Irkutsk sent a telegram to Colonel George H. Emerson at Omsk on July 2, 1918, stating that "he received confirmation from the Peking Legation of the intention of the United States to engage in military intervention, which had for its object hostile action against the Soviets."* This statement was later denied by Consul-General Harris in a memorandum to the Department of State. **

* Graves, America's Siberian Adventure, 70-71.

** Memorandum from Harris to Stimson, April 26, 1934, NA, RG 59, file E/B 861.00/11557.
Bolsheviks... and the United States army is not here to fight Russia or any group or any faction in Russia." (76)

Along with the Japanese, the British and the French attempted to use the intervention for their own purposes. The British and the French were primarily interested in setting up an Eastern Front and they supported the anti-Bolshevik counter-revolutionary groups in Russia and Siberia in the hope of securing their cooperation against Germany. After the signing of the Armistice between the Allies and Germany on November 11, 1918, the need for forming an Eastern Front no longer existed. Yet the British and the French were reluctant to forsake the Russian counter-revolutionary groups. Their hatred of the principles of Bolshevism together with their belief that the Bolshevik Government was a German inspired one, induced them to continue their support of the anti-Bolsheviks even after the war was over.

The United States also retained its forces in Siberia after the signing of the Armistice. But the reason was different. It was to prevent Japan from extending her control over North Manchuria and Eastern Siberia which, in all probability, would have fallen under the clutches of the Japanese in the event of the withdrawal of the American troops.

(76) Unterberger (n. 40) 90.
The Soviet Government was very bitter about United States' participation in the intervention which it considered to be inconsistent with the message contained in the sixth of Wilson's Fourteen Points as well as his message to the Congress of Soviets. In spite of this, however, the Soviet Government, soon after the Armistice, made a plea through Maxim Litvinov to Wilson for the participation of Soviet representatives in any discussion of the Russian question at the Paris Peace Conference. The plea was addressed to Wilson because, as Litvinov stated, "most points of your peace program are included in the more extensive aspirations of the Russian workers and peasants." (77)

**Wilson's Proposal**

President Wilson responded to the Soviet plea immediately, and after discussion with the other Powers at the Paris Peace Conference, he presented a proposal on January 22, 1919. (78) It invited every organized group that exercised "political authority" or "military control" anywhere in Siberia, or within the boundaries of European Russia to send representatives to the Prince's Islands, Sea of Marmora, for a free and frank exchange of views so that the desires of all groups of the Russian people might be made known and so that an agreement might be reached by means of which Russia could define its own intentions and establish a basis

(77) Degras (n. 17) 130.

of cooperation with other nations. (79)

The Soviet Government at once accepted the invitation, although it had received no official notification, and expressed its willingness "to make weighty concessions" (80) for the purpose of securing peace. But the refusal of other governments on Russian territory to deal with the Bolsheviks whom they regarded as traitors, murderers and criminal usurpers, defeated the plan of a meeting. (81)

Wilson did not, however, give up all hopes of bringing about a settlement of the Russian problem. In an endeavour to obtain more information he dispatched William C. Bullitt, a member of the staff of the American delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, accompanied by Captain Walter Pettit of Military Intelligence and Lincoln Steffens, a well-known journalist, on a mission to Russia. The manner in which Moscow exercised its control over the areas under its occupation convinced Bullitt that "no government save a socialist government can be set up in Russia ... except by foreign bayonets, and any government so set up will fall the

(79) Cumming and Pettit (n. 4) 297-298.

(80) Degras (n. 17) 138. The Soviet Government expressed its desire to end hostilities and begin negotiations at once. Further, it offered to make territorial and economic concessions in return for peace. It also evinced a readiness to make certain concessions in regard to Russia's financial obligations. Cf. Ibid.

(81) Cumming and Pettit (n. 4) 305-306.
minute such support is withdrawn . . ." (82)

**Soviet Proposals for Peace**

On March 14, 1919 the Soviet authorities handed to Bullitt proposals for peace for submission to the Paris Peace Conference in which they expressed their willingness to negotiate with the Allies as well as their Russian opponents. (83) Bullitt was convinced of the sincerity of the proposals and returned to Paris highly enthusiastic about the prospects for peace. But by that time Wilson's enthusiasm for the solution of the Russian problem had subsided and Bullitt had a cold reception for his Russian endeavours. In utter despondency, Bullitt resigned from the American Peace Delegation and returned to the United States.

Perhaps Bullitt's cold reception was to some extent due to the victories of anti-Bolshevik armies in April

(82) For. Rels. 1919, Russia (Washington, GPO, 1937) 88.

(83) The principles on which peace was to be discussed were: (a) an armistice was to be made with all factions in Russia in full control of the territories which they occupied at that moment; (b) the economic blockade was to be raised and trade relations between Soviet Russia and Allied and Associated countries were to be re-established; (c) the Soviet Government was to have the right of unhindered transit on and the use of all ports; (d) a general amnesty was to be declared to all Russian political opponents by all factions; (e) all foreign troops were to be withdrawn from Russia and all military assistance to anti-Soviet Governments were to be ended; and (f) the financial obligations for the former Russian Empire were to be recognized by the Soviet Government. Cf. Degras (n. 17) 147-149.
and May, 1919, under Admiral Alexander Kolchak in Siberia (84) which renewed the hope for an early overthrow of the Soviet regime. As a matter of fact, Kolchak's army had, by May 1919, advanced from East Siberia to within 500 miles of Moscow. For a while, most of Siberia, large areas in the south, south-east and north, were lost to the Soviet Government. Harassed by internal revolt and starved by Allied blockade, the Red Army retreated before the general onslaught of the Whites who were assisted with economic and financial aid as well as military supplies by the Allies, including the United States. (85)

The Red Army, however, succeeded in turning back and eventually routing the anti-Bolshevik forces in the second half of 1919. For a while, Allied hopes were raised again by the advance of the White leaders, General Denikin and General Yudenich. In October 1919, a White force under General Denikin advanced from the south to within

(84) An All-Russian Government was formed in the autumn of 1918 by the various anti-Bolshevik elements. On November 18, 1918, however, this government was overthrown and a military dictatorship headed by Admiral Alexander Kolchak was established at Omsk. Kolchak gradually obtained recognition by the major anti-Bolshevik factions, headed by Denikin, Yudenich and other important White leaders, as the new Russian Chief of State. Cf. Fischer (n. 44) 201-205.

(85) For. Relg. (n. 82) 323. The United States, however, was unable to assist the Kolchak Government with credits for military supplies as it was not recognised by her as a co-belligerent against the Central Powers. Cf. Ibid., 421.
175 miles of Moscow, and from the west, a White detachment under General Yudenich almost captured Petrograd. But with the defeat of both these thrusts, and the capture of Omsk by the Bolsheviks in mid-November, 1919, which was followed by the collapse of the Kolchak Government, the failure of the intervention became evident and the United States, unwilling to be dragged into extended hostilities against the Bolsheviks, decided to withdraw her troops from Siberia. (86) On December 23, 1919, Secretary of State Lansing in a memorandum stated in part:

The Kolchak Government has utterly collapsed; the armies of the Bolsheviks have advanced into Eastern Siberia . . . Further the Bolshevik army is approaching the region where our soldiers are, and contact with them will lead to open hostilities . . . In other words, if we do not withdraw, we shall have to wage war against the Bolsheviks. (87)

The memorandum thus indicated the real reason for withdrawing American troops -- it was the fear that their continued maintenance in Siberia might lead to conflict with the Bolsheviks which the United States wanted to avoid. Although the United States had aided the Kolchak

(86) According to the eminent Wilson scholar Arthur S. Link, Wilson never believed in intervention as a means of undoing the revolution. The decision to intervene, Link holds, was dictated by military and humane necessities and that American troops were sent "only in small numbers and for the briefest time possible, as if to chaperone Allied conduct in these areas." Cf. Link, Arthur S., Wilson the Diplomatist (Baltimore, John Hopkins Press, 1967) 117-118.

Government with military supplies, (88) it did so in the hope that it would help to preserve "Russia's territorial integrity" and maintain "the open door in Siberia and Manchuria", and had no intention of directly involving itself in the civil strife between the Reds and the Whites. (89) Accordingly, American troops started leaving Siberia by way of Vladivostok in January 1920. The last American contingent left Vladivostok on April 1, 1920. (90) The final withdrawal of American troops marked the end of United States' participation in the intervention in Siberia.

The Red Scare in the United States

The happenings within Russia during the first few years of the Bolshevik regime produced severe repercussions in the United States. The Bolsheviks, faced with foreign intervention and civil war at the same time, resorted to desperate measures. In an effort to stamp out internal revolt, the Bolsheviks had recourse to a program of mass terror and suppressed all counter-revolutionary activities with ruthless severity. Every suspected uprising against

(88) Between the summer and autumn of 1919, Kolchak received from America or through Americans, arms, ammunition, clothing, boots, and other materials amounting to some $50,000,000. Cf. Reitzer (n. 41) 156.

(89) Unterberger (n. 40) 233.

them was crushed by wholesale arrests and executions. The programme of terror, in fact, was designed to crush without mercy those who challenged the authority of the new regime.

Reaction in the United States

The terroristic measures adopted by the Bolsheviks led to an intense wave of anti-Bolshevik feeling in the United States. With Lenin and Trotsky urgently calling upon the proletariat throughout the world to free themselves from capitalist control, many Americans began to fear the spread of communism in the United States. This fear on the part of the Americans was exploited by U.S. governmental agencies which kept up a barrage of anti-Bolshevik propaganda throughout 1919. It was inspired partially, at least, by the need to justify the policy of intervention. (91)

The American Press was also filled with tales of Bolshevik atrocities. (92) Bold headlines carried the news of cruel deeds perpetrated by the Reds without any effort being made to evaluate the conditions in Russia.

(91) Cf. Department of State, Memorandum on Certain Aspects of the Bolshevik Movement in Russia (Washington, GPO, 1919).

(92) Some observers have contended that the American Press was influenced by the U.S. Government’s attitude toward the Bolsheviks. It is, however, equally possible that the U.S. Government was influenced by the American Press, and that the Press reflected the sentiments and prejudices of various interested elements or the conviction of the publishers themselves. While there might be some justification in both the arguments, perhaps it would be difficult to substantiate them with any accuracy.
The July 2, 1919, issue of the New York Times describing the cruel massacres committed by the Reds in Siberia stated, "they shot them down in squads ... Some of the squads rose as high as fifteen hundred. Some of them they shot in the streets, some of them they took out in the woods, and only the melting snow revealed the crime." (93)

It is true that there was substance in some of the charges. But most of the happenings were greatly exaggerated without any effort being made to realise the fact that the disorderly conditions in Russia resulted from the activities of the Bolsheviks as well as the various anti-Bolshevik groups. The New York Times spoke of Bolshevism as "the despotism of the socialist proletariat" that had replaced "the overthrown despotism of Czardom" (94) and described the Bolsheviks as murderers and assassins who had established "a reign of terror", (95) "a rule of force and oppression unequalled in the history of any autocracy." (96)

The hysterical nature of these attacks upon Bolshevism was largely the result of a growing fear of the spread of Red revolution to the United States. The establishment of an American Communist Party in September 1919, heightened

(93) New York Times (July 2, 1919).
(94) Ibid (November 27, 1917).
(95) Ibid (April 6, 1919).
(96) Ibid (May 4, 1919).
this fear. America, however, offered an infertile ground for communist doctrine. Despite this fact, the public saw the Bolshevik spectre in every outbreak of industrial strikes, many of which were a natural consequence of labour’s post-war demand for higher wages to meet the rising cost of living. The bomb outrages attempted in May 1919, heighten the fear of the Americans who believed that foreign influences were at work in their country. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer undertook vigorous repressive measures. He struck at the industrial strikers with blanket injunctions, prohibited radical literature from the mails, and rounded up for deportation all undesirable aliens fomenting agitation in the United States. (97) The spirit of intolerance became fairly widespread in the country and radicals and aliens came, for a time, under especial suspicion as possible advance agents of the Russian Bolsheviks seeking to promote the cause of world revolution by spreading disaffection and strife in the United States.