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File

"The treatment accorded to Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will."

—PRES. WILSON.

RUSSIAN SOVIETS

Seventy-six Questions and Answers on the Workingman's Government of Russia

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By

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ALBERT RHYS WILLIAMS was a war correspondent in Belgium and author of "In the Claws of the German Eagle." He went to Russia and for fifteen months lived in the villages with the peasants, in the Red Army with the soldiers, and in the industries with the workers. He knew the people, as well as Lenin, Trotzky and all the others. His travels took him down the "Mother" Volga and through the beautiful Ukraine on the Dneiper, then through all the great cities of Russia and over 6,000 miles of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

He addressed the soldiers at the front, the great mass meetings of the People's House in Petrograd, and the Cirque Moderne, and the sailors of the Baltic Fleet. When the Germans began the drive on Petrograd he organized an International Legion for the defense of the Red Capitol. In the Foreign Office of the Soviet Government he helped prepare the propaganda which was sent into Germany to stir up the revolution.

Some of his experiences Mr. Williams has written for the "New Republic," "The Nation" and other journals. After his addresses in the Church of the Ascension, in New York, and at Ford Hall, in Boston, many questions were raised. Some of them are briefly answered here.

Russian Soviets

THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT OF RUSSIA

What is the present government of Russia?

An Industrial Republic, the first government of the working class in the world, owned by the workers and for the workers.

When was it established?

Over a year ago; to be exact, November 7th, 1917.

Where is the capital of Russia?

In Moscow, in the Kremlin.

The Kremlin is a citadel with a wonderful collection of churches, graceful towers, green and golden domes, big bells and cannons and rich treasures of art. It is the pride of the Russians. They say "above Moscow lies the Kremlin and above the Kremlin lies only the stars." But now above the Kremlin flies the red banners of the new industrial republic: "Long live the Union of Soldiers, Sailors, Workingmen, Peasants and toiling Cossacks." "Hail to the Brotherhood of the Toilers of the World."

What is the form of government in Russia?

It is a government of Soviets.

How is a Soviet formed?

Instead of electing men at the polls, they are elected in the shops and unions. For example, every 500 workers in a munition factory select a delegate. The shoe factory elects a delegate, as do the clothing shops, the brick yards, glass works, and all the other industries which happen to be in that city. The different unions do likewise. The regiments of soldiers and the sailors also elect their delegates; likewise the teachers, the clerks, and the engineers who are organized.

Is it true that the Soviets do not allow everyone to vote?

It is true at the present time. The exploiters of labor, idle people living off interest, members of the Czar's family, criminals

and the insane are not allowed to vote in Russia. The Soviet slogan is "A vote for everyone who works." Soon everyone in Russia will work for a living and that means that every man and woman over eighteen years of age will have the right to vote. Even at present 95 per cent in Russia can vote, while in the United States only about 65 per cent can vote.

How many Soviets are there?

There is a Soviet in every city, village, district and county in Russia.

It was through a land of Soviets that the Trans-Siberian express had brought us across the great steel bridges, the Urals, the Taiga and the steppes. The trainmen spoke of their Soviet, the peasants of theirs, the miners had cheered us in the name of theirs. We had conferred with the Soviet of Central Siberia and the Far East Soviet. It was a Soviet world through which we had passed, and when we stepped from the train at Vladivostok we found the Soviet there an exact copy of the one at Petrograd, seven thousand miles away.

There is nothing more remarkable in all history than the fact that in a week after the Revolution one-sixth of the earth's surface should, in every city and village, bring forth this new state apparatus, that it should so manifest its worth, strike its roots deeper and deeper, crowd out all rivals, resist the shock of every attack, and after 15 months hold undisputed sway from the White Sea on the North to the Black Sea on the South, from Petrograd upon the Baltic to Vladivostok on the Pacific.

How can the people get their representative in the Soviet to do what they wish him to do?

They blow the factory whistle and have a meeting; or the teachers' association or union meets at a regular session. Then they tell their representative what they wish of him. If he doesn't act in accordance with their wishes, they elect another. For example, in Petrograd in July, 1917, documents were published in the papers saying that some Bolsheviki were German agents. Then the men in the shops immediately recalled the Bolsheviki from the Soviet and put in Menshevik delegates. Later, when the workingmen discovered that all these documents were lies and forgeries, they sent back their old Bolshevik delegates and hundreds of new ones.

This is the government of the towns, but what is the government of all Russia?

Each local Soviet elects a delegate to the All-Russian Assembly which meets about every three months at Moscow. Altogether there are about 1500 delegates.

“The delegates come from the Arctic where it is nearly always cold, and from the Crimea, where it is nearly always warm.

There were fishermen from the Lena and shepherds from the Caucasus. There were Little Russians, merry-souled chaps, blue-eyed and fair-haired, who came from a land where the sun shines much and the earth yields plentifully. There were Big Russians, inured to hardship, their sterner struggle with the soil photographed upon their determined faces. Scattered among them were fair-haired Cossacks from the Don and dark-skinned Cossacks from the Urals, with a strain of Tartar marked in the slant of their eye and the color of their skin. Sometimes it was an Esthonian, a Pole, a Lett, a Lithuanian, or a member of one of the numerous Siberian tribes. All of Russia was gathered under that roof.”—“The Red Heart of Russia,” by Bessie Beatty.

What does this gathering of workmen, peasants, soldiers and sailors do in the All-Russian Assembly?

It decides all the great public questions like war, peace, land, commerce, etc. When it adjourns, it leaves behind an Executive Committee of about 250 members, a body somewhat like our Congress.

What are the duties of the Executive Committee?

It passes laws. One of its chief duties is to appoint, dismiss, and control the Council of People's Commissars, a body somewhat like our Cabinet.

What is the difference between our Cabinet and the Council of People's Commissars?

The members of the American Cabinet are appointed by the President. The members of the Russian Council of People's Commissars are elected by the people.

What are the salaries of the Commissars of the Soviet government?

The largest salary that any official in the Soviet government receives is 600 roubles a month (\$60).

Under the old government officials were paid enormous salaries. Most of them received as much in a week as a Soviet official now receives in a year. The Bolsheviks

said that the pay of officials of a workingman's government should not be more than that of an average workingman. They feared the gulf that must arise between well paid officials, able to maintain a luxurious standard of living, and workingmen receiving only a living wage. They wished to avoid the creation of a new bureaucracy. Careerism in public life was to be discouraged. No one can have cake until everyone has bread. They fixed the pay at \$60, with \$10 extra for each non-earning member. Lenin's wife works in the Department of Education, therefore Lenin receives only \$60 a month. Trotzky has a wife and two children, therefore he gets \$90 a month.

When the Soviet Government moved to Moscow it took over one of the large hotels, the National, to live in. The first thing it did was to abolish expensive and elaborate menus. The meals, instead of consisting of many dishes, were cut down to two. One could have soup and meat, or soup and kasha (a kind of porridge). Of course, there was tea.

What are the differences between the Soviet form of government and the parliamentary form?

(a) A Soviet delegate comes from a group—a shop or a union, meeting regularly. It has a natural unity. A Congressman represents all sorts of people, irrespective of their work, who meet at the polls every two or four or six years; there is no other bond between them.

(b) A Soviet representative is continuously in touch with the people he represents. A Congressman has no natural connection with his people.

(c) The Soviets are elected largely by occupations. They are full of miners who know mines; machinists who know machines; peasants who know the land; teachers who know children and education.

(d) The Soviet is a center for the translation of business by men who know their business. Parliament is too often a talking-machine, an arena for playing party politics.

WHAT THE SOVIETS HAVE DONE

What are some of the things which the Soviet Government has accomplished?

First—It nationalized all the natural resources, the forests, mines, waterways, etc.

Second—It gave all the land to the peasants. Each family

was given as much land as it could work. This has made the peasants very happy and glad to support the Soviet.

Third—It organized a great Red Army.

Fourth—"It swept the Secret Treaties into the ash barrel of history."

Fifth—It stirred up the great Revolution in Germany and pulled the Kaiser from his throne.

Sixth—It opened up thousands of schools, libraries, workmen's theatres, newspapers and postoffices.

Seventh—It gave the factories, shops and mines to the workers. Some of them were owned by the State; others came directly under workmen's control.

What is meant by workmen's control?

It means that a committee elected by the workmen take part in the management of the plant.

"I mean by control," said Trotzky, "that we will see to it that the factory is run not from the point of view of private profit, but from the point of view of the social welfare. . . . For example, we will not allow the capitalist to shut up his factory in order to starve his workmen into submission, or because it is not yielding him a profit. If it is turning out economically a needed product, it must be kept running. If the capitalist gives it up, he will lose it altogether, for a board of directors chosen by the workmen will be put in charge.

"Again, 'control' implies that the books and correspondence of the concern will be open to the public, so that henceforth there will be no industrial secrets. If this concern hits upon a better process or device, it will be given to other concerns in the same branch of industry. Thus the public will promptly realize the utmost possible benefit from the find."—From an interview with Trotzky by Professor E. A. Ross, of Wisconsin University.

When the workers took over the factories and mines, did they not make many mistakes?

They did. Lack of experience and technical skill led them to many blunders. But they learned quickly, and after a time many factories turned out more products than before.

As soon as the workmen found the factories really in their hands there came a change in their minds. Under the Kerensky regime they tended to elect a foreman who would let them do as they pleased. Under their own government, the Soviet, they began to elect as foreman

those who put discipline into the shop and raised the production.

In the so-called "American Works" at Vladivostok, the wheels, frames and brakes of cars were assembled, and the cars sent out over the Trans-Siberian Railway. In the Kerensky regime these shops were hotbeds of trouble. The 6,000 workmen on the payroll were turning out but 18 cars a day.

The Soviet Committee closed the plant down and put the men to work in other places. Then it reorganized the shops and started up with a force of 1,800 men. In the underframe section, instead of 1,400 there were 350, but by means of short cuts, introduced by the workers themselves, the output of that department was increased. Altogether, the 1,800 men on the new payroll were turning out 12 cars a day,—an efficiency increase of more than 10 per cent. per man.

I was standing with the Bolshevik president on the hills, overlooking the shops below. He was listening to the clank of the cranes and the stamp of the trip hammers ringing up from the valley.

"That seems to be sweet music to your ears," I said.

"Yes," he replied, "the old revolutionists used to make a noise with bombs, but this is the noise of the new revolutionists hammering out a new social order."

What has the Soviet done to give good houses to the people?

There were millions of people in Russia living in poor, dark rooms. On the other hand, there were thousands of palaces and fine homes well furnished and well lighted which were occupied by but a few people. The Soviets said this is all wrong; "You who build the great houses should live in them." So the people moved in. Now there are hundreds of thousands of poor people in Russia who, for the first time, have a decent place to live in.

What has the Soviet government done to the church and religion?

It gave religion the same freedom it has in America. It separated the church from the State, so that now all churches are on the same footing in Russia. The Catholic, the Protestant, the Jew, can worship as he pleases. The Soviets have made the first great attempt to put into practice the teachings of Jesus. Jesus wanted a social order where every man would get a fair chance; that is what the Soviet is doing.

What have the Soviets done for the women of Russia?

Women have the same political, economic and social rights as

men. The Bolshevik Government provides free care for women sixteen weeks before, while, and after they become mothers. If they go back to work, they are allowed to work but four hours a day. Women have full rights over their property, the right of divorce the same as men, and in the shops are on the same footing. "Together men and women were slaves, now together they are free."

How is justice administered under the Soviets?

Justice is very simple in Russia now. The old laws of Russia were very bad and the Soviet Government had to rebuild the whole thing. In the meantime a revolutionary tribunal which hears all cases was established. Sometimes lawyers are not present at all, but the people defend themselves, and their friends come forward to speak for them. The principle of right and wrong guides the tribunals, legal tricks and technicalities are out of court.

What has the Soviet done for amusements in Russia?

Workmen Theatres have been established in hundreds of places, and in these the best plays are given. There are thousands of workmen who are actors. The People's Theatre in Petrograd is managed by the wife of Maxim Gorky. There is more good music in Russia than ever before.

Under the Soviet, then, is there great happiness in Russia? Is it the millenium on earth?

There is much cold and hunger in Russia now and many babies have died for lack of milk, in Moscow and Petrograd. The railroads are broken down, and while the rest of Europe has peace the workmen and peasants of Russia by the hundreds of thousands must go out to fight and to die. But they do not blame this upon the Soviets but upon the Allies who have cut off the food supply of Siberia.

How did the Soviet show its interest in the American working class?

It held thousands of meetings to protest against the murder of Mooney. The workmen of Petrograd went to the American Ambassador and told him Mooney was their brother and that he must be freed.

Did the Soviet pass any laws for the benefit of the American working class?

A great many. For example: the Soviet desired to import harvesters and other machinery from America. They declared they would receive no machinery from America which was not made under a living wage in an 8-hour day, with no night work for women, etc. No machinery, they said, would be allowed in Russia which did not bear the O. K. of committees of the workmen where the articles were made.

What else has the Soviet done for which all America should be grateful?

It has saved hundreds of thousands of American lives, some say 500,000; others say more.

How has the Soviet saved so many American lives?

Because it did all it could to bring about the great revolution in Germany and Austria which, in turn, suddenly brought about the end of the Great War. Our military experts were saying that the war would last six months or two years more, and that it would take perhaps a million American lives in order to get to the Rhine. The Teuton armies were way down upon the soil of France and Belgium and Italy, but they suddenly stopped fighting. Why? Because the Revolution started back home.

How did the Russian Soviet make the Great Revolutions in Austria and Germany which helped stop the war, and thus saved the lives of so many Americans?

The Soviet sent hundreds of agitators into Germany and Austria who told the people to make a Revolution as they had done in Russia. The Russian Soviet also published millions of copies of papers in different languages—German, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, etc. These papers were dropped by aeroplanes, blown by wind, smuggled in boxes and carried by prisoners into Germany.

In an illustrated paper sent over, there is a picture showing a workman tearing the Imperial eagles off the Palace, and below the crowd is making a bonfire of them. The paper explains the picture to the Germans in these words:

"On the roof of a palace a workingman is tearing down the hated emblems of autocracy. On the street the people are burning up the Imperial eagles. A soldier is telling the people that the overthrow of autocracy is only the first step on the way to the Social Revolution. It is very easy to overthrow the Imperial government, German comrades. It rests only upon those blind soldiers who support it with their bayonets. The Russian soldiers only opened their eyes and the Czar's government has disappeared. When will the soldiers in other lands ruled by a Kaiser open their eyes?"

Here is one of the appeals which was sent out to the German fleet:

"The Revolutionary sailors of the Baltic Fleet, in conference assembled, send their greetings of brotherhood to their heroic German comrades who have taken part in the insurrection at Kiel.

"The Russian sailors are in complete possession of their battleships. The Sailors' Committee are the High Command. The yacht of the former Czar, the 'Polar Star,' is now the headquarters of the Fleet Committee, which is composed of common sailors, one from each ship.

"Since the Revolution, the Russian Fleet is as busy as formerly, but the Russian sailors will not use the fleet to fight their brothers but everywhere to fight under the Red Flag of the International for the freedom of the proletariat throughout the entire world."

Millions of roubles, and much energy of Bolsheviks like Lenin and Trotzky were spent on this propaganda. At last it won out. The Great Revolution in Germany came and the Great War ended.

What do Americans think about the Soviets?

Nearly all Americans who have been to any Soviets and know the Bolsheviks say that the Soviet Government should be recognized by America as the real government of Russia.

"It is absolutely necessary for us to believe in the Soviet. . . . The Soviet is the soul of Russia—and more . . . the Soviet has become its communicating nervous system and its deciding brain. . . ."

"Let us abandon every word of unnecessary criticism against Russia. It is a Soviet House. If the Soviets choose Lenin to rule their house, it is their house. If they choose someone else to rule their house, it is their house.

“ . . . It is a republic of Soviets, and in the mouth of every American the word Soviet must become a word of friendship, a word of comradeship, a word of great hope.”—Chicago Daily News.

“Russia is a government of the workingmen and the soldiers, of the peasants and the mechanics. It is a democracy which is striving for the uplift of the great masses. It is a democracy which comes as near being representative of the soil as it would be possible to find anywhere. It has mud on its boots, hair on its face, and the love of freedom in its heart. They say, “the Russian democracy is red.” Yes, full of good, red blood—you will find it isn’t yellow. No less than 60 per cent. of the Russians are Bolsheviks.”—Colonel W. B. Thompson.

Are Socialists the only ones who believe in the Soviets?

No, all classes of Americans; Colonel W. B. Thompson of Wall Street; Colonel Raymond Robbins, head of the American Red Cross, who knew Lenin and Trotzky; Major Thatcher; Bessie Beatty, of the San Francisco Bulletin; Louise Bryant, of the Bell Syndicate; Madeline Z. Doty, of Harper’s; Louis Edgar Brown, of the Chicago Daily News; Dr. Charles F. Kunz; Jerome Davis, acting head of the American Y. M. C. A. in Russia; John Reed, of the Liberator, and scores of others.

How do we know that the Soviet is the Government that the people of Russia want?

It is the only Government that has shown any strength, and the only one that the people have fought for and died for. The last Sunday in July an election was held in Vladivostok. There were 17 tickets. Everybody said the contest was between the Cadet Party and the Moderate Socialist block. It was not supposed that the Bolsheviks could cast any large vote because their leaders were in prison and their papers suppressed. But when the votes were counted, it was found that the Cadets had 4,000, the Socialists 5,000, and the Bolsheviks 12,000. The Bolsheviks got more votes than all the other 16 parties put together.

If the people of Russia want a Soviet Government have we any right to make them take our kind of Government?

The kind of a Government they want is their business. If at the point of the bayonet we compel them to take our kind of Government we are doing the same thing as Imperial Germany.

"The people of Russia intend hereafter to own Russia and to govern Russia in their own interests. In Russia, practically speaking, there is no middle class of small property owners, business men and landowners, such as is characteristic of England, France and the United States. Virtually the entire population of Russia consists of peasants and industrial workers. That is the reason why the government of the Bolsheviki—the majority—is entirely made up of representatives of these workers."—Col. Wm. B. Thompson, head of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia.

DIFFICULTIES THE SOVIETS FACED

Has it been an easy task for the Soviet to do its great work?

No; the workingmen have had tremendous difficulties.

First, hundreds of years of the rule of Czars had kept the people browbeaten, poor and oppressed.

Second, three years and seven months of war had bled the country white. 3,500,000 Russians had been killed, 4,000,000 wounded, there were 350,000 war orphans and 200,000 deaf, dumb and blind. The Russians lost more than Belgium, France, Italy and America combined.

Third, the railways were broken down, the mines had been flooded, the food and fuel were nearly gone.

Fourth, the Czechs, supported by the Japanese, French, British and Americans, cut off their grain supply from Siberia. The Germans and Austrians cut off their food supply from the Ukraine.

Fifth, 12,000,000 soldiers were suddenly demobilized. America has only 4,000,000 soldiers, and yet we expect to take a year before they are all home from France and demobilized.

Sixth, they were sabotaged by the old officials, and deserted by the upper classes, boycotted by the Allies and nearly guillotined by the Germans.

Are the difficulties which the Russians face in their Revolution greater than America faced in hers?

Much greater.

(1) In the American Revolution there were 3,000,000 people. In the French Revolution there were 23,000,000. But in the Russian Revolution there are 180,000,000 spread over a country three times as large as America.

(2) The French Revolution and the American Revolution were largely political, while the Russian Revolution is **political and social**.

(3) In our Revolution the foreign countries let us alone or helped us, while all the foreign governments today are fighting Russia.

(4) It took us in America over eight years before we settled down to a firm, stable government. The Russians have had less than two years.

What did the upper classes do to make disorder in Russia?

They gave huge sums of money to the old officials, and to bank clerks to stop work. They said that the workingmen did not have brains enough to run things. But the Soldiers and Sailors took charge of the banks and the governmental offices, themselves.

How else did the upper class try to overthrow the Soviet government?

(a) They hoped to starve the people into submission. Roubinsky, a great capitalist, said, "the bony hand of hunger will clutch the people by the throat and bring them to their senses." But the Soviets brought in food. (b) Then the upper class hoped that bad sewage and the melting snow would bring cholera. But the Soviets organized sanitary commissions and stopped the epidemics. (c) Then they tried to get the people in the cities drunk in order that they should go out to loot, burn and kill. This was called a wine-pogrom. They would suddenly open up hidden wine-cellars and give everybody all the wine he could drink. The Soviets stopped this by destroying 400 such cellars and pumping the wine out into the canals.

How else did the upper classes try to overthrow the Soviets?

They went away to the far parts of Russia and organized military forces. Large armies were led by the Czar's generals against the workmen's government.

What kind of soldiers did the Soviets have, to beat off its enemies?

There were two divisions: (1) the Red Army; these were the regular soldiers who received about \$30 a month. (2) the Red Guards; these were workingmen in the factories and peasants on the farms. When danger threatened, they left their ploughs

and dropped their tools and, picking up their guns, went out to the defense of their government.

Regiments of officers, monarchists, adventurers, Khun-Khuz bandits and Japanese mercenaries were formed in Manchuria and kept attacking the frontiers of the workingman's republic.

It was the regular division of the Red Army that bore the brunt of these raids. As soon as the enemy broke through the cry of "The Socialist Fatherland is in danger!" was raised. Into every village and factory hurried the call to arms. Each formed its little group of Red Guards, and along the roads and pathways they marched up into the Manchurian Mountains, singing sometimes a revolutionary hymn and sometimes folk songs of the village. Poorly equipped and poorly fed, they voluntarily advanced to pit themselves against a merciless foe, splendidly armed and trained.

The Red Army and the Red Guard showed a lack of the iron discipline of the regular national armies. But it had a spirit which the others lacked. I talked much with these peasants and workers who for weeks had been lying out on the hillsides in the rain and the cold. "What made you come and what keeps you here?" I asked. "Well,—millions of us dark people," they replied, "had to go out and die for the government of the Tsar in the old days; surely we would all be cowards if we didn't go out and fight for a government that is our own."

Was the Soviet able to defeat all its enemies?

Every one of them. Not a single member of any of these Anti-Soviet governments dared set his foot upon Russian or Siberian soil. If he had done so he would have been locked up.

Who are the enemies of the Soviet government?

(a) The landlords, who want to take the land away from the peasants. (b) The capitalists, who want to take the factories and banks away from the workingmen. (c) The officers, who want to take control of the army away from the soldiers. (d) The monarchists, who want to take the government away from the people.

But they could do nothing against the workmen of Russia until the Allies came to their help.

SIX CHARGES AGAINST THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

I

Has the Soviet Government of Russia killed great numbers of officers, the landowners, and the rich?

On the contrary, very few. In the future we will ask, "How can we explain that in a Revolution so big and so deep such a handful were killed?" There have been many wild tales about the number of victims. But no one says that there were more than 40,000 killed in the first year of the Revolution; and many of these were Bolsheviks who were killed in defending the Soviets against unlawful attacks. Russia has a population of 180,000,000; that means that in this civil war less than one out of every 4,000 people in Russia was killed. In the first year of the American Civil War one out of every 300 was killed. In the South, thousands of American men were sacrificed to perpetuate slavery. Russia is fighting, not to perpetuate injustice and crime, but to establish freedom.

Have not Marie Spiridonova and Breshkovskaya (Babushka), the two great women of the Revolution been killed by the Bolsheviks?

The newspapers have killed them several times in order to make **the people who love these two women hate the Bolsheviks. But both are living. Marie Spiridonova is now working with the Bolsheviks.**

What is the "Red Terror"?

It means that whenever anyone is caught killing a member of the Soviet Government, or trying to kill a member, or of plotting to overthrow the Soviet Government, he is arrested. Then he is placed on trial before a Revolutionary Tribunal. If he is adjudged guilty he is imprisoned or executed. If found innocent, he is promptly released. In other countries we would call this preserving law and order.

"The terrorism under which the limited property-owning class is living is slight compared with the terrorism in which the workingman and peasant lives in fear of the return of the old regime."—Colonel W. B. Thompson, Chairman of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia.

Why then are the papers full of these stories of loot and murder and massacre?

Because the great interests are making a poison gas attack against the Soviets and the Bolsheviks.

"What is the source of the lies about Russia which are so systematically disseminated in this country? A couple of weeks ago the statement was published on the front

pages of the eastern newspapers that on November 10th the Bolsheviki were to indulge in a general massacre of all their class opponents. But what actually happened on or about that day? The following dispatch published in the New York World may give some idea. 'The Soviet Council in Petrograd has adopted a resolution giving amnesty to all arrested hostages and persons alleged to be involved in plots against the Soviets, except those whose detention is deemed necessary as a guaranty for the security of the Bolsheviki who have fallen into enemy hands.' Instead of a St. Bartholomew, a feast of reconciliation. The lie is published in the most conspicuous parts of all the newspapers in the country. The truth is published in an inconspicuous part of one newspaper. Is the case against the Bolsheviki so weak that it has to be sustained by lies?"—New Republic, November 16th.

Is it not true that the Bolsheviks wish to kill the upper class?

No; they only wish to set them to work.

II

Has not the Soviet Government made general chaos and disorder in Russia?

On the contrary. It has saved the country from these evils. Correspondents tell us that the streets of Moscow and Petrograd are as safe, if not safer, to walk upon, than the streets of New York and Chicago. We came across 6,000 miles on the Trans-Siberian railway as quietly as going from New York to Washington, and safer than in Brooklyn. Order was asserting itself on every hand. Then Allied intervention came and now tens of thousands of people have been killed and wounded, villages burned, tunnels and bridges have been blown up, fifty miles of tracks torn up, and the Omsk Government is reported to have taken 1,714,000 bushels of wheat, which is needed for hungry Russia, and is turning it into alcoholic liquor to make the people drunk.

III

Has not the Soviet Government refused to pay the national debt?

It is true they originally repudiated that debt when the Allies did not come to their help.

It was the Czar who borrowed the money from France and England in 1906-10. He used it in employing a big army to put down the Russian workingmen. He used it to send 300,000 men and women and children into the horrors of the awful Siberian mines and prisons. The Socialists warned the bankers of France not to give the money to the Czar. Even Milyukov warned them. The Socialists said if they came into power they would not pay back the money which was used to suppress, to jail and to kill them, and so they did exactly what they said they would do. But even rather than have a bloody war over the debt, the Soviet would prefer to compromise and have since offered to arrive at an understanding with the Allies.

Is it not true that the workmen's Soviet does not trust the educated and upper classes?

They have lost faith in the so-called "governing classes." The workers and peasants say, "We used to toil and slave and let you run the world. But what kind of a world was it that you made? It was full of strife, slums, awful poverty, ending in this horrible war. If you are not criminals you are terrible bunglers. You have shown yourselves unfit to have power and we do not intend to let you have it. True, as workingmen we will make mistakes, too. But we prefer to suffer from our own mistakes and not from yours."

Why has there been a break between the educated (intelligentsia) and the great masses of Russia?

Because the attitude of the educated was, "Let the people rule, but let them rule through us." But the people of Russia said, "We want to rule ourselves and in our own way." However, the educated are now working for the Soviet. For the first time the working class is buying brains quite as the capitalist class has done before.

V

Did not the Soviets dissolve the Constituent Assembly of Russia that met a year ago?

They did because it was the only thing that could save Russia and the Revolution. Nearly all observers who were on the spot agree to this. The Constituent Assembly was elected under rules laid down by the government of Kerensky, and was a relic of the political revolution in Russia. It was really dissolved on that

November day when the government which created it evaporated like a pricked balloon. The Bolsheviki claimed it was not representative of the Russian masses. Their claim seems to have been upheld by the people themselves.

VI

Did not the Soviet Government make peace with the Imperial German Government?

It did because the old soldier army recruited under the Czar refused to fight any longer. The soldiers said they had enough of fighting without food or clothes and that they had nothing to fight for. The Russian working-men sent an appeal to the German working-men not to advance upon the soil of the New Russian republic. To their eternal honor, thousands of German working-men soldiers refused to advance. They were shot by their officers, and the main German Imperial Army marched on against Moscow and Petrograd. The Germans said they would not stop until the Soviet signed the Brest-Litovsk peace. There was no other way out. Lenin said, that it was "a shameful" peace, a "robber's" peace, a "cut-throat" peace, but the Soviet Government had to sign. The Russian workmen then said, "The old army has gone; now we shall build up a new Red Army. Meantime we shall try to make a revolution in Germany. If that does not come in six months or a year, then we shall turn our Red Army against the Germans." Slowly they built up a new, strong Red Army, but before they could use it, the revolution came in Germany.

THE SOVIET LEADERS AND THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

Whom have the working men of Russia elected as President, or Premier of the Council of People's Commissars?

Nicholas Lenin (Vladimir Ilitch Ulianoff).

Lenin is forty-eight years of age. He was born of a noble family. When he was seventeen years of age his brother was hanged for plotting to kill the Czar. He was expelled from the law school for preaching Socialism. Later we find him in Siberia charged with founding the Union for the Struggle to Liberate the Artisan Class, then as student in Paris learning languages; then in Switzerland writing books on politics and economics; later again in London as the "leader" of the Bolshevik Party.

When the Revolution of 1905 began, he rushed to Petrograd and two years he labored like a galley slave, writing, speaking and organizing. The outbreak of the Great War caught him in Austria trying to stir the workers to rebellion.

In April, 1917, Lenin hastened home and was given a great ovation as his train pulled into Petrograd. He looked the field over and then told the workmen and soldiers: "You made this Revolution, and it belongs to you. Do not let the usurpers keep it away from you; take the power in your own hands." After the bourgeois showed they could not run the government of Russia, the workers, soldiers and peasants took Lenin's advice and took the government in their own hands. They made Lenin their Premier and have kept him on the job ever since.

Lenin is probably the most hated and the most loved man in Europe. The love for him comes from the great masses of the people; the hate for him comes from the old crowd of nobles, landlords and capitalists. A dozen times with dagger and bomb and pistol they have tried to kill him; twice indeed the assassin's bullet entered his body. But he still lives to smile and preach his gospel of revolution and of work. He works hard, himself,—eighteen hours a day. Out of this work there will come for the masses a new society when the toilers need work but six hours or three hours a day. The rest he can give to his mind, to music and to travel. Lenin believes this is coming and coming soon.

When Lenin's death was reported in this country, on September 2, 1918, the "New York Times" wrote:

"An American . . . who had rare opportunities of studying Lenin at close range, in the midst of the Russian turmoil, described him as 'the greatest living statesman in Europe.'"

". . . He endeavored to put into practice theories which he had been preaching for many years before the Russian Revolution came to pass. In those years he conceived and worked out in his mind a principle of social revolution which distinguished him from other Socialist thinkers by his uncompromising appeal to the spirit of class revolt.

"This spirit as an indispensable weapon in the construction of an ideal Socialist state he preached with increasing fervor as years went by, supplementing . . . it with something that was essentially lacking in the Marxian doctrine, namely, a political design under which the economic aims of a thorough-going Socialism might

be put in effect. This political design found its expression, so far as it has gone, in the present Soviet government."

Whom have the workingmen of Russia elected as the Commissar of War to defend them against enemies?

Leon Trotzky (Bronstein).

In 1900 we find Trotzky in solitary confinement in the prisons of Odessa. The charge against him was that he had called a meeting out in the woods to organize a laborers' union. When his term was up he did it again. Then they exiled him to Siberia; twice he escaped, one time driving a reindeer 500 miles across the Arctic snows. As a war correspondent in the Balkans, he showed the atrocities on both sides. Olgin says of him:

"His house in Vienna was a poor man's house—poorer than that of an American workingman earning \$18 a week, and containing less furniture than was necessary for comfort. Trotzky has been poor all his life." But his spirit has always been rich, blazing hot. He never lost heart, even though he was hounded from one country to another by the Russian Secret Police. He came to New York in 1916, but when the Revolution broke out he started home. The British held him up at Halifax, but at last he arrived in Petrograd to be greeted with great joy by the workingmen; they finally made him the President of their great Soviet, of the Red Commune.

Trotzky saw that the old Russian army was throwing down its guns and running away from the trenches. So he said: "This old army will not fight. We must have a new army—a Red army; meantime we must have peace." He went to Brest-Litovsk and told the German generals to their faces that they were robbers and cut-throats and Imperialists. He said, "With the sword you are writing upon the bodies of living nations. You make us sign this peace at the bayonets point, but some day you will fall either by our Red Army, or from Revolution within your own country."

Trotzky was right. Almost always he has been right.

"Besides . . . do you imagine that capitalist control is going to survive everywhere save in Russia? In all the warring countries of Europe I expect to see social revolution after the war. So long as they remain in the trenches the soldiers think of little but their immediate problem—to kill your opponent before he kills you. But when they go home and find their families scattered,

perhaps their homes desolate, their industry ruined, and their taxes five times as high as before, they will begin to consider how this awful calamity was brought upon them. They will be open to the demonstration that the scramble of capitalists and groups of capitalists for foreign markets and exploitable 'colonial' areas, imperialism, secret diplomacy, and armament rivalry promoted by munition makers, brought on the war. Only they see that the capitalist class is responsible for this terrible disaster to humanity, they will arise and wrest the control from its hands. To be sure, a proletarian Russia cannot get very far in realizing its aims if all the rest of the world remains under the capitalist regime. But that will not happen."

Who have the workingmen chosen to be Commissar of Education?

M. Lunacharsky.

Lunacharsky is one of the noted writers and scholars of Russia. "Our first aim is to struggle against darkness," he said. "The expenditure on education must stay high. A generous budget for public instruction is the honor and glory of every people." Now every child in Russia attends public school. The children of the upper classes must attend the same schools as those of the workers, for all private schools have been abolished.

One of Lunacharsky's aids in the educational work is Maxim Gorky, one of the greatest of Russian writers. Gorky has been against the Bolsheviks but lately he has joined them.

Whom did the workingmen elect as Commissar of Public Security?

Alexandra Kollontay, a woman, who, among other great works in behalf of the masses, established the Palace of Motherhood. Kollontay is one of the leading sociologists in Russia, and has written many books on mothers and children.

At one time Kollontay called a meeting of all workers in her department, even the servants.

"She was very frank with them at this meeting. Russia, she explained, was bankrupt; there were little funds to carry on charitable work; no one was to receive even a 'good' salary; she herself was to get \$60 a month, which is the salary of every commissar.

"This came as a great blow to the professional social workers, who up to this time had received as much as \$10,000 a year. Kollontay shocked them even more by announcing that thereafter all employees should continue

to be present at meetings, and that the same consideration would be given to suggestions from scrub-women as from professional philanthropists."

"I used to go up to Kollontay's office on the Kazanskaya and she explained many of her problems to me. She was very much moved by the way some of her lower employees had responded to her appeal in this crisis. It really was astonishing how much many of these simple and uneducated old servants understood about the work. And when they once realized that they were a part of the larger plan they gladly worked for sixteen hours a day to help Kollontay, whom they all called 'Little Comrade'."—Louise Bryant, "Six Red Months in Russia."

Whom have the working class of Russia chosen as Commissar of Foreign Affairs (State Department)?

George Tschitcherin. He came from an old line of diplomats in Russia. Disgusted with the lying and stealing of the old order, he resigned his position in the London Embassy and joined the Bolsheviks.

Can these men be dismissed from their positions?

At any time the Executive Committee may recall them.

"While the Bolshevik control of the Soviet organization has not been impaired since the formation of the Government, the form of the Government is such that this control may be changed whenever the peasants and workmen desire a change."—Major Thatcher.

To what party does Lenin, Trotzky, Lunacharsky, Kollontay and Tschitcherin belong?

They belong to the Communist Party, popularly known as Bolshevik.

What does the word "Bolshevik" mean?

The word "Bolshevik" is the Russian word for "one of the majority," as opposed to and distinguished from the word "Menshevik," or "minority." It is a party which now has the majority of delegates of the workers on its side, and consequently the majority of the delegates in the Soviets. It has changed its name at the present time to Communist Party. It must be clearly kept in mind that the Bolsheviks, though composing the main party in the Soviets, are only one among several parties there.

Are the Bolsheviks intelligent people?

The more educated a workingman is, the more likely he is to be a Bolshevik. The sailors and the Lettish folk in Russia are

the most literate people in Russia. Nearly all of them can read and write, and nearly all of them are Bolsheviks.

Why did the working class of Russia select the Bolsheviks for leaders instead of others?

Other political parties have had eloquent and sincere men, but they only talked about giving the people what they wanted—land, peace and factories. The Bolsheviks really gave these things to the people.

Why did not the people choose Breshkovskaya, Tschaikovsky and Kropotkin, such well-known revolutionists?

These leaders are more than seventy years of age. They were great, noble spirits, but they have lost touch with the masses—they are leaders of the past. Most of the Bolshevik leaders are young men. Four out of every five in the Soviet are under thirty-five years of age. They are the leaders of the present and the future.

Why do the Russian people continue to keep the Bolsheviks in office?

(a) Because they have proved able and good leaders who did what the people wanted. (b) Because most of the Bolshevik leaders came out of the ranks of the people, themselves, and understand the people's ideas and speak the people's language. (c) Because the capitalists and the rich have called them "murderers and German agents." The people know that these are lies and that the Bolshevik leaders are the most honest and the most sacrificing men in the world.

"I do not claim that the Bolsheviks are angels. These men who have made the Soviet government in Russia, if they must fail, will fail with clean shield and clean hearts, having striven for an ideal which will live beyond them. Even if they fail, they will none the less have written a page of history more daring than any other which I can remember in the history of the human race. They are writing it amid showers of mud from all the meaner spirits in their country, in yours and in my own. But, when the thing is over, the mud will vanish like black magic at noon, and that page will be as white as the snows of Russia, and the writing on it as bright as the gold domes that I used to see glittering in the sun as I looked from my windows in Petrograd.

"And when in after years men read that page they will judge your country and mine, your race and mine, by the help or hindrance they gave to the writing of it."—Arthur

Ransome, Correspondent of the London Daily News.

"The Bolsheviks most of all have helped to make the war not only for democracy, but a war at last of democracy and by democracy. The Bolshevik revolution is the one fertilizing force that throughout Europe is making governments answerable to peoples."—Professor Kallen, of Wisconsin University.

THE RUSSIANS AND AMERICA

In what way do the Russians have respect for America?

They have great respect for the fine products of our industry, and our wonderful machinery, particularly harvesters, etc.

Coming out of Siberia, a little Russian about seventeen years of age came on the train carrying a gun as big as himself. He was a Bolshevik, going out to fight Semenoff, the Cossack general who wanted to destroy the Workman's Republic. When he found that we were Americans, he was wild with happiness. 'You, see, I work in the railroad shops,' he said, 'and I like engines when they are so full of steam and strong and ready to pull the big trains out on the track. I could almost kiss them. And you Americans, you make the best engines in the world. I almost love you all.'

What things in America are there that Russians do not like?

They do not like our blacklists and lockouts, our hired thugs to beat up strikers, our very rich living in palaces and our very poor living in slums. They do not like the way America treats men like Mooney and other fighters for labor.

"Nearly all regard America as a hopelessly 'capitalistic' society and expect that in a few years Russia will far surpass America in the realization of democracy."—Professor Ross, of Wisconsin University.

What else do the Russians not like about America?

They do not like our ignorance about the great world movement of Socialism; they look upon us as a nation of political illiterates, for four out of every five Russians are Socialists.

"Nearly everybody in Russia was a Socialist, the only difference being in degree . . . That being the case, the notion continually advanced in certain British and American quarters of taking by the hand these simple children of nature and leading them kindly up to the primary democratic principles of Thomas Jefferson and Lloyd George was always a joke . . . Among the Russians, evolution had long passed beyond all such primitive

processes and democracy means industrial democracy as much as it means the right to vote, and industrial democracy means the division of the products of industry among those whose toil had created such products.

"In other words, it meant the practical elimination of dividends and interest and with this, it was hoped, there would be an end of want on one side and luxury on the other.

"For some reason never well explained, it was always extremely difficult to get in America any recognition of these facts."—Charles Edward Russell, "Unchained Russia."

What is the root of the trouble between America and Russia?

It is this misunderstanding. Americans think that the American government is about the best there is in the world, and that Russia ought to have a government and a society like America's. The Russians do not think so. They want one of their own, a Soviet, a great, new experiment in democracy.

But have the Russians education enough to govern themselves?

While fully 60 per cent. of them cannot read or write, on the other hand they are intelligent people.

Rodzianko, the ex-president of the Duma, told me that a French engineer came to his estate to set up an engine for his sawmill. He worked for three days, but the engine would not go. Then one of his old peasants who had been looking on said, "Let me try to put it together. Within five minutes the engine was set up and running perfectly.

That, to Rodzianko, was an example of the native soil-wisdom of the masses. They are not learned in books, but they are learned in life. With the same sort of minds, not twisted by tradition or warped by prejudice they look at all questions.

Do the Russians understand the great social and business problems enough to organize a great, new society?

The average Russian workman far better understands all economic and social questions than does the average so-called educated American. The workingmen and peasants of Russia read or have read to them tens of thousands of papers and pamphlets. These papers and pamphlets are not like the cheap, sensational sheets of America, but are solid, strong journals. America has sent over hundreds of men to "educate" the Russian workingmen, but the average Russian workman knows twice as much

about the great social problems as these men who are sent to "educate" them.

"How came so much of the mass of Russian people, viewed by all the truly learned as ignorant and stupid, to seize upon a social philosophy so new to the rest of the world and so far in advance of it? . . . The 'inferior' Russian . . . lays hold upon this new conception which is . . . not simple, not rudimentary, but advocated in many volumes by ponderous thinkers practically unknown to our superior world. Here, it seems to me, is a wonder both historic and suggestive."—"Unchained Russia."

But why debate about the Russian's ability to organize a government? Why not face the fact that they DID ORGANIZE A GREAT, NEW GOVERNMENT—THE SOVIET.

Did the Soviet Government ask for help from America?

They asked for help and were willing to give America concessions in return.

"On numerous occasions the American Red Cross was asked to actively co-operate in various departments of the Soviet Government, including a suggestion that the American Red Cross take charge of the entire food administration in Petrograd; that it take charge of shipments of food from Siberia and that it handle the purchase of supplies for the Soviet Government in China, and handle the shipments of these supplies through Siberia. The Soviet Government desires the assistance of the Allies in organizing a revolutionary volunteer army with which to oppose German domination. Nothing whatever can be done by the Allies except in co-operation with this (Soviet) Government."—Report of Major Thomas D. Thacher of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia.

Did the Soviets believe they were going to get help from America?

They did. Because President Wilson said "We are fighting for the liberty and self-government and the undictated development of all people." And he sent a message to the Russian people through the great All-Russian Soviet, promising help to Russia.

Did the leaders of the Soviet believe in the assurances of help that President Wilson promised?

Many were skeptical about it all, but most of the masses of Russia believed that the heart of the great American people sympathized with them.

When the Soviet in Vladivostok was overturned by the Czecho-Slovaks, the gruzshchiki (longshoremen) rushed to the defense of the Red Staff Building. There were only 200 of them and they were surrounded by 20,000 English, Japanese and Czecho-Slovaks, but they refused to surrender until the building was fired by an incendiary bomb. The workingmen of Vladivostok gathered up the corpses of their dead and made rough coffins for them, painting them red. On July 4th, 17,000 of these workers streamed through the streets in a funeral procession. Their Soviets had been destroyed, their comrades had been killed, the Government that they had held had been wrested from their grasp. All around them were the guns and battleships of their enemies. Their hearts were heavy with grief and bitterness.

A sailor, hailing them, suddenly cried out: "Comrades! Comrades! We are not alone. We are not alone! I ask you to look away to the flags flying over there on the American battleship Brooklyn. And with the flags of all nations there is the red flag of our Russian Republic. No, comrades, we are not alone today in our grief. The Americans understand, and they are with us!"

It was a mistake, of course. Those flags had been hung out in celebration of the Day of our Independence. But these workers did not know that. To them it was like a sudden touch of a friend's hand upon a lonely traveler in a foreign land. With a cry they caught up the shout of the sailor: "The Americans are with us!" And the vast gathering, lifting up their coffins, wreaths and banners, were again in motion. Tired as they were from long standing in the sun, they made a wide detour to reach the street that runs up the steep hill to the American Consulate. Straight up the sharp slope they toiled in a cloud of dust, still singing as they marched, until they came before the Stars and Stripes floating from the flag-staff. There they stopped and laid the coffins of their dead beneath the flag of the great Western democracy.

They stretched out their hands, crying, "Speak to us a word!" They sent delegates within to implore that word. On the day the great republic of the West celebrated its independence the poor and disinherited of Russia came asking for sympathy and understanding in the struggle for their independence. In the hour of their affliction these simple, trusting folk, makers of the new democracy of the East, came stretching forth their hands to the great, strong democracy of the West.

They knew that President Wilson had given assurance of help and loyalty to the "people of Russia." They reasoned: "We, the workers and the peasants, the vast majority here in Vladivostok, are we not the people?"

Today in our trouble we come to claim the promised help. They came, bringing their dead with the faith that out of America would come compassion and understanding. America, their only friend and refuge.

But America did not understand. The American people did not even hear about it. But these Russian folk did not know that the American people never heard about it. All they know is that a few weeks after that appeal came the landing of the American troops.

And now they say to one another: "How stupid we were to stand there in the heat and dust stretching out our hands like beggars!"

What is supposed to be the purpose of intervention?

To bring order into the country and a firm, stable government.

What has intervention accomplished in Russia?

(1) It has overturned the government of the Soviets in Siberia, which rested on the peasants and workers, and in its stead gave support to the Omsk Government, which is a government of the Cossack generals, monarchists and landlords and a few old social revolutionists. (2) It has brought anarchy, assassination and hunger to the great masses of workmen and peasants. The Soviet at Vladivostok was established without killing a single human being; but to overthrow the Soviets for 150 miles thousands of peasants and workers were killed and wounded, all the battle-ships, hospitals and warehouses around Vladivostok were filled with these victims of intervention. (3) It has cut off the great cities of Moscow and Petrograd from the grain supply of Siberia. (4) It is turning the natural love of the Russians for America into hatred for her.

Russia says to the workers and to the right-minded people of the whole world:

"Come with us toward the new life, whose creation we work for without sparing ourselves and without sparing anybody or anything! Erring and suffering in the great joy of labor and in the burning hope of progress, we leave to the honest judgment of history all our deeds. Come with us to the battle against the ancient order, to work for new forms of life! Forth to life's freedom and beauty!"—Maxim Gorky.

THE purpose of this book is not to claim that the Russian people have already established a Utopia or even a pure democracy. But it does prove by the convincing testimony of those who have seen and who know that these people are making the bravest and most successful of all the age-long struggles for a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

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