The Root Mission to Russia, 1917.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II DECISION TO SEND MISSION</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III SELECTION OF MEMBERS</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV WASHINGTON, D.C., TO VLADIVOSTOK</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V VLADIVOSTOK TO PETROGRAD</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI OFFICIAL RECEPTIONS.</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII FINANCE</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII THE MILITARY</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX THE SOCIALISTS</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X LABOR, RELIGION, AND PROPAGANDA</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI CONCLUSION</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Tsar Nicholas II of Russia abdicated on March 15, 1917. For several months, Russian politics was in a state of flux until Vladimir Ilych Lenin led the Bolsheviks to power in November and established the first government based upon Marxist Socialism.

America's initial reaction to the abdication was one of extreme pleasure as the Americans expected the Russians to establish a government similar to their own. In addition, most Americans interpreted the events in Russia as beneficial to the Allied cause. Less than a month after the abdication, however, the United States entered World War I, and it soon became apparent that political unrest in Russia might weaken her ability to continue as a belligerent. President Wilson sent a Special Diplomatic Mission to Russia in the summer of 1917. The nine-man Mission, headed by former Secretary of State Elihu Root, was a good-will mission and a fact-finding group whose work was to determine Russia's material and financial needs and to assess the political and military stability of the new government. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the work of the Root Mission and to evaluate its accomplishments.
In the preparation of this work, many unpublished sources were used. The State Department Records in the National Archives contain hundreds of items, including reports from each member as well as a detailed log of the trip. The private papers of seven of the men furnished significant material and the detailed diaries of three of the members were utilized. These and other sources were examined in an attempt to present an accurate account of the Root Mission and its effect on American policy.
news of the march, 1917, revolution in russia ar-

rived in the united states at approximately the same time

that president woodrow wilson decided to enter world war

i. Most americans reacted favorably to the events in

russia and were especially pleased with initial reports

that the provisional government would probably be based

upon a political ideology similar to that of the united

states. The overthrow of the tsar was timely in that

americans could now more realistically accept world war

i as a struggle between the forces of democracy and autocracy. americans soon began sending messages to congratu-

late and encourage the new russian government. And many

began to suggest that the united states send a special

fact-finding mission to russia.

president wilson accepted the idea, envisioning

the mission as an elaborate goodwill venture as well as

a way to observe at first-hand russia's military needs.

this mission, headed by former secretary of state elihu

root, was to be wilson's most ambitious attempt to deal

with revolutionary conditions in russia. It departed from

washington in may, 1917, and returned in august of that

year. While in russia, mission members encountered events

vi
which were evolving so rapidly that even the most experienced observers of the Russian political scene understood and interpreted them with difficulty, if at all.

When Elihu Root departed for Russia, American public opinion, as reflected by journalists, was that the aged diplomat could effectively encourage political stability in Russia and persuade that nation to continue its role as an effective ally in World War I. Historians, however, view the Root Mission as a dismal failure. Some have gone so far as to suggest that both Allied and American diplomacy during the period in which the Provisional Government ostensibly was in control in Russia was based upon the false premise that the Russian government could continue the war while consolidating its political strength. The Root Mission is a prime example of diplomacy based upon this premise.

Historical judgment of the worthlessness of the Root Mission is far more accurate than was contemporary opinion of its value. Most historians, however, have reached this conclusion without a thorough study of the Mission's activities in Russia. I have sought to examine in detail the Root Mission in an effort to determine why it was sent, what was expected of it, what it accomplished while in Russia, and what effect, if any, this Mission had on United States-Russian relations during this critical
period.

I did my research for this study almost entirely in primary sources, many of which have never been fully utilized before. I undertook this work with the realization that the Root Mission, in all probability, contributed very little toward establishing a significant Russian policy by the United States Government. I pursued it, however, with the conviction that in historical research and writing it is as valid to study policies and experiments which have failed as to peruse those which have had tangible and lasting results.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On March 15, 1917,^1 Tsar Nicholas II of Russia abdi­
cated the throne from which his family has reigned for more
than three hundred years. This event followed a brief
period of rioting in the Russian capital of Petrograd but,
nevertheless, came as a surprise to almost everyone. The
causes for the Tsar's overthrow and subsequent abdication
were complex and, as is the case with most events of such
magnitude, resulted from many factors.

The underlying causes of the collapse of absolutism
in Russia had roots deep in the nineteenth century, but the
event which precipitated it in 1917 was Russia's involve­
ment in World War I. This first total war simply placed
unbearable strains on an already deeply riven (some would
say disintegrating) society. The tsarist government enjoyed
a brief period of popularity at the beginning of the war.
Popular support declined, however, as the war began to go

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^1Throughout this work all dates cited will be
according to the Gregorian calendar. The Gregorian calen­
dar was thirteen days ahead of the Julian calendar which
remained in use in Russia until February 14, 1918. Thus,
the term "February and October" Revolutions refers to
events which occurred in March and November according to
the Gregorian calendar.

1
against the Russians early in 1915. On July 1, 1915, a combined Austro-German offensive wiped out most of the Russian gains of the previous year. From that point on, the military outlook was bleak and, with the exception of a few brief reversals, the war continued to go against the Russians.2

Because of the inability of Nicholas and his bureaucrats to mobilize efficiently Russia's resources for the war, living standards for millions of Russian citizens quickly plummeted. The Russian peasantry, source of the bulk of the manpower for the Army, found it increasingly difficult to obtain consumer goods. Industrial workers, whose wage increases failed to keep pace with inflation, were periodically confronted with bread shortages in the cities. As early as 1915, small numbers of industrial workers began to strike in protest against these deplorable conditions. These early and isolated strikes did not seriously threaten the government.3

By the fall of 1916, however, expressions of dissatisfaction with the situation in Russia arose from all segments of the political spectrum. The inefficiency of the government coupled with the incredible spectacle of


3Ibid., 66-67.
Rasputin, an ignorant, dirty peasant "holy man," manipulating the Empress and through her the weak-willed Tsar, had destroyed the last vestige of respect for Nicholas' regime. Indeed, wide popular credence was given to rumors that the poor Russian performance in the war was due to treason at the highest levels of the government. The situation did not improve at all when Rasputin was murdered in December, 1916. Strikes continued, Duma (lower house of the legislature) members were clamoring for responsible government, and, as winter progressed, the shortage of food and fuel in the rear areas became acute. And yet, not many observers felt a major crisis was imminent. In February, 1917, an Inter-Allied conference was held in Petrograd, and none of the delegates saw anything to indicate the grave events which were now just around the corner. 4

During the first week in March, industrial strikes began in Petrograd. At their height, these strikes involved a quarter of a million workers and culminated in the fall of the Tsar's government. The two most important causes of the strikes were the closing of the huge Putilov Muni­tions Works and rumored bread shortages in the capital.

The Putilov factory was accustomed to labor problems and had been plagued with a series of strikes in 1916. On March 3, 1917, however, workers in one department of the factory demanded a fifty per cent wage increase. When their demands were not met, they went out on strike. A few days later, the remaining workers joined the strike and the management closed the plant on March 7. The Putilov workers, approximately 30,000 strong, organized street demonstrations for wage increases as well as for more bread. The demands for more bread resulted from rumors circulating throughout Petrograd that a serious flour shortage existed and that the bakeries were selling a portion of their flour on the black market. Tsar Nicholas was assured by A. D. Protopopov, Minister of the Interior, that the demonstrations, peaceful in nature, could be handled easily, and he left the capital on March 8 for the Russian Military Headquarters at Mogilev.

On the day of the Tsar's departure, the demonstrators were joined by thousands of additional workers and a bread riot ensued. The riots became much more serious on March 9, and many of the guards regiments, whose duty it was to suppress the rioters, joined in the demonstrations.

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The riots in Petrograd continued, and the Tsar adjourned the Duma for an indefinite period on March 11. That body met without his permission on March 12 and from its membership elected a provisional committee to fill the void created by the adjournment. Although the committee was unable to alter in any way the course of events in Russia, it is important because it became the Provisional Government following the Tsar's abdication.

By this time, there was virtually no support for the Tsar in Petrograd, and troops brought in to quell the uprisings quickly joined the rioters. On March 12, a group of insurgents and radical intellectuals invaded the Taurida Palace, occupied rooms not being used by the Duma, and established the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Tsar Nicholas tried to reenter Petrograd on March 13 but his train was stopped and rerouted to Pskov by troops loyal to the revolution. When the extreme gravity of the situation finally penetrated to the incredibly imperceptive monarch, military and political advisers convinced him that he should abdicate in favor of his twelve-year old son, Alexis, and a regency. For personal reasons, however, he decided instead to give up the throne to his younger brother, the Grand Duke Michael, on March 18.

7The Taurida Palace was built for Prince Potemkin of Taurida by Catherine the Great. In 1917, it became the seat of the Provisional Government.
But the Grand Duke, after conversations with Duma representatives, decided it would be prudent to refuse the Crown. Thus, with less than half-hearted efforts to preserve it, the monarchy which had dominated Russian politics for centuries perished.3

An event of such magnitude would be significant in the history of any nation. The downfall of the Russian monarch, however, transcended purely internal considerations. The Tsar's abdication, coming as it did in the midst of World War I, presented the possibility of a Russian withdrawal from the war because, as it turned out, this was merely the opening act of a revolutionary drama which tore the very fabric of Russian society asunder. Before the year was over, Lenin and his Bolshevik party had seized power in the name of Marxian Socialism — an event of lasting significance in world history. But none of this was foretold by the events of March; the immediate problem facing Russia seemed to be the creation of a government to replace the monarchy.

Overnight, Russia was converted to the most democratic country in the world. In this new freedom, a plethora of political factions appeared.9 The history of political

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3Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution, 92-98.

9When it became apparent that there was little if any chance for a return to a monarchy, all those who normally supported the Crown disappeared or went into hiding and were of no significance during the next few months.
events in the capital between March and November of 1917 is basically the story of the struggle for power among the three most important factions.

The most conservative of these groups were the Kadets led by Paul Miliukov, who was a member of both the last Duma and of the provisional committee, and who became a power in the first Provisional Government. Prior to the March Revolution, the Kadets were considered a liberal-reform party. The swiftly moving events during and after March, however, soon relegated them to a position on the right of the political spectrum, a result of the extreme radicalization of politics within Russia. The Kadets held a party conference in early April, 1917, and issued a statement advocating the creation of a western-style democratic republic. The party also strongly supported the war against Germany and upheld the Tsar's secret treaties with the Allied powers. The Kadets felt, however, that substantive economic and social change should be delayed until a constituent assembly could be held. The Kadets dominated the first cabinet of the Provisional Government but lost control as the Revolution overtook and passed their leaders.

In the center of the political spectrum were the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries. These two parties furnished the leadership of the early Revolutionary movement and controlled the Petrograd Soviet until shortly
before the Bolsheviks seized power in the November Revolution. The Socialist Revolutionaries were the largest party in Russia in March, 1917, but were hampered by the lack of a comprehensive program. While they recognized the trend toward industrialization in Russia, they believed that its economic backwardness called for a revolution based primarily upon the peasantry. Consequently, they championed reforms, especially the confiscation of landed estates, which would appeal to the peasants. The Mensheviks were the largest Marxist party in Russia. They also believed that the working class in Russia was too small to revolt successfully. Unlike the Socialist Revolutionaries, however, they had little or no hope that the Russian peasantry would support a revolutionary movement. The domestic programs of both parties varied but both advocated the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly. Their view with regard to the war, however, was more consistent. Unlike the Kadets, both were unwilling to support the secret

11 Ibid., 39-41.
12 The Bolshevik-Menshevik division has been described by one historian as "more temperamental than doctrinal." Robert V. Daniels, Red October; The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), 20.
agreements with the Allies. They did not insist upon an immediate peace, as did the Bolsheviks at a later date, but supported the war only as a defensive measure until a general peace could be arranged. This would occur, hopefully, when the masses in the belligerent countries forced their governments to renounce imperialistic war aims and accept a policy of "no annexations, no indemnities."

The last and most radical of the three major political groups were the Bolsheviks. At the time of the Tsar's abdication, most of the Bolshevik leaders were living in exile, and their role in the March Revolution was inconsequential. The Bolshevik program was the most extreme of any of the revolutionary groups. When Lenin returned, they immediately advocated withdrawing support from the Provisional Government, confiscation of land by the peasants without waiting for the Constituent Assembly to meet, bread for the hungry, and later, peace for the war-weary. Even in his April Thesis in which Lenin called for turning the Imperialist war into a revolutionary war, he did not yet champion an immediate peace. The Bolsheviks' position with regard to the war, however, did lead to a separate peace with Germany once they gained power.\textsuperscript{14}

The actual power in Russia was divided between two bodies. This situation is usually referred to by historians

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., 359-61.
as "dual power." The Provisional Government, as the "legitimate" successor to the Tsar and political heir of the Duma, was recognized as the legal head of state by foreign governments. In the first few weeks, it was controlled by the liberal and moderate leadership of the Duma. Although the Provisional Government had the responsibility for conducting the government, it never had the power to enforce its policies, a fatal weakness.

The other source of power was the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies organized by a group of revolutionary leaders who called themselves the Provisional Executive Committee of the Petrograd Workers' Deputies. They patterned their organization after the St. Petersburg Soviet of the Revolution of 1905. At first, the Petrograd Soviet was no more than a loose organization of self-appointed revolutionaries. Later, a larger and more representative group was obtained through the addition of delegates from the factories and the Petrograd Garrison. The growing strength of the Petrograd Soviet was derived from the increasingly revolutionary masses of soldiers, workers, and peasants. Whereas the Provisional Government attempted to exercise power where none existed, the Petrograd Soviet soon had the power to act as a government but did not choose to do so.\footnote{Katkov, \textit{Russia 1917}, 359-61.} Dominated by Mensheviks and
Socialist Revolutionaries, the Soviet resolved not to participate in the Provisional Government. This decision was based on their concept of the Soviet as a class institution whose task was to protect the toiling masses from a "bourgeois" government, the inevitable product of the first, or "bourgeois" revolution. The time was not yet ripe for the second, or socialist revolution, when they would wield power. Thus, the socialist parties were completely free "to support or to oppose" without any responsibility.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, 388.}

The selection of the members of the Provisional Government was done in an irregular fashion. M. V. Rodzianko, President of the Duma, and Miliukov determined its membership after consulting the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet on the night of March 13. The Executive Committee, however, did not wish to publicize its role in the selection of the members of the Provisional Government.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, 393-94.}

Most of the members of the Provisional Government were extremely conservative for Petrograd in March, 1917. Prime Minister Prince G. E. Lvov and Foreign Minister Miliukov were members of the Kadets. Alexander Guchkov, the Minister of Navy and War, was an Octobrist.\footnote{In 1917, the Octobrist party was considered extremely conservative.}
conservative Ukrainian businessman, M. I. Tereshchenko, served as the Minister of Finance. The only member of the Provisional Government associated with a revolutionary party was Alexander F. Kerensky who became the Minister of Justice. Kerensky, a former Trudovik, was now a Socialist Revolutionary. Another Socialist, N. S. Chkheidze, a Menshevik, had been offered the position of Minister of Labor but had refused. His refusal was caused by the Soviet's decision that none of its members should serve in the Provisional Government. As Deputy Chairman of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, Kerensky should have refused the post in the Provisional Government. On March 15, however, Kerensky addressed the Petrograd Soviet and in an emotional appeal to the members explained his decision to accept the appointment as Minister of Justice. Following his address, he was carried by the members of the Soviet to the room of the Executive Committee, an action which apparently indicated that he had the support of the Soviet. Although Kerensky retained both his Cabinet post and his position as Deputy Chairman of the Soviet, it became increasingly difficult to do so.

19Prior to 1917, the Trudoviks had a fairly large following and considered themselves spokesmen for the peasants. After March, 1917, most found their way into the ranks of the Socialist Revolutionary party.

20Katkov, Russia 1917, 388-93.
Newspapers informed the inhabitants of Petrograd of the membership of the new Provisional Government on the morning of March 16. The article appeared as a statement by the Duma Executive Committee but was signed by the newly appointed ministers of the Provisional Government rather than by the members of the Duma committee. Included in the announcement was an eight-point program which was the Provisional Government's expression of faith in the Revolution. This program resulted from discussions between the Duma committee and the Soviet Executive Committee and may be interpreted as the price paid by the Provisional Government for acceptance. The eight-point program was as follows:

1. Complete amnesty for all political and religious offences, including terrorist attempts, military mutinies and agrarian disorders;
2. All democratic liberties (of speech, of the press, etc.) for all citizens, including the military insofar as permitted by technical military considerations;
3. Abolition of all discrimination on grounds of class, religion, and race;
4. Immediate preparation of elections to the Constituent Assembly;
5. Replacement of the police by a popular militia, with elected officers, subordinated to the organs of local administration;
6. New elections on the basis of universal franchise to all organs of local self-government;
7. Military units which took part in the revolutionary movement not to be disarmed or withdrawn from Petrograd;
8. Extension of all civic freedoms to soldiers and military personnel, subject only to the maintenance of strict military discipline when on duty.21

21 Ibid., 395.
The willingness of the Provisional Government to keep the mutinous garrison in Petrograd (point number seven) has been seen as the cause of many of its later problems. Thus maintained in Petrograd was a large military force which turned for leadership to the Soviet rather than to the Provisional Government. Years later, Miliukov wrote that the decision to include point number seven was made at a time when it was unclear whether the regular military might attempt to suppress the Revolution.  

The Petrograd Garrison, however, had already been assured of protection in Order Number One issued by the Executive Committee of the Soviet on March 14. The Order was to apply solely to the Petrograd Garrison but was soon distributed to the troops at the Front who assumed that it also included them. It is usually accepted as the most important factor leading to the deterioration of the Russian Army as an effective fighting unit. The Order stated that all military and naval units should elect committees to represent the enlisted men; that each company should send a deputy to the Petrograd Soviet, the decisions of which would determine the political activities of military units and take precedence over any orders of the Duma Military Commission; that the committees should be allowed to keep arms; that the soldiers should enjoy

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22 Ibid., 396.
all civil liberties conferred by the Revolution; and that all soldiers should be treated with more courtesy and equality by their officers.\textsuperscript{23}

That this Order was generally obeyed by rank-and-file soldiers made it an executive act of overriding significance; thus, it was apparent immediately that the real power in Russia resided in the Soviets, if they chose to grasp it, rather than in the Provisional Government. On March 22, less than one week after his appointment as Minister of War, Guchkov admitted as much in a letter to General M. V. Alexseev, the Russian Chief-of-Staff:

The Provisional Government possesses no real power and its orders are executed only insofar as this is permitted by the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which holds in its hands the most important elements of actual power, such as troops, railroads, postal and telegraph service. It is possible to say directly that the Provisional Government exists only while this is permitted by the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Especially in the military department it is possible now only to issue orders which do not basically conflict with the decisions of the above mentioned Soviet.\textsuperscript{24}

The "dual power" certainly did not bode well for the future of liberal-democratic elements. It is therefore not surprising that the first Provisional Government lasted approximately two months. Too conservative to remain

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., 372.

\textsuperscript{24}Chamberlin, \textit{The Russian Revolution}, I, 101.
long in favor in Petrograd, the immediate cause of its downfall was its position on war aims. Upon assuming the position of Foreign Minister, Miliukov notified the Allies that the Provisional Government would honor all treaties entered into by its predecessors. A few days later, the Petrograd Soviet issued a statement to the "peoples of the world" in which it expressed strong opposition to a war of conquest. In an attempt to reconcile the two positions, the Provisional Government published a statement on war aims on April 9 which pledged to secure a peace based on the "self-determination of peoples." Included in the statement, however, was a pledge to support "all obligations assumed toward our allies." Miliukov approved publication with reluctance and prevented its transmission to the Allies as a diplomatic note. 25

Although the Petrograd Soviet viewed the April 9 statement as a modification of war aims, Miliukov continued to insist that Russia receive territorial concessions. His position was made public following an interview on April 22 by a reporter from the Manchester Guardian. In this interview, Miliukov's statement that he hoped to gain the Dardanelles for Russia indicated that he was as favorable toward receiving a share of the spoils as had been any of the Tsar's advisors.

25 Warth, The Allies And The Russian Revolution, 46-49.
Three days later, the Soviet reaffirmed its support of the Provisional Government's April 9 statement on war aims and suggested a conference with France and England for the express purpose of denouncing all territorial claims. On that same day, and without Miliukov's knowledge, Kerensky announced that the Provisional Government might inform the Allies of a change in Russian war aims as indicated by the April 9 statement. Miliukov insisted upon and received a retraction of Kerensky's announcement.

Kerensky, nevertheless, had forced the issue, and the Soviet demanded that the Provisional Government send the April 9 Manifesto to the Allied capitals. The Cabinet sent the Manifesto and an explanatory note to the Allied governments on May 1, 1917. The note, however, included a pledge to "observe the obligations assumed toward our allies" and was, therefore, unacceptable to the Soviet. Consequently, on May 3, 1917, thousands of soldiers and workers marched on the Mariinsky Palace to demand the resignation of Miliukov. The demonstrations continued the following day, and a clash between supporters of the Soviet and the Foreign Minister resulted in the death of several persons. General Lavr Kornilov, commander of the Petrograd District, ordered that troops be sent to the Palace Square but was ignored by the soldiers

26 Ibid., 54–55.
who looked to the Soviet for leadership. Order was finally restored by the Executive Committee of the Soviet.  

The demonstrations of May 3 and 4 made Miliukov's position in the government untenable. Leaders of the Petrograd Soviet recommended that he be transferred to the Ministry of Education. This solution was endorsed by a majority of the Cabinet as well as the Executive Committee of the Kadets. Miliukov, however, preferred to withdraw from the Ministry. His resignation was submitted on May 16, three days after the resignation of Minister of War Alexander Guchkov, a strong supporter of the Foreign Minister.  

On May 18, a new cabinet was formed. This cabinet, usually referred to as the First Coalition, represented a significant shift of power within the Provisional Government. Whereas the first government had included only one socialist, six of the sixteen members of the First Coalition were socialists. Prince Lvov remained as Prime Minister, but Kerensky, who had replaced Guchkov as Minister of War, became the real power in the government. Miliukov was replaced as Foreign Minister by Tereshchenko, a change which did not cause any noticeable difference in Russian foreign policy.

27 Ibid., 56-59.
28 Ibid., 61-63.
Perhaps one of the major changes in the government resulted from a new policy of the Petrograd Soviet which no longer instructed its members to refrain from participating in the government. Although the Socialist parties still did not assume a position of responsibility for governmental actions, leading Socialists served the government with their parties’ blessings. Victor Chernov, leader of the Socialist Revolutionary party, became the new Minister of Agriculture and Heracles Tsereteli, a Menshevik, was named Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

The First Coalition, led by Kerensky, became convinced that Russia needed a successful military offensive to consolidate Russian opinion and persuade persons of many diverse political viewpoints to support the government. The Allies were pleased by the planned offensive, but the decision was made primarily because of domestic considerations. The offensive, which was directed against the Austrian Army in Galicia, began on July 1, 1917. It was halted after two weeks, and the Russian troops were thrown back in such disorder as to imperil the entire Russian line. The political repercussions in Petrograd caused by the military defeat were general disorder and rioting on July 16 and 17, usually known as the July Days.

The July Days were probably the unorganized actions of some of the companies of the Petrograd Garrison. Although they apparently did not organize the demonstrations, the
Bolsheviks decided to accept the responsibility for having organized them. If there was any theme of unity during the July Days, it was that the Petrograd Soviet seize control of the government. The moderate leadership of the Soviet was not prepared to assume such power. On one occasion, the angry mobs came close to lynching Chernov, one member of the group that they desired as leaders, and might have done so had not Trotsky intervened. The July Days demonstrated that the radicalized masses were repudiating not only the Provisional Government but the moderate leadership in the Soviet as well.

The frustration, anger, and repudiation of moderation by the masses of soldiers, workers, and peasants are easy to understand. Since the Revolution, absolutely nothing had been done to satisfy their immediate demands. Bread was still scarce, the inflationary spiral continued to outrun workers' wages, the land had not been given to the peasants, and, worst of all as time progressed, the war dragged on with no end in sight. The temper of the masses grew more radical and the reaction following the July Days turned out to be no more than a temporary pause in the swing of politics to the left.

Beginning in the summer of 1917, the masses, cautious at first, began to move of themselves. Workers seized factories in the cities. In the villages, peasants satisfied their age-old land-hunger and seized the estates
of noble landlords, often avenging the humiliations of centuries by murdering their former superiors and burning their mansions. In the army, peopled largely by peasants in soldier's uniforms, news of the "Black Partition" occurring back home prompted countless millions to "vote for peace with the legs," as Lenin put it. Needless to say, these mass desertions had a devastating effect on the morale of those who stayed in the army. To the common Russian in 1917, "law and order" had no positive influence; popular spontaneity was producing chaos and anarchy.

Against this tide were swimming Kerensky, the Provisional Government, and the moderate leadership in the Soviet—therein lay their fatal weakness. As Trotsky remarked, the Bolsheviks alone chose to accept the masses as history had made them—therein lay their great strength. Therefore, as might be expected, the Bolshevik setback in the wake of the July Days was only temporary.

In an attempt to counteract the growing influence of the Bolsheviks, the Provisional Government circulated documents which purported to prove that Lenin was in the pay of the Germans, which in fact he was. Gradually, a trend which favored the government developed among moderate elements and, on July 18, Bolshevik headquarters were raided and a few leaders were arrested. Most of the leaders, however, went into hiding so as to be able to
emerge at a more advantageous time. Following the July Days, the Bolsheviks renounced temporarily their slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" as they realized that the only way they could gain control of the government was through violence. Also, as a result of the July Days, a new government, known as the Second Coalition, was formed. The Cabinet was headed by Kerensky who now assumed Prince Lvov's position as well as his power. For the first time, the socialists outnumbered the non-socialists in the Cabinet and held eleven of the eighteen posts, but they were the "wrong kind" of socialists as far as the Russian masses were concerned.

Kerensky realized that he lacked a power base and tried to create support for himself and his new government. In late August, he called for a meeting of persons who represented all political viewpoints. It was held in Moscow and was called the Moscow State Conference. All political factions were represented except the Bolsheviks who boycotted the meeting. Kerensky had intended the conference as a means through which he could gather political support. One of the most significant results, however, was a heightened interest in and support for the conservative General Lavr Kornilov.

29 Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution, 166-90.
In early September occurred the most conspicuous effort by the political right to seize power. This incident, known as the Kornilov Affair, grew out of the conservatives' belief that Kerensky was unwilling to use the force necessary to prevent anarchy and restore order. In actuality, this meant that the Soviets had to be curbed. General Kornilov, who had replaced General Brusilov on July 31 after the ill-fated July offensive, did not hide his willingness to disperse the Soviets by force, if necessary. Thus, he became the rallying point for advocates of a restoration of order. Kerensky, well aware of Kornilov's increasing strength and the threat this posed to his government, removed him as Commander-in-Chief. Kornilov then ordered troops to march on Petrograd. Running scared, Kerensky called upon all elements to save the Revolution from this right-wing threat. Revolutionary elements responded vigorously. It was the hastily illegalized Bolshevik Party, however, which emerged as the chief benefactor from the "Kornilov Affair" because it was the most ardent and vocal defender of the continuation of the Revolution in the face of counter-revolutionary forces. Consequently, as Kornilov's forces approached the capital, they were isolated, worked on by revolutionary agitators, and finally melted into the mobs shouting their allegiance to the revolution.
The threat of counter-revolution represented by the abortive Kornilov coup was very real to contemporary Russians. This menace, beginning with the July Days and continuing into September, galvanized mass support for the most radical party in Russia and eroded completely the increasingly untenable position of any moderates. By September, the masses had spoken in no uncertain terms: the results were chaos and anarchy. As the most radical element, the Bolsheviks rode the wave of mass spontaneity to power. Shortly after the Kornilov Affair, Lenin's party won a majority in both the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets. The old slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" was revived and took on an entirely different meaning.

The Third Coalition, already foredoomed to failure, was formed on October 8 after more than three weeks of confusion. In order to free himself from any suspicion of collusion with Kornilov, Kerensky punished all persons involved. But all of this was futile. Kerensky, like so many others in Russia in 1917, was being swept away by the whirlwind of Revolution. Just about a month after it was formed, the Third Coalition was cast into the garbage-bin of history by the Bolshevik Revolution.31

Thus culminated a frenetic eight months in which the Russian government was completely transformed. From the revolution precipitated by the collapse of tsarism

31 Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution, 192-222.
issued a regime professedly based on Marxian socialism. None of this was inevitable. In retrospect, it is fairly clear why the Provisional Government failed. But at the time, few perceived these causal relationships and fewer still understood them.

The Revolution, coming as it did during World War I, was of particular concern to the Allied nations. For some time, the Allied camp had felt, erroneously, that German sympathizers in the Tsar's government had hampered the Russian war effort. Consequently, the immediate reaction in the Western European press was that the Revolution was due in large measure to Russian liberals who desired a more vigorous prosecution of the war. Even the London Times, at the time considered a government organ, described the political upheaval as a "win the war movement."32 The Allied nations soon began to have second thoughts about the positive effect of the Russian Revolution on the war. Nevertheless, they continued to view events in Russia within this narrow frame of reference. The result was that "immediate national interests became the sole guide of Allied politico-diplomatic judgments

32Warth, The Allies and The Russian Revolution, 27.
The March Revolution also had a significant bearing on United States-Russian relations. Shortly before the nations of Europe became involved in World War I, the relationship between the United States and Russia had deteriorated drastically. As a result of the Russian political upheaval in 1905, thousands of Russians fled their homeland, and a large number of these political refugees found asylum in the United States. Their presence soon led to problems between the two nations. The first crisis developed in 1908 when the Russian embassy in Washington sought to have Janov Pouren, a participant in the Revolution of 1905, extradited under the provisions of the Russo-American treaty of 1893. The Ambassador explained that Pouren was accused by the Russian Government of non-political crimes, but the American public believed otherwise. Organized opposition to Pouren's extradition developed immediately. The American Jewish community, along with Socialist and labor organizations, spearheaded the movement, but support came from all parts of the nation. In October, 1908, a United States commissioner

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in New York ruled that Pouren was guilty of the charges brought against him and would therefore be extradited. This decision was reversed the following year when another commissioner ruled that, although Pouren had committed the crimes in question, he had been acting as a revolutionary and was therefore not subject to the provisions of the 1893 treaty. Similar cases developed involving Christian Rudewitz and Yevgeni Azev, and, as in the case of Pouren, extradition was refused on the grounds that their actions were of a political nature. 34

The anti-Tsarist feeling expressed in support for Pouren and other Russian exiles was soon transferred to a movement for the termination of the Russo-American commercial treaty of 1832. This long-standing treaty included the customary provision for the reciprocal right of entry and travel for the citizens of each country. This clause created no difficulties until the last few years of the 19th century. At that time, Russia began to curtail the rights of Jewish citizens who, in turn, emigrated in large numbers to Western Europe and the United States in order to avoid persecution. A problem soon arose when these Russian Jews, now naturalized American citizens, attempted to return to Russia for business and

34Thomas Andrew Bailey, America Faces Russia: Russian-American Relations From The Early Times To Our Day (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1964), 209-14.
personal reasons. In some instances, these individuals were denied entry into Russia. Even when allowed entry, they were frequently subjected to the same restrictions as Jews of Russian citizenship. To many Americans, non-Jewish as well as Jewish, this was a flagrant violation of the Treaty of 1832 and an affront to American citizenship. The result was that by 1909 Congress had received numerous requests for an investigation of this discriminatory treatment of American Jews. These requests, coupled with the furor created by the extradition cases, prompted Congress to pass a joint resolution asking for renegotiation of the 1832 treaty. President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Congressional resolution in March, 1909, just before he left office.

For two years, the State Department attempted to carry out the Congressional request but found the Russian Foreign Office in no hurry to negotiate a solution. By 1911, Congress began to consider resolutions calling for the abrogation of the treaty. The impetus for this movement came primarily from the Jewish community but, as in the extradition cases, support was received from all segments of the American public.

In December, 1911, the House of Representatives, with only one dissenting vote, passed a resolution which bluntly charged the Russians with having violated the 1832 treaty and requested President Taft to give formal notice
of termination. The President, after an unsuccessful attempt to obtain from Russia a joint statement of abrogation, informed the Russians that the treaty would be terminated on December 31, 1912.  

Although hostile on the surface, Russian-American relations did not deteriorate after 1912 as rapidly as some had expected. In fact, even in the absence of a commercial treaty, trade between the two countries was maintained at its former level. For two years, the United States had no ambassador in Russia. As World War I approached, President Woodrow Wilson remedied the situation by the appointment of George T. Marye in 1914. The Russian government accepted the new Ambassador with reluctance. By the end of his brief tour in Petrograd, however, Marye had gained the respect of the Emperor's Court. When Marye was withdrawn at his own request in March, 1916, the Russian government considered the move an affront. Thus was created in Petrograd a climate of suspicion which Marye's successor, David R. Francis, found very difficult to overcome.  

37 Marye gave poor health as the reason for his request to be recalled. Later, he said that "Political combinations had arisen at home which affected me and . . . I felt impelled to withdraw." Kennan, Russia Leaves The War, 34.
Obviously, during the last few years of Tsarist Russia's existence, Russo-American relations were in need of improvement. The opportunity for rapport came suddenly in 1917 with the almost simultaneous events of the March Revolution and American entry into World War I.

President Woodrow Wilson, who would play the leading role in establishing a policy toward the Russian Provisional Government, was an admitted novice in the area of international affairs. Shortly before he became President, he wrote to a friend, "It would be the irony of fate if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs." And yet, during the second half of his first administration and throughout his second, Wilson found it necessary to devote almost all of his time to an area in which he had little experience. Historians agree that Wilson was ill-prepared in this field, and one, who found "no evidence that Wilson ever studied the details of any foreign issue," described the President as "woefully ignorant" of conditions which brought war to Europe.

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39 In preparation for the presidency, Wilson "gave little thought to the conduct of foreign affairs." John Morton Blum, Woodrow Wilson and the Politics of Morality (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1956), 84; "Wilson's training as a diplomatist ... was exclusively theoretical." Link, "Wilson the Diplomatist," 147.
Prior to assuming the presidency, Wilson had devoted most of his attention to domestic problems. In his writings about governmental matters he had barely touched upon foreign affairs. After the Spanish-American War, Wilson began to express more interest in this area, but a leading Wilson scholar suggests that this was "superficial and reflected more the faddish thought of the time than an astute understanding of what was taking place." Even during the presidential campaign of 1912, Wilson never discussed foreign issues unless they were also current domestic issues.

Through the years, however, Wilson had studied various governments and consequently brought with him to the White House a concept of the nature of government which he would use as the basis of his foreign policy. A significant element in Wilson's view of politics and foreign affairs was his devotion to Christian precepts. In issues of "basic Christian faith," Arthur S. Link judges that the President "was like a little child, never doubting, always believing." He believed that moral

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41 Link, "Wilson the Diplomatist," 151.

42 Ibid., 150-51.
laws were applicable to nations as well as to men. That "God controlled history and used men and nations in the unfolding of His plan according to His purpose," Wilson had no doubt. A Wilsonian idea which greatly affected his attitude toward foreign affairs was his firm belief that democracy constituted the "most humane and Christian form of government." The result was that he believed that any society capable of establishing a government would, if given a choice, select democracy. Wilson, therefore, visualized the role of the United States as that of furnishing moral leadership in order to assist the less fortunate areas of the world in acquiring the desired political institutions.

Wilson's tendency to emphasize ideals and principles in his conduct of foreign affairs ultimately resulted in pitfalls. With respect to his attitude toward Russia between the March and November Revolutions, Wilson's policy was restricted by his belief that a responsible and enlightened government would ultimately emerge as the result of free elections.

Another important aspect of Wilson's conduct of foreign affairs was his tendency to reserve for himself the final responsibility for making decisions in foreign

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43 Ibid., 152-54.
44 Ibid., 155-59.
affairs. For all practical purposes, Wilson was "his own Secretary of State." This situation arose from his idea that in the area of international relations the powers of the president were almost unlimited. As he put it clearly in 1907, "The initiative in foreign affairs, which the President possesses without any restrictions whatever, is virtually the power to control them absolutely." And Wilson applied this principle once he became President, even to the exclusion of his own advisors. Consequently, foreign diplomats frequently by-passed Secretary of State Robert Lansing and dealt directly with the President. An additional basis for this attitude may have been, as Link contends, Wilson's "awareness of his own intellectual superiority over most of his associates, and,

45Kennan, Russia Leaves The War, 28.

46Quoted in Link, "Wilson the Diplomatist," 160.

47Wilson "failed systematically to consult the expert intelligence in the executive departments and the foreign service." Blum, Woodrow Wilson and the Politics of Morality, 85; "No President was ever in more complete control of the conduct of the nation's foreign affairs than Woodrow Wilson ... In the broad outline of his foreign policy and the principal decisions implementing it, Wilson was remarkably independent of his advisers." Robert Endicott Osgood, Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations: The Great Transformation Of The Twentieth Century (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), 172.

48Kennan, Russia Leaves The War, 30.
above all, in his urge to dominate."

Historians who have described Woodrow Wilson's conduct of foreign affairs as "Missionary Diplomacy" have generally agreed that Wilson attempted to impose his own concepts of morality upon other nations. An excellent example of this tendency as well as Wilson's attitude toward revolutions appears in the first diplomatic crisis which confronted the new President. On February 22, 1913, Francisco I. Madero, a Mexican liberal whose government had been recognized by President Taft, was executed by the revolutionary forces of General Victoriana Huerta. Taft decided to take no position with respect to the new government but would instead allow Wilson, who would be inaugurated within the week, to handle the problem. Wilson refused to acknowledge the Huerta regime, believing that to do so might encourage government by assassination in other areas of Latin America. This strategy of non-recognition, announced on March 11, 1913, reversed the historic policy whereby the United States had extended diplomatic recognition to de facto governments.

In dealing with the Mexican problem, Wilson demonstrated little respect for or confidence in career diplomats and relied increasingly upon "amateur diplomatists and


50 Howard Francis Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), 139-62.
special agents." John Lind, one such agent in whom Wilson placed great trust, was ignorant of Mexican problems, spoke no Spanish, and was anti-Catholic as well. This tendency to rely upon personal agents, most of them amateurs in diplomacy, was coming to characterize Wilson's efforts in international relations. The Root Mission of 1917 would be a striking example.

Once Wilson determined his proper course of action toward Mexico, he did not hesitate to use military intervention "to force the Mexicans to behave according to his standard." In April, 1914, American naval forces bombarded Vera Cruz, and United States Marines then entered the city, a move that soon forced the overthrow of the Mexican government. For the next four years Wilson attempted to influence the course of events in the Mexican Revolution through the support of various revolutionary leaders. As he confided to a British diplomat, "I am going to teach the South American republics to elect good men." 52

Wilson apparently learned little from his experience with the Mexican Revolution. After years of


intrigue and intervention, the United States withdrew from Mexico with no apparent success, and almost immediately became involved in a much larger and more significant revolution in Russia. 53

When news of the March Revolution reached the United States, the President and most of the American public welcomed it and anticipated the establishment of a government similar to those of Western Europe. Both Wilson and his Secretary of State had a very limited knowledge of Russian history and institutions, and, unfortunately, they received inadequate advice from the so-called "Russian experts" in the United States. This deficiency prevented a realistic view of events in Russia. 54

Wilson was also misled by the statements of the leaders of the Provisional Government. Their pledge to hold a constituent assembly in the near future in order to determine a permanent form of government led Wilson


54 This lack of reliable information is discussed in Chapter III below.
to assume that the results would be a western-style democracy. In view of his own faith in human nature and his unqualified acceptance of democracy as the best of all forms of government, it was impossible for him to believe otherwise. The Provisional Government also issued unqualified assurances of its intention to pursue the war effort. It was upon these assurances and Wilson's own beliefs that he established his policy toward the Russian Provisional Government: to promote the stability of the Provisional Government and to encourage Russia to retain her position as an effective military force in the war. 55

55 Kennan, Russia: Leaves The War, 12-23; "In wartime Russia, Wilsonians sought initially to buttress the pro-Allied liberal-nationalistic regime of the March Revolution, in order to save the moral and material strength of a liberalized Russia for the anti-German Coalition." N. Gordan Levin, Jr., Woodrow Wilson And World Politics: America's Response to War and Revolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 7.
CHAPTER II

DECISION TO SEND MISSION

On the evening of April 2, 1917, before a joint session of the United States Congress, President Woodrow Wilson requested a declaration of war against Germany. In the course of his message, Wilson directed the attention of Congress to the recent revolution in Russia which he described as "wonderful and heartening." Wilson suggested that Russia was now "a fit partner for a league of honour [sic]." The Russian people would now be able to fight more effectively for "freedom in the world, for justice, and for peace."¹

Wilson's reference to Russia indicated two ways the Russian Revolution of March, 1917, might affect American participation in World War I. Coming as it did immediately prior to America's entry into the war, the Revolution strengthened Wilson's claim that the war was a struggle between democracy and autocracy. Of more significance to Wilson was the possibility that the political upheaval in Russia would increase its military effectiveness in the war. In a few weeks, however, it became

¹George F. Kennan, Russia Leaves The War, 18.
apparent that the exact opposite might occur, and many Americans began to reconsider their enthusiasm for the March Revolution.

During a Cabinet meeting on March 20, 1917, less than two weeks after news of the Tsar's abdication reached America, Secretary of State Robert Lansing suggested that the Russian Revolution made the European war a conflict between the forces of democracy and absolutism, thus making American entry into the war more acceptable. Although agreeing that events in Russia had "in a way changed conditions," the President explained to his Cabinet that he "could not give that as reason for war."²

The American people, however, were more willing than their President to accept the Tsar's abdication as further justification for entry into the war to end all wars.³ News of the Revolution occasioned in America a kind of spontaneous rejoicing that Russia had overthrown its monarch and joined the ranks of the world's democracies.⁴

⁴Lasch, American Liberals and the Russian Revolution, 21-22.
Many Americans, who knew little of Russian history and less of contemporary conditions, became keenly interested in and sought additional information about recent political developments. George Kennan, a recognized authority and author of several works on tsarist Russia, recorded in his diary, "Since the first news of the Russian Revolution our telephone has rung every twenty minutes or so from morning to night, and letters and invitations to speak have poured in on me faster than I could answer them." 5

Mass meetings were held throughout the country to express sympathy and encouragement for the new government. One meeting, chaired by Alton B. Parker, was held in the Manhattan Opera House in New York City and included among its sponsors former Senator John C. Spooner of Wisconsin, the president of the American Federation of Labor Samuel Gompers, New York Mayor John P. Mitchel, former Ambassador to England Joseph H. Choate, and Charles Evans Hughes, Presidential candidate for the Republican Party in 1916. Following the meeting, the American Committee for the Encouragement of Democratic Government in Russia was formed. Most of the committee's work consisted of encouraging the governors and legislatures of the several states

5George Kennan, "Diary," March 19, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 24 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
to send messages of support to the Provisional Government. 6

An American in Russia probably reflected public opinion accurately when he explained, "So long as Russia was an autocracy we could see no essential difference between either side . . . But the moment there came the wonderful news of your magnificent revolt all this began to change. We saw then that the conflict was between the fundamental principles of autocracy and democracy." 7 Similar views were expressed by Russians. George Kennan was informed by a Russian friend that "we can join hands with your America and with all the free nations of the world, not only in this war but in all our succeeding life . . . without blushing for our country and a feeling of real brotherhood." 8 A Russian newspaper concluded that there was "no doubt" that the Russian Revolution "hastened the decision of the head of the great


8 Mrs. Ann Petrunkevitch to George Kennan, April 21/8, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 3 (New York Public Library, New York).
transatlantic republic to break definitely with Germany."

This certainly exaggerated the significance of the Russian Revolution in determining American foreign policy. The Revolution, however, made an already established policy more acceptable to the American public.

Of far greater importance to the American government was whether the political upheaval in Russia would affect the country's ability to continue the war effort. Conservative Americans became increasingly aware that the Revolution might weaken Russia's contribution and conceivably remove her as an active belligerent.10

From the outset, Secretary Lansing's policy toward the Provisional Government was dictated primarily by his estimation of its ability to continue the war. Shortly after the Tsar's abdication, David R. Francis, the American Ambassador in Petrograd, urgently requested that the United States extend diplomatic recognition to the new government. He explained that representatives of the government had assured him that Russia would "vigorously prosecute the


10Strakhovsky, American Opinion About Russia, 3-9.
Francis, overly optimistic about the political situation, informed the State Department that there was "no opposition to the Provisional government" and "absolute quiet prevails here and throughout Russia." Lansing received Francis' request on the same day he received assurances from Paul N. Miliukov, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, that the new government would "continue to respect the international undertakings made by the fallen regime."

The State Department reacted immediately. Within twelve hours after receiving Francis' request, authorization for the American Ambassador to extend diplomatic recognition to the Provisional Government was on its way to Petrograd. Less than an hour after receipt of Lansing's telegram, Francis called on Miliukov and made arrangements to be received by the President of the Council of Ministers, George E. Lvov. At 4:30 on the

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11 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, March 18, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/284, St. Dept. Lansing also received assurances from the American minister in Stockholm that the revolution had been "general throughout the Empire" and in Petrograd and Moscow had been "entirely successful." Ira Nelson Morris to Robert Lansing, March 19, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/285, St. Dept.


13 Robert Lansing to David R. Francis, March 20, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/284, St. Dept. Notwithstanding the prompt action of the State Department, Ambassador Francis sent two additional messages urging prompt action; one undated and received by the Department March 21, 1917, and the other dated March 21, 1917.
afternoon of March 22, 1917, Ambassador Francis, accompa­
nied by his staff and military and naval attachés, read

to the Provisional Cabinet a statement extending full
diplomatic recognition to the new government.¹⁴

Two weeks later, Secretary Lansing pointed out to
President Wilson that the United States had recognized
the new government but had not "congratulated the Russian
Government or people upon the establishment of democratic
institutions." He therefore proposed sending a message
through Ambassador Francis "going a little further than
we did in the telegram of recognition."¹⁵ On April 6,
1917, Wilson approved Lansing's draft with only "a verbal
change here and there." The message was liberally sprinkled
with such phrases as "new bond of friendship" and followed
the same pattern as those which had so recently emanated
from private sources in America.¹⁶

Three days later, April 9, 1917, Secretary Lansing
suggested to the President that the United States take a
further step in its efforts to encourage Russia. His

¹⁴David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, March 22,
1917, Doc. No. 861.00/294, St. Dept.; and David R. Francis
to Robert Lansing, March 22, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/296,
St. Dept.

¹⁵Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 5, 1917,
Robert Lansing, War Memoirs, (Indianapolis and New York:
Bobbs-Merrill, 1935), 332.

¹⁶Ibid., 333.
action was prompted by a letter from William Phillips, Assistant Secretary of State. Phillips' concern grew from a conversation he had on the sixth of April with Lieutenant Zinori Pechkov, the adopted son of Russian novelist Maxim Gorky. When asked how the United States "could most help Russia," Pechkov suggested that Phillips "ask the President to send to Russia at once a commission of three men to speak to the Russian people." He proposed a commission consisting of "an Intellectual" (and suggested Professor Franklin H. Giddings of Columbia University), a "prominent and vigorous lawyer," and "a man of high rank, for example, an ex-ambassador." The Russian visitor felt that they should be joined by "two or three younger men who could mingle with the young men of Russia." To Pechkov, a commission such as this "would go far toward creating a solid foundation of mutual understanding between the two people." The Secretary of State believed that Phillips' letter contained "a suggestion which should be carefully considered." He reported to Wilson that the proposed commission "would encourage and strengthen the new government and would create an atmosphere of friendship which would be very helpful in future negotiations."
The President made no response.

Two days later, Russian Ambassador George Bakhmetev warned Lansing that the Provisional Government "will not last" and that the Socialists "may get the upper hand and make peace with Germany." That same day the State Department received from Ambassador Francis a dispatch lacking his earlier optimism. Describing the Russian naval situation as "precarious" and that of the Army as "not wholly satisfactory," Francis suggested that "everything possible be promptly done to strengthen the situation," as there were elements in Russia "urging peace."

Lansing informed the President that the Francis dispatch had caused him "serious concern" and repeated his earlier request that a commission be sent to Russia, thus enabling the United States to "do something to prevent the socialist element in Russia from carrying out any plan which will destroy the efficiency of the Allied Powers." Similar recommendations, Wilson replied, had reached him from "a number of quarters," and the President was "inclined to think that it would be a good idea to send one . . .

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20 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, April 10, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3771, St. Dept.

21 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 11, 1917, Doc. No. 3771, St. Dept.
practically at once." Lansing telegraphed to Francis to "discretely ascertain from Miliukoff" his views about such a mission, whose purpose would be to "consult with the Russian Government as to the best means of cooperation in the war effort and to convey a message of good will from the United States." Within a few days, Francis replied that Miliukov had "no objection" to the proposed mission, and that it would be welcomed by the Russian government. Francis included his "personal view on the subject." He suggested that the group should direct its efforts "first and mainly to successful prosecution of war . . . be very discreet," and avoid "giving expressions to views concerning internal affairs." Although Francis did not object openly to the mission, he emphasized that good relations had been established with the Provisional Government as a result of early diplomatic recognition and suggested, "We should be careful to avoid anything likely to detract from a good record." His true feeling, however, was that the mission would make his work in Russia more difficult. To a member of his family Francis wrote, "I don't know what effect their

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22 Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, April 12, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3800½, St. Dept.

23 Robert Lansing to David R. Francis, April 14, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4001A, St. Dept.

24 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, April 19, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4002, St. Dept.
coming will have and sometimes wish that they were not coming as my relationships with this Government are so good now that I feel they will be injured rather than benefited by the injection of any new element."\textsuperscript{25}

Anticipating a favorable response from the Provisional Government, President Wilson and Lansing had already begun selecting the members for the special diplomatic mission. The group would ultimately consist of nine men representing diverse elements of American society and be headed by an aging leader of the Republican party, former Secretary of State Elihu Root.

It is impossible to determine with any degree of accuracy who first suggested sending the special diplomatic mission to Russia. When Lansing presented the proposal to Wilson he was informed that the idea had already reached Wilson from several sources. Wilson would later name his advisor Colonel E. M. House as an early sponsor.\textsuperscript{26} Oscar S. Straus of New York played a prominent role in encouraging interest in such a mission and has been recognized by historians as well as contemporaries as the first to

\textsuperscript{25}David R. Francis to Perry Francis, May 16/29, 1917, David R. Francis Papers, Box "May 1917" (Missouri Historical Society Library: St. Louis, Missouri).

\textsuperscript{26}Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, April 12, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3800\$0, St. Dept.
suggest the idea. But the idea of a mission had been discussed in many circles.

As early as April 7, 1917, The New York Times carried a story, datelined "London April 6," that Russian sources indicated that "an American commission of national character would be welcomed in Russia" and that "its co-operation with the new Government would be of inestimable value now and for the future." An American Army officer attached to the Root Mission recalled in his memoirs that, at the time of America's entry into the war, "the word 'mission' had taken on a new importance for Americans." French and British "missions" to the United States had stirred the nation with excitement. "The whole country was in its first paroxysm of war-fever and everybody was in a prodigious hurry to do something; do it at once, and, above all, do it in Europe."

Perhaps the most important promoter of American assistance to Russia and one who has been neglected or ignored by historians was Stanley Washburn, an American journalist who in 1917 had recently returned from Russia

27"You originated the idea of a commission and were the first to suggest it." George Kennan to Oscar Straus, April 27, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 8 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).


29T. Bentley Mott, Twenty Years As Military Attaché (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 194.
where he had served as a war correspondent for *The London Times*. Washburn arrived in Washington on March 28, 1917, and contacted Daniel Willard, President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the National Defense Committee. With Willard's assistance, Washburn presented his ideas about railroad assistance for Russia to the National Defense Committee three days later.

Washburn was concerned primarily with improving the railroad system, particularly the Trans-Siberian road. He suggested that a commission of "eight or ten of the best of railroad men in America" be sent to assist the re-organization of the railway system. The group would make recommendations to the Provisional Government and "if necessary suggest taking over the actual operations from the Pacific to Moscow."³¹

Washburn's suggestions impressed the National Defense Committee, which included six members of Wilson's Cabinet. The Chairman later stated that although "many men of distinction" had appeared before the Committee,

³⁰Stanley Washburn to Lord Northcliff, April 6, 1917, Stanley Washburn Papers, Box 1 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

"none of them, not a single man, received the close attention which he Washburn received." Willard recognized Washburn as the originator of the railroad commission and wrote to him:

But for your own efforts to stimulate interest in this particular matter, it is doubtful if such a commission would have gone at all, and in any event it would not have started at this time. The first recommendation which was made to the Council of National Defense concerning such action by our government, was based wholly upon your personal appeal to me. I know, because I presented the matter to the Council.

Washburn also hoped that something could be done to help stabilize the political situation. In March, Washburn had written his London publisher that things "seem to be going extremely well and we must hope for continuity of the present system of Government established by the Revolution." The Allies "must not overlook the possibility of a reaction from this spasm in the form of a contra-revolution." Washburn believed the political left constituted an even greater threat to the military effectiveness of the Provisional Government. "This sweeping democratic movement may become so top-heavy that

32Josephus Daniels, "Diary," March 31, 1917, Josephus Daniels Papers, Box 3; and Ann W. Lane and Louise H. Hall (eds.), The Letters of Franklin K. Lane, Personal and Political (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1922), 243; and Daniel Willard to Mrs. Stanley Washburn, April 10, 1917, Stanley Washburn Papers, Box 1.

33Daniel Willard to Stanley Washburn, May 6, 1917, Stanley Washburn Papers, Box 1.
fanatic radicals will over-rule the moderate and if the German drive should develop successfully on the Russian front we may again see talk of an independent peace."^34

Washburn felt that the only effective method of assuring pro-Allied sentiment in Russia was by reaching "the hearts of the common people." He saw "an enormous increase of pro-ally publicity" as the best method of assuring this relationship and of counteracting the potentially dangerous radical influence in Russia. He emphasized the need for immediate action:

Now while the Russian Government is with us is the time to develop and push every form of publication which can reach the common people in Russia so that in case this Government by misadventure is weakened or over-thrown we have not lost the opportunity of reaching the heart of Russia which would ultimately dominate foreign relations.

Finally, Washburn expected a "difficult summer." Any "serious reverse" in the Russian military situation "would at once create the background for a reactionary attack on the present government and an equally dangerous radical demand for cessation of the war."^35

Washburn's role as one of the first, if not the first, to create interest in aiding the Allied cause through assistance to Russia has been neglected. Not only was he

^34Stanley Washburn to Lord Northcliff, March 23, 1917, Stanley Washburn Papers, Box 1.

^35Ibid.
directly responsible for suggesting the Railroad Commission, but his ideas about publicity make him one of the first to envision an expanded diplomatic mission to Russia in the summer of 1917.

On May 22, 1917, Secretary Lansing instructed Ambassador Francis to inform the Russian Foreign Minister that the Root Mission was being sent "primarily to manifest to the Russian Government and people the deep sympathetic feelings which exist among all classes in America for the adherence of Russia to the principle of democracy." 36 President Wilson described the Mission's purpose as an attempt "to convey to the Provisional Government of Russia the congratulations of the Government of the United States on the formation of the new Government and to arrange for the cooperation of the two Governments in matters in which they are mutually interested." 37 Thus, in their official statements, the Secretary of State and the President limited the objectives of the Mission to good-will and fact-finding.

In addition to the stated purpose, other considerations prompted the decision to send the Mission to Russia.


37 Woodrow Wilson to Provisional Government of Russia [No date], Elihu Root Papers, Box 136 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
Originally, Lansing had suggested that the group be used to "prepare the way to negotiate a new treaty with Russia which will secure satisfactory commercial relations after the war is over." The possibility did not go unnoticed abroad. Post Wheeler reported from Tokyo that the Japanese press viewed the proposed mission as an attempt to establish favorable economic relations with the new government. Wilson, however, decided to exclude any such task from the Mission's duties, and the members were instructed to refrain from any discussions on the topic of a commercial treaty.

Many Americans, among them some of Wilson's closest advisors, felt that another goal of the Mission should be to assist the Provisional Government in preventing the takeover by more radical elements. The possibility of a movement toward a separate peace sponsored by persons referred to as "radical," "socialistic," or "anarchist"

38 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 9, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3799¼, St. Dept.


40 See below. Chapter on Finance.

41 Oscar Straus, one of the first to suggest the Mission, told George Kennan in a telephone conversation that the purpose of the proposed Mission should be to help the Provisional Government in all possible ways and "particularly in its struggle with Socialists and radicals." George Kennan, "Diary," April 9, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 24 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
seemed to be the most dangerous threat to the Russian war effort. Many observers warned Lansing of this danger. On March 20, 1917, he received a message from the American Ambassador in Stockholm that if the present "moderate party" remains in power the results of the recent political changes would be beneficial. If, however, "control passed into the hands of the extremist party the outcome is more doubtful." Francis also warned that elements in Russia were "urging peace" and suggested that "everything possible be promptly done to strengthen situation." On the same day that Wilson approved the Root Mission, Henry Morgenthau requested that something be done to "prevent any internal disturbance in Russia at this time." The idea of helping Russia and the Allied war effort by preventing a radical takeover in Russia was fairly common in the American press. It is, therefore, not surprising that some analysts in the United States

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43 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, April 10, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3771, St. Dept.


45 Strakhovsky, American Opinion About Russia, 6-9; The New York Times quoted Count Ilya Tolstoy, son of the Russian literary figure, as suggesting, "The only thing I fear . . . is that the Socialists of the extreme left will be too radical." The New York Times, April 28, 1917, 12.
viewed the Root Mission and Root's role in particular as that of offering "wise counsel" in order to "stem the current of the forces of radicalism."\(^{46}\)

There can be no doubt that Lansing envisioned the Mission as a way to prevent the possibility of a "radical" overthrow of the Provisional Government. In his request for a Mission on April 11, 1917, he stated, "I wish we could do something to prevent the socialistic element in Russia from carrying out any plan which will destroy the efficiency of the Allied powers."\(^{47}\)

President Wilson was not as direct as his Secretary of State but no doubt shared Lansing's opinion. When Charles R. Crane, upon his departure for Russia immediately after the March Revolution, asked Wilson if he had any message to convey to the Russian people, Wilson replied, "Oh, no, I do not know much about their problems and they probably understand what is needed." He added, however, "People are much controlled by political habit and if the Provisional Government can accomplish the essential things they are after and hold old forms they would probably get


\(^{47}\)Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 11, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3771, St. Dept.
on easier and make more progress." When asked by a leader in the suffragette movement to give assistance to the women in Russia, Wilson replied that he was in sympathy with the movement but felt that any "political guidance on our part" would be resented. The Russians would react in a way "that would be detrimental to the interest of the country and to the relations of Russia and the United States."

There is no indication that Root or any member of the Mission received any instructions to try to prevent a radical coup. In fact, they were cautioned to refrain from any statements which could be interpreted as interference in Russia's domestic politics.

One way in which Root and his group could have played an important role in American-Russian relations would have been by a clarification of American war aims. Root, however, was specifically instructed to avoid any


discussion of the topic, since the President was reserving this problem for himself. Wilson's dilemma over the question of war aims stemmed from what many Russians considered a shift in policy by the United States following its entry into the war. Wilson's "Peace Without Victory" speech before the United States Senate on January 22, 1917, was translated in Russia into the slogan "no annexation, no indemnities." Miliukov, whose foreign policy differed in no great degree from that of the Tsar, felt compelled to explain Wilson's statement to his countrymen. Stating categorically that "peace without victory, proposed by President Wilson is inadmissible for the Allies," Miliukov explained that the phrase was being used incorrectly and out of context with the President's broader views. When "all the ideas" of Wilson were examined it could be seen that "the President's statements imperiously demand the very continuation of the war by the Allies to a victorious end." "Peace without annexation" would be acceptable only if the word annexation were interpreted as "conquest." But in the same statement, Miliukov talked of "fixing the map of Europe on lines that will exclude every possibility of a new international catastrophe," "the settlement of national historical questions" and "the fixing of frontiers in accord with national endeavors" as examples of "broad

international questions" suitable for consideration by the Allies once the war was over. At this point, President Wilson's position on war aims was closer to those of the Soviets than to those of Miliukov.

President Wilson was informed by several advisors that an official statement on American war aims was desirable. Lansing forwarded to the President an urgent request from Francis, who had recently conferred with the officials of the Provisional Government. The Ambassador explained to the State Department that these officials "contend that wrong construction is being placed on [the] President's utterances." Francis agreed and reported that a "workmen's committee" had been using Wilson's "Peace without Victory" speech to justify its own formula for peace. Even the French Minister of Munitions suggested the possibility of a conference in Petrograd in order to issue a "joint reply" to the Russian Government. Francis opposed such a conference due to the "absence of a definite understanding between ourselves and other

51 "Translation of an interview accorded by the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Petrograd press," David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, April 9, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5547, St. Dept.

52 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, [no date], Doc. No. 861.00/361, St. Dept.
countries fighting Germany."

The Secretary of State also forwarded for the President's consideration the view of a leading pro-War American Socialist that "immediate renunciation of no annexation no indemnities program by President may save Russia nothing else will." Lansing later received the same advice from George Kennan, a man whose knowledge of the Russian situation he respected. Kennan suggested, "If we can make a breach in the dogma of 'no annexation and no indemnities' ... we shall greatly weaken their position."

Secretary Lansing, convinced that Wilson must issue a statement to the Russians concerning war aims, pointed out that "certain phrases uttered by you are being used by the radical socialists (probably under German influence) to force the Provisional Government to declare a policy which will remove the chief incentive to

53 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, May 11, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/356, St. Dept.; Three days later, Francis relayed to Lansing a request from the Russko Slavo, a Moscow daily with a circulation of over one million and described by Francis as "perhaps the most influential Russian Journal," for a statement from Wilson on war aims. David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, May 14, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/361, St. Dept.

54 William English Walling to Frank K. Polk, May 16, 1917, Frank K. Polk Papers, Drawer 85 (Yale University Library, New Haven, Conn.).

55 George Kennan to Robert Lansing, May 30, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/422½, St. Dept.
Russian offensive operation." He interpreted this as "an insidious and ingenious plan to win over the Russian people to the idea of a separate peace . . . a very real danger" and suggested that Wilson send a personal message clarifying war aims to the Provisional Government to be published in Russia. Wilson delegated the actual drafting of the statement to Lansing and approved the draft with "only a few verbal changes." The statement contained nothing that was new and was transmitted to Francis on May 22, 1917.

During this period, Miliukov was finding it increasingly difficult to maintain his position on the war. Throughout April and into the first week of May, various attempts were made to reconcile Miliukov's position on foreign policy with that of the Soviet. This task proved impossible and a cabinet crisis resulted in the resignations of both Miliukov and Guchkov by May 16. A new cabinet known as the First Coalition was formed. Michael Tereshchenko assumed Miliukov's position, and Kerensky

56 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, May 17, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/361, St. Dept.


58 Robert Lansing to David R. Francis, May 22, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5171A, St. Dept.
became the new Minister of War.  

When Tereshchenko accepted Wilson's note, he inquired whether certain passages could be "changed or altered." Although Francis had been instructed to deliver Wilson's message in the form of a "verbatim copy," he, along with Tereshchenko, felt that alterations were possible. When inquiries were made, Lansing directed him to explain that the President's message was "in no sense a reply to anything" but was a "wholly spontaneous and independent communication" and "not subject to any change."

Tereshchenko's fears were not without foundation, as considerable opposition developed in the Russian Press when Wilson's original message was published on May 28. The President's statement contained lengthy passages of a high mora1 tone. This caused one Russian critic to

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59 Warth, The Allies And The Russian Revolution, 55-56.

60 One passage in question stated: "The war has begun to go against Germany." The Foreign Minister felt this would be used by some Russians to argue that further offensive military efforts on their part would no longer be required. Tereshchenko also pointed out that Wilson's use of such phrases as, "The day has come to conquer or submit" and "That status /power of the Imperial German Government/ must be altered" would suggest a "dictated and annexationist peace." Browder and Kerensky, Provisional Government Documents, II, 1109.

observe that "as should have been expected" Wilson's message "contained nothing new" and differed with the remarks of other Allied powers only in that the true meaning of the President's words had been "camouflaged" by the use of "peace-loving sounding words." The editor of a large Odessa daily, socialist but non-Bolshevik, stated: "President Wilson is renouncing the principles he proclaimed only a short while ago." The author also noted that with American entry into the war, Wilson could "no longer pose as a superarbiter," and Russians "can no longer have any faith in the impartial objective judgment of President Wilson."^63

Wilson's message of May 28 was his last attempt to state clearly American policy and aims until his significant "Fourteen Points" were issued in January, 1918, following the Bolshevik victory in November. Two years later, Arthur Bullard, who was assigned to Russia by the American Committee on Public Information, wrote:

We will not know until men still young write their memoirs in their old age why the Allies refused to define their war aims. If Mr. Wilson could have formulated his fourteen terms in July instead of January there would have been some hope. But the


refusal of the Allies to even discuss the Russian proposals were fatal as far as Russia was concerned; it dampened the ardor of all our friends and it gave a new and tremendous weapon to our enemies.  

Bullard probably overemphasized the possible effect of a statement by Wilson on American war aims. He was correct, however, in the assumption that Russia was tired of the war by the summer of 1917 and was unwilling to continue in pursuit of the objectives agreed upon by the Tsar and the Allied Powers. Consequently, the objectives of the Mission, although frequently visualized as broad and comprehensive, were never more than Wilson had originally intended. These objectives were to congratulate the new Russian government and to determine how the United States could materially assist Russia in the two countries' united war effort.

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CHAPTER III

SELECTION OF MEMBERS

The process of selecting members of the Mission began as soon as the decision to send a group to Russia was made. Wilson informed his Secretary of State on April 12, 1917, that the Mission should be sent "practically at once" and that "the important, perhaps the all-important thing is the personnel." Mission members should be "men of large view, tested discretion, and a sympathetic appreciation of just what it is they have been sent over for . . . and it is necessary, besides, that they should look the part." He added that "they must not all be Democrats." In fact, it was not necessary that "any of them be Democrats." The group "should all be genuinely enthusiastic for the success of the Russian revolution."^1

Wilson also desired the selection of men who represented a cross-section of the American public. Ambassador Francis was instructed to inform the Russian government that the men were "selected by the President with the

^1 Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, April 12, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3800½, St. Dept.

^2 Ibid.

65
special purpose of giving representation to the various elements which make up the American people." Thus began the process of selecting members of the Mission, a task which would not be completed until May 10.

In early April, when the idea of a Mission was first suggested to the State Department, it was decided to include a man of high rank in order to lend prestige to the effort. As England and France had sent Cabinet members to Russia, the United States could scarcely do less. At first, Lansing favored William G. McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury, and suggested him in a Cabinet meeting on the afternoon of April 13 following a conference with Frank L. Polk, State Department counselor. Apparently, former Secretary of State Elihu Root's name was mentioned at the same Cabinet meeting, as Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane wrote his brother of the plans to send a Mission to Russia "possibly headed by McAdoo or Root."
On the evening of April 16, Secretary McAdoo called on Lansing at his home, where the two discussed the Mission to Russia.\(^7\) Evidently it was in this conference that McAdoo and Lansing decided to support Root for the position. On the following day, McAdoo wrote Wilson that Root's appointment would be "highly regarded by the entire country" and that he would be a good choice if he were found to be "in full sympathy" with the administration's plans.\(^8\) McAdoo repeated his recommendation in a Cabinet meeting on the same day and was given strong support by Lansing.\(^9\)

Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, was the only member of the Cabinet who objected to the choice. He believed the selection of Root would be a mistake, although he agreed there was "no abler man in America" for the task. President Wilson replied that politics should not be a factor in their choice. Daniels attempted to clarify his position: He explained that his objection did not stem from Root's Republicanism but resulted from Root's reputation as a conservative, which might bring

\(^7\)"Lansing Desk Diary," April 16, 1917.

\(^8\)William G. McAdoo to Woodrow Wilson, April 17, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.

him undue criticism. Daniels suggested Theodore Roosevelt or William Jennings Bryan, who "were known in Russia as liberals," as possible alternatives. Daniels' argument had no apparent effect, and he later recalled that neither "Wilson nor any member of the Cabinet agreed with me. Lansing and McAdoo rebuked me, and Wilson agreed with them."\(^\text{10}\)

The only restriction placed upon Root's selection was that his position on Russia be determined prior to informing him of the appointment.\(^\text{11}\) Wilson instructed Lansing to determine whether Root could be considered "a real friend of the Russian Revolution."\(^\text{12}\) After conferring with Root, Lansing found him to be acceptable. Root agreed to accept the position on April 24\(^\text{13}\) and met with President Wilson to discuss the Mission two days later.\(^\text{14}\)

It is difficult to determine the motives behind the selection of Root. Discussions about the minor members

\(^\text{10}\)Daniels, Years of War, 57-59.

\(^\text{11}\)William G. McAdoo to Woodrow Wilson, April 17, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.

\(^\text{12}\)Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, April 24, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4031\(^\text{\frac{1}{2}}\), St. Dept.

\(^\text{13}\)"Lansing Desk Diary," April 24, 1917; and Lansing, War Memoirs, 334.

of the Mission were recorded in correspondence between the President and his Cabinet members. Root, however, was evidently discussed in conversations that went unrecorded. Perhaps those who favored Root were later reluctant to claim credit for the selection of a man whose work was so soon discredited. There are, however, several factors which may explain the selection. Root was a Republican, a man of international stature, and, perhaps most important, a man who had given strong and open support to the President's war policy. Root had impressed both Wilson and Lansing with his willingness to suppress partisan feeling and, in a sense, had offered to join their team.

In the months immediately preceding America's entry into World War I, Root publicly as well as privately supported the President's preparedness campaign. In Washington on January 25, 1917, Root delivered a speech entitled "America's Present Needs" to a gathering of the Congress of Constructive Patriotism held under the auspices of the National Security League. In his address, the former Secretary of State made a strong emotional appeal for universal military service, which he saw as the

15 "Lansing Desk Diary," April 12-26, 1917.

16 In his memoirs, Lansing stated, "It had been decided that Honorable Elihu Root should head this important mission if he was willing to accept the post." Lansing, War Memoirs, 334.
surest way to protect the vital interests of the nation. 17

Following Wilson's request for war, Root congratulated the President and offered his support. Wilson replied that Root's "generous letter" had given him "real gratification." He was especially pleased that Root considered his action a reaffirmation of traditional American foreign policy rather than an abrogation of it. 18

A week later, Root once more expressed support for Wilson and his war policy at a gathering of the Republican Club in New York City. The man who was considered by many the elder statesman of the party told his fellow Republicans that partisan considerations would have to be shelved for the duration of the war. He added that there was no need for a coalition cabinet, and the President's administration should be supported "as if every man there was a Republican." 19

Root's early support for preparedness did not pass unnoticed. On April 11, the same day the decision was made to send a mission to Russia, Secretary Lansing complimented Root on his New York speech: "There has been no utterance by any man which surpasses it in patriotism


18Woodrow Wilson to Elihu Root, April 7, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 136.

or in sound practical means of helpfulness to the Government." Lansing assured Root that his speech would discourage those persons who heretofore had been unable to "divorce their public responsibilities from partisanship and the petty things in politics." One of Wilson's Cabinet members later recalled that the President's "former harsh opinion" of Root changed "when Root rang clear on war measures."

When news of his selection became public, Root received many congratulatory letters from varied elements of American society and from members of both major political parties. A letter from Root's personal friend, former President of the United States William Howard Taft, illustrated the reaction for which Wilson had hoped. Expressing surprise "that Wilson would be wise enough to select the best man in the United States to go to Russia," Taft confessed that "the President's selection of you has

20Robert Lansing to Elihu Root, April 11, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 136.

21Daniels, Years of War, 58; Root's former chief, Theodore Roosevelt, was "utterly sick of the gush about supporting the President." He expressed surprise and disappointment that "Taft, Hughes, and even Root take part in the general idiot cry which aligns us behind the President." Theodore Roosevelt to Henry Cabot Lodge, March 18, 1917, quoted in Elting Elmore Morison (ed.), The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954), VIII, 1183.

22Elihu Root Papers, Box 136.
heartened me more than any other thing that has happened--
It means everything for the country."  

Although the President's selection was well received by most of the American press, significant opposition was voiced in the Socialist New York Call and the New York Russian-language newspapers Russkoye, Russky Golos, and Novy Mir.  

Socialist Congressman Meyer London of New York's Twelfth Congressional District asked Wilson "to revoke the appointment" if it could "possibly be done." He felt that Root was "the last person in the world to command the confidence of that awakened country." The Russians would look upon the appointment as "a calamity." 

On that same day, Wilson was asked by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise of New York to reconsider the appointment. Wilson replied that prior to Root's selection, "I convinced myself that he was genuinely and heartily in sympathy with the revolution in Russia." 

23 William Howard Taft to Elihu Root, April 28, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 166.

24 Strakhovsky, American Opinion About Russia, 11-14.

25 Meyer London to Woodrow Wilson, April 28, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B. Senator Hiram W. Johnson would later express a similar view. Hiram W. Johnson to Mrs. Raymond Robins, July 17, 1917, Raymond Robins Papers, Box 12 (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin).

Most of the criticism came from Socialists and Jews and, to a lesser extent, from naturalized Americans of Russian birth and Russians living in America. Professor Alexander Petrunkevitch of Yale University disapproved of Root's appointment and discussed it with George Kennan and Oscar Straus. In a speech in New York, Petrunkevitch stated that the decision to send a mission to Russia was "fraught with danger" which "lies in the selection of the members of the commission." He did not openly oppose Root's appointment but urged his audience to persuade Wilson to add to the commission "men acceptable to the Russian Social Democrats." Two days later, Representative Abraham Shiplacoff introduced a resolution in the New York State Legislature asking the President to reconsider Root's appointment. His resolution, however, was "hooted down" by his colleagues and "all record of it ... expunged from the Journal." In addition to public expressions of displeasure, many persons privately disapproved of the appointment. Included among them were Ambassador Francis and Oscar Straus who had played a large

27 George Kennan to Oscar Straus, April 27, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 8 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress); and Oscar Straus to George Kennan, May 2, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 4 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).


29 Ibid., May 4, 1917, 7.
part in promoting the idea of the Mission. Wilson did not anticipate the objections that the appointment created and probably regretted his choice even before Root departed. On April 28 he wrote to a critic, "I believe, all things weighed together, \(\sqrt{\text{that}}\) my choice has been the wise one." A few days later, however, Wilson wrote, "I am trying to put men on the commission whose popular sympathies and catholic view of human rights will be recognized (at any rate, in the case of most of them)." Although Wilson did not name him, Root must have been the member to whom he referred, as no other member had aroused any controversy.

Years later, one of Root's friends, Colonel T. Bentley Mott, suggested that Wilson had sent Root to Russia "to get rid of him" and to avoid utilizing him in a more responsible capacity." This accusation, which Mott admits was only "my hypothesis" based upon nothing "I have heard Mr. Root assert," cannot be borne out by the existing records. All available information indicates

\[30\text{Oscar Straus to George Kennan, May 2, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 4 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress); and David R. Francis to Edward B. Lilley, May 1/14, 1917, David R. Francis Papers, Box "May 1917."}\]


\[32\text{Woodrow Wilson to Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, May 8, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.}\]

\[33\text{Mott, \textit{Twenty Years}, 192.}\]
that everyone involved in the selection of the personnel felt that they had selected a man who could accomplish the Mission's objective. If Wilson did have second thoughts about appointing Root, his removal would have been politically impossible. The choice of Elihu Root, was a decision for which the President was responsible and one which he ultimately regretted.

Historians usually restrict their attention to the factors and motives leading to the selection of Root and, in general, have neglected the other eight members. This is understandable in view of Root's prominence in American politics and his subsequent exclusion from the Paris Peace Conference. It is important, however, to examine the other members selected.

Colonel House recommended to Wilson that the group consist of Samuel Gompers, Willard Straight, Benjamin Ide Wheeler, and Oscar Straus to represent

34 Root would later write his biographer that "Wilson didn't want to accomplish anything. It was a grand-stand play. He wanted to show his sympathy for the Russian Revolution. When we delivered his message and made our speeches, he was satisfied; that's all he wanted." Elihu Root to Phillip C. Jessup, September 16, 1930; quoted in Phillip C. Jessup, Elihu Root (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1938), II, 356.

35 Root's most recent biographer suggests that it was Root's performance in Russia which led Wilson to exclude Root from the Paris Peace Conference following World War I. Richard W. Leopold, Elihu Root and the Conservative Tradition (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1954), 119.
American labor, business, education, and Jewry, respectively. From this group Wilson eliminated Wheeler, whom the President considered "a bit too ladylike." Wilson then submitted for Lansing's consideration the names of the other three along with those of Charles R. Crane, a wealthy Chicago businessman, who was already in Russia, and Professor Samuel Harper, whom Wilson considered "widely known and trusted in Russia."36

Of the four originally recommended by Colonel House, Lansing approved only of Samuel Gompers, "as available a man as we could get." Gompers, however, eliminated himself. Straus was eliminated by Lansing who questioned the "advisability of sending another Jew" and felt there was "a measure of danger in overplaying the Jew element." Straight was also rejected by the Secretary of State as was Wheeler, already excluded by the President. Lansing approved the President's choice of Crane but opposed Professor Harper with the explanation that "I have heard from several different sources that he is not as popular as I had supposed in Russia."37 In addition to Gompers and Crane, Lansing suggested that the Mission include John R. Mott (President of the Y.M.C.A.), Cyrus McCormick

36Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, April 12, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3800½, St. Dept.

37Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 12, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3800½, St. Dept.
or Harold Elliot as a representative of American business, Samuel R. Bertron (a New York banker), and "a lawyer of prominence." 38

Crane had for many years expressed a keen interest in Russia and the furthering of Russian and Slavic studies in the United States. He had established a lecture series in Slavic studies at the University of Chicago and had invited Miliukov and others to the University. He had also subsidized the work of Professor Harper and had made it financially possible for him to visit Russia several times prior to World War I. 39 He had, moreover, encouraged Harper to travel to Russia as advisor to Ambassador Francis in 1916. 40 Crane maintained his interest in Russia throughout this period, although he refused to accept the position of Ambassador to Russia when Wilson offered it to him in 1913. 41

As soon as news of the March Revolution reached the United States, Crane left for Russia. 42 Before

38 Ibid.

39 Lasch, American Liberals And The Russian Revolution, 5-7.


41 Lasch, American Liberals And The Russian Revolution, 5.

departing, he asked Colonel House to inform the President that if he were needed in any capacity, "You have only to make a sign." Thus, when members of the Mission were being chosen, Wilson personally included Crane in the group. No open opposition to Crane's appointment was expressed, although Kennan privately criticized the choice because Crane was not a "level-headed thinker and although he has been in Russia many times he doesn't know the psychology of the Russian people." 

Cyrus McCormick was chosen as a representative of American business because International Harvester Company was "very popular in Russia." However, McCormick and the President were also personal friends, and McCormick corresponded with the President on a first-name basis. This no doubt enhanced his availability for such a post. During the time names were being considered, McCormick wrote the President and offered his services.

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43 Charles R. Crane to Edward M. House, April 4, 1917, Charles R. Crane Papers.

44 Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, April 12, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3800½, St. Dept.

45 George Kennan to Oscar Straus, May 16, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 8 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

46 Lansing, War Memoirs, 334.

47 Cyrus M. McCormick to Woodrow Wilson, April 22, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.
Samuel Bertron, described by one of his colleagues as an unusual banker in that he was a Democrat, was named to the group by Lansing although Bertron thought his appointment was due to the influence of Colonel House. John R. Mott, who was included for the "religious and social betterment" of Russia, was attached to the Mission following a suggestion by Crane. Perhaps the least controversial of all the men to serve on the Mission, Mott impressed one extremely critical Russian observer as a "very pleasant, mild-mannered man, very much like a clergyman of a well-to-do parish," a man who was "genuinely anxious to help Russia."

Wilson soon decided that the Mission should include representatives of the Army and Navy. Major General Hugh L. Scott, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, was chosen to represent the army. This selection was somewhat surprising since the United States had just


49 Samuel R. Bertron to Edward M. House, April 28, 1917, Edward M. House Papers, Drawer 3 (Yale University Library, New Haven, Conn.).

50 Lansing, War Memoirs, 334.


52 D. Fedotoff White, Survival Through War and Revolution in Russia (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1939), 140.
declared war, and it would appear that the nation could ill afford the absence of its ranking military man for such a long period of time. To prevent any "misunderstanding" concerning Scott's detachment from duty at this time, Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, explained that Scott had been selected "in order that the people of Russia may realize from the dignity of his office the full compliment and cordiality of our great mission to them." 53

Scott's appointment was first mentioned in a conversation between Secretaries Lansing and Baker on April 26, at which time they also discussed sending General Samuel B. M. Young. The matter was settled, however, when Baker informed Lansing that the President favored Scott. 54 When told of the President's decision by Secretary Baker, Scott replied that he did not wish to leave the country at that particular time but would accept the decision since he was "at the disposition of the President and would do cheerfully whatever he wished." 55 Thus, of


54 "Lansing Desk Diary," April 26, 1917; The following day Root was told of the choice and was "delighted at the idea of Gen. Scott's going." Ibid., April 27, 1917.

all the men in the Mission, Scott joined most reluctantly
and was the most pessimistic about the possibility of
success. 56

The choice of the naval representative was dele-
gated to the Secretary of the Navy. Daniels discussed
the appointment with Lansing, and they both felt that in
view of Scott's rank the naval representative should be
a junior officer. 57 Daniels recommended, and the Presi-
dent accepted, Rear Admiral James H. Glennon, who was
described by Daniels as "a handsome man of commanding
presence" and an "expert in ordinance." 58

The question of including a Jew on the Mission
was perhaps the most explosive. From the beginning,
President Wilson, following the advice of Colonel House,
had wanted Straus to be the representative of American
Jewry. 59 Lansing had no objection to the appointment of

56 "I greatly fear we are too late . . . I start
out with very little hope of any successful results."
Hugh L. Scott to General Elbert Wheeler, May 15, 1917,
Hugh Scott Papers, Box 29 (Division of Manuscripts,
Library of Congress); "It looks very much as if Russia
is breaking up and we will be too late." Hugh L. Scott
to Mrs. H. L. Schelling, May 15, 1917, Ibid.

57 Josephus Daniels, "Diary," May 10, 1917,
Josephus Daniels Papers, Box 3; and "Lansing Desk Diary,"
May 10, 1917.

58 Josephus Daniels to Woodrow Wilson, May 10,
1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.

59 Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, April 12,
1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3800½, St. Dept.
a Jew, but he assumed that Gompers would represent Labor, and, therefore, thought it inadvisable to send another Jew. On April 14, Lansing instructed Francis to "discreetly ascertain" from the Russian Foreign Minister "whether it would be wise to have a prominent Hebrew a member of the Commission" and if his being "orthodox or unorthodox" were important. Following a discussion with Miliukov, Francis informed the State Department that there were no objections from the Russian Foreign Office and that "either kind" was "equally acceptable."

The President, after learning of Gompers' reluctance to leave the country for such a prolonged period, was faced with the task of finding not only a Jewish representative but a labor leader, as well. By April 24, Wilson had decided upon Eugene Meyer, Jr., of New York and notified Lansing of this decision. Almost as soon as the decision was made, the Secretary of State began to reconsider the desirability of sending any Jew to Russia, since the State Department had received

60 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 12, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/3800 ½, St. Dept.

61 Robert R. Lansing to David R. Francis, April 14, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4001A, St. Dept.

62 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, April 19, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4002, St. Dept.

63 Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, April 17, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4031 ½, St. Dept.
dispatches which suggested the possibility of an anti-Semitic movement which might disrupt the Provisional Government. Other persons began to fear that the Russians might interpret the appointment of any Jew as an indication that America was more interested in securing political rights for Jews than in assisting the Provisional Government in its war effort. Bertron wrote Colonel House that he had been advised by persons "best posted in reference to the Russian affairs" that a Jew should not be sent on the Mission. Professor Harper reminded the State Department that "the revolution was not put through to give the Jews rights."

Secretary Lansing then received a further opinion from Ambassador Francis. Following his conversation with Miliukov, Francis had discussed the question with other members of the Russian Government. He informed Lansing that "another minister . . . cautioned against Hebrew being chairman or vice chairman" of the Mission and that "while no objection to such membership on commission

64 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, April 17, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/407, St. Dept.; and Madding Summer, American Consul Moscow, to Robert Lansing, March 20, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/337, St. Dept.


he should not be conspicuous but discreet."^7

Becoming increasingly concerned over the possibility of jeopardizing the effectiveness of the Mission, Lansing, following a discussion with Stanley Washburn on April 30, wrote to Wilson at length about Washburn's views on the matter. He considered Washburn "very closely in touch with Russian affairs," a man whose "knowledge and judgment as an observer entitle his opinion to careful consideration." It was Washburn's view that "it would be a great mistake to send any Jew at all on the commission to Russia." The appointment of a Jew, he felt, would "cause popular suspicion on the purpose of the commission and very materially impair its usefulness." The Secretary of State then directed the President's attention to Ambassador Francis' telegram and recommended that Meyer be asked to withdraw. On the following day, after conferring with Wilson about the Mission, Lansing was undoubtedly instructed to ask Eugene Meyer to withdraw.

On May 2, Secretary Lansing discussed the situation with Justice Louis D. Brandeis. Meyer arrived in Washington

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67David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, April 20, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4003, St. Dept.

68"Lansing Desk Diary," April 30, 1917.

69Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 30, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4386½, St. Dept.

70"Lansing Desk Diary," May 1, 1917.
on the following day and was met by Brandeis, who explained the situation to him. The two men then met with Lansing. Following the conference, the Secretary of State informed President Wilson that Meyer "was very pleasant about it and at once declared his willingness to withdraw his acceptance." He cautioned the President, however, that it would be difficult to explain why no Jew had been included. He felt that this "delicate question" would require "very careful handling."  

Shortly after the Root Mission had departed for Russia, Judge Aaron J. Levy of New York interviewed President Wilson and published an account of the interview in the Jewish Daily Warheit. Readers were given the impression that the President's decision to withdraw the Meyer appointment had resulted from a suggestion by the Russian Provisional Government. Reuben Fink, Washington correspondent for The Day, a rival of the Daily Warheit in New York, interviewed both Joseph Tumulty, the President's secretary, and Secretary Lansing for clarification of Judge Levy's article. Both men forwarded Fink's

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71 Ibid., May 2–3, 1917.
72 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, May 3, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4390½A, St. Dept.
73 Reuben Fink to Joseph Tumulty, May 26, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B. In forwarding the letter to Wilson, Tumulty attached a note; "The Secretary thinks there is dynamite in it."
questions to the President, who expressed considerable displeasure that Levy had published an account of the interview and stated that nothing in his conversation had indicated that he had received a request from the Russian government to exclude Jews from the Mission. Although there were no serious political repercussions, Prince Lvov, the Provisional Prime Minister, issued a categorical denial that he or any member of his government instigated Wilson's decision.

Another major segment of American society which would be represented on the Mission was organized Labor. Shortly after the creation of the Provisional Government, Francis cabled the State Department to suggest that Samuel Gompers and other American labor leaders use their influence to encourage Russian labor to support the new government. Similar requests reached the Secretary of State from other Americans. Gompers had in fact already telegraphed congratulations and pledges of support to the revolutionaries. In a second message he reminded the

74 Woodrow Wilson to Joseph Tumulty /no date/, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.


76 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, March 23, 1917, Frank L. Polk Papers, Drawer 85; also found in Doc. No. 861.00/299, St. Dept.

77 Henry Morgenthau to Robert Lansing, April 12, 1917, Robert Lansing Papers, Vol. 25; and Flint, Memories, 234.
Russians in more conservative tones that "freedom . . .
cannot be established by Revolution only— it is the pro-
duct of evolution." Subsequently, when the appointments
to the Mission were being made, there was no question that
Gompers would be chosen as the representative of Labor
if he so desired. A request was made by Joseph H.
Coate that there be two labor representatives, one
Socialist and one non-Socialist. Wilson and Lansing felt,
however, that one representative would suffice, and that
he should be a non-Socialist so as to more broadly repre-
sent American labor. It was important, however, that the
delegate not be regarded by the Russians as "an active
opponent of Socialism."

William B. Wilson, Secretary of Labor, approached
Gompers on the question of his joining the Mission but
found that the Labor leader felt he could not leave the
country at that particular time because of America's entry
into the war. Wilson accepted the decision, and Gompers,

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78 Samuel Gompers to N. S. Chekhleiji, March 21, 1917, and Samuel Gompers to Nscheidge, April 2, 1917, Doc.
No. 861.00/299, St. Dept.

79 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 11, 1917,
Doc. No. 763.72/3771, St. Dept.; and Woodrow Wilson to
Robert Lansing, April 12, 1917, Doc.No. 763.72/4008½, St.
Dept.

80 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, April 19,
1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4029A, St. Dept.; and Woodrow Wilson
to Robert Lansing, April 24, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4031½,
St. Dept.
in turn, offered to recommend a delegate. On May 4, he recommended two names to Lansing: James Duncan, First Vice-President of the American Federation of Labor, and James Lord, President of the United Mine Workers, described by Gompers "as representing the constructive radical element in this country." After further discussion with Gompers, Lansing recommended that Duncan be selected. The President then extended the invitation, which Duncan accepted.

The decision to include an American Socialist in the Mission to Russia was made after the other members had been chosen. In the early correspondence concerning the Mission there is no indication that President Wilson or Secretary Lansing wished such a representative, and, as late as April 30, Wilson apparently was still undecided. The fact that both the English and French governments had sent Socialists to confer with leaders of the Provisional Government may have encouraged Wilson

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82 Samuel Gompers to Robert Lansing, May 4, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4391¾, St. Dept.

83 "Lansing Desk Diary," May 5, 1917; and James Duncan to Woodrow Wilson, May 7, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4670¾, St. Dept.

84 William B. Wilson to Woodrow Wilson, April 30, Doc. No. 763.72/4386¾, St. Dept.
to do so. It is also possible that Socialist opposition to Root encouraged the President to include a Socialist in order to counteract the conservative image the Mission had acquired. Regardless of his reasons, Wilson had decided to include a Socialist in the group by May 3, and the search began for an acceptable representative. 85

The first Socialist recommended by Secretary of Labor Wilson was William English Walling of Greenwich, Connecticut, who had been criticized by the American Socialist Party because of his strong support of the American war effort. 86 Soon after his recommendation of Walling, Secretary Wilson received from him a lengthy letter which he forwarded to the President. 87 In his letter to the Secretary of Labor, Walling stated that "none of the official leaders of the Majority now in control of the American Party can be trusted." It would be preferable not to include a Socialist as "the American Federation of Labor should represent our working people." Walling appraised several leaders in the Socialist Party and indicated those he thought had promoted policies

86 William B. Wilson to Woodrow Wilson, April 30, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4386 1/2, St. Dept.
87 William B. Wilson to Woodrow Wilson, May 4, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4390 1/2, St. Dept.
detrimental to the interests of the United States. He also named several, among them Charles Edward Russell, who opposed the position of the majority in the Party.\footnote{William English Walling to William B. Wilson, May 2, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4390\(\frac{1}{2}\), St. Dept. Walling's statement that none of the party leaders could be trusted was a reference to the official party attitude toward World War I. In March, 1917, the Socialist party called an Emergency Convention to decide the party's position if America should enter the war. By the time the convention met, war had been declared. The delegates voted on three resolutions and overwhelmingly accepted one drafted by Morris Hillquit of New York which was known as the St. Louis Proclamation. It not only condemned the war but also suggested a seven-point program of opposition to it. When the Socialist party adopted this position, many of its members left the party. In addition to Walling, other prominent members were Charles Edward Russell, W. J. Ghent, Upton Sinclair, J. G. Phelps Stokes, A. M. Simons, and John Spargo. David Shannon, \textit{The Socialist Party of America} (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), 93-100.} 

After examining Walling's letter, the President reported to his Secretary of State that it "seems to me to show that Mr. Walling is the man we want."\footnote{Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, May 3, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4390\(\frac{1}{2}\), St. Dept.} Lansing was asked by the President to examine Walling's book, \textit{The Socialist and the War}, which was published in 1915. Lansing informed the President that the work was "a compilation of the views of other socialists" but that it failed to indicate Walling's own position. After examining the opinions of several American Socialists on the war, Lansing explained to Wilson that "of these I find that the ideas of Charles Edward Russell are more in accord
with what I conceive to be the best suited to influence Russian Socialists." 90

Lansing then discussed the appointment of a Socialist with Frank L. Polk, who suggested W. J. Ghent, but the Secretary of State still favored Russell. 91 Root, who had made few suggestions about the personnel of the Mission, then wrote to Lansing suggesting Walling. On the following day, Lansing sent Root's letter to the President with the comment that "Walling was very possibly the man who should be selected." 92 Walling, consulted by Polk, informed the Undersecretary that although he would accept the appointment if it were extended, he felt someone else would be more effective in view of his split with the majority in the American Socialist Party. Walling then recommended A. M. Simons, John Spargo, and Charles Edward Russell to Polk, who relayed the message to Lansing.

Lansing's earlier opinion of Russell was now reinforced by Walling's recommendation, and he therefore recommended that Russell be the choice. On May 8,

90 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, May 3, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4390 1/2, St. Dept.


President Wilson instructed Secretary Wilson to extend the appointment to Russell. On May 10, Russell accepted the position and was sent a letter of appointment from the President. As Walling had anticipated, the majority of the Socialist Party objected to Russell's appointment and requested that he refuse with the explanation that he did not represent the American Socialist Party. According to Russell, his acceptance of the appointment led to his expulsion from the Party.

The selection of a staff for the Mission took considerable time. Colonel William Judson, the Mission's Military Attaché, had served as Military Attaché, to Russia during the Russo-Japanese War. While in Russia, Judson had met Alexander Guchkov, a mild liberal and leader of the Octobrist party, who, after the March Revolution, was elevated to the position of Minister of War. Judson's personal acquaintance with him was now an asset and led to his being included in the group. Postmaster Albert S. Burleson first suggested Judson for the post.

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President Wilson relayed the recommendation and his approval of it to his Secretary of War. Colonel R. E. L. Michie was assigned as aide to General Scott and Lieutenant Alva D. Bernhard as aide to Admiral Glennon. Holton C. Curl, a navy doctor, was attached to the group as the physician.

Root requested that Lt. Colonel T. Bentley Mott be included in the group. Colonel Mott had served Root in London in 1903, when the latter was negotiating a treaty to determine the boundary between British Columbia and Alaska. Shortly after his selection as head of the Mission, Root met Mott in Washington and asked him to join him on the trip to Russia and Mott agreed. On April 28, Root requested Mott's appointment as a military aide and the appointment resulted.

The selection of the clerical staff was assigned

96 William V. Judson, “Memorandum As To Alexander Guchoff Now Minister of War,” William V. Judson Papers, Box 4; and Woodrow Wilson to Newton D. Baker, May 3, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.

97 Josephus Daniels to Lt. A. D. Bernhard, May 14, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.

98 Josephus Daniels to Holton C. Curl, May 9, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Box 84, Case File 64 B.

99 Mott, Twenty Years, 122, 190-91.

100 Newton D. Baker to Elihu Root, April 30, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 136.
to Breckenridge Long, Third Assistant Secretary of State. This task, wrote Mott, gave "more trouble than all else," since "the private secretaries of half the members of the House and Senate wanted to go with us." Basil Miles, in Petrograd at the time, was finally selected as Secretary to the Mission after Ambassador Francis was consulted on his appointment.

Stanley Washburn, who had earlier been named to the railroad commission which he had interested the government in sending to Russia, now requested a transfer to the Root Mission since he felt he would be more useful to that group. Overruling the objections of John F. Stevens, Chairman of the Railroad Commission, Secretary Lansing cabled the American consul at Vladivostok to advise Stevens that Washburn had been reassigned to the Root Mission.

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101 "Lansing Desk Diary," May 12-14, 1917.

102 Mott, Twenty Years, 193; The papers of the members of the Mission as well as the State Department files contain hundreds of applications for positions on the Mission.


105 John F. Stevens to Robert Lansing [no date], Doc. No. 763.72/5103, St. Dept.; and Robert Lansing to American Consul Vladivostok, May 17, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4781B, St. Dept.
As civilian aide and interpreter to the Mission, the State Department selected F. Eugene Prince. Born and educated in Russia but now a naturalized American citizen, Prince was employed by Willys-Overland, Inc., of Toledo, Ohio, and was stationed in Petrograd. With his employer's approval, Prince was attached to the Mission for the duration of its stay in Russia. 106

The staff consisted of nine additional persons; James F. McKenna, Chief Clerk and Disbursing Officer; six clerks, Clyde S. Stilwell, James F. O'Rourke, Jay Keegan, Duane E. Washburn, Walter W. King, and George D. Gregory; one messenger, George Long; and one valet, James Dooley. 107


107 The names of the twenty-six men composing the Mission and their official titles are found on pages 1-2 of the "Mission Log" in Box 192 of the Elihu Root Papers.
CHAPTER IV

WASHINGTON, D.C., TO VLADIVOSTOK

The Mission held its first meeting on the morning of May 14 at the State Department. All members were present except Cyrus McCormick, who would meet the group in Seattle, and Charles R. Crane, who would join them in Petrograd. A brief session with President Wilson was followed by a luncheon given by Lansing.¹

The Mission had little time to receive a proper briefing from the State Department. Root had already spent several days in Washington in an attempt to gather as much information as possible.² It is doubtful, however, that information available in Washington was of much help to the group. At that time, the State Department was understandably preoccupied with problems related to America’s entry into World War I. There was also much confusion about events in Russia, and, more important, even as information was received and decisions were made, changes in Russia made the policies outdated.

The State Department’s major source of information

¹"Lansing Desk Diary," May 14, 1917.
²Ibid., May 9-14, 1917.
in Russia, Ambassador Francis, proved unreliable and perhaps prevented the State Department from developing a more realistic evaluation of the Russian situation. Francis' major fault was his overly optimistic evaluation of the strength of the Provisional Government. In the early days of the Revolution, Francis sent encouraging reports. In a dispatch to the State Department dated March 24, 1917, Francis reported that the Provisional Government was "in absolute control" and that the authority of the government was "loyally recognized by the army and navy and by every municipality and province in Russia." On the following day he reported that "the situation is improving daily and I am encouraged to look for a favorable outcome." Francis was not alone in his unrealistic view of the political stability of the Provisional Government. Lansing later recalled that no one in Washington "appreciated the real menace ... to the establishment of a Republic" in Russia.

The Secretary of State also sought advice from Americans he considered informed on Russian affairs, such as Charles Crane, Samuel Harper, and Stanley Washburn.

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3 David R. Francis to Frank L. Polk, March 24, 1917, Frank L. Polk Papers, Drawer 85.

4 David R. Francis to Frank L. Polk, March 25, 1917, Frank L. Polk Papers, Drawer 85.

5 Lansing, War Memoirs, 331.
Lansing found them "optimistic as to the success of the moderate or constitutional Democrats and of their ability to control the situation." 6 Crane had returned to Russia soon after receiving news of the Revolution. He was intellectually and emotionally attached to the leaders of the Provisional Government, most of whom he knew personally. 7 Soon after arriving in Petrograd, Crane wrote his son, Lansing's secretary, that the revolution was "purely Russian and very characteristic." He also stated that "practically the whole population took part in it so there is absolutely no class feeling and no bitterness or resentment." 8

Professor Harper, described by one historian as "an inveterate optimist by temperament," 9 also failed to understand clearly the significance of the Russian Revolution. When asked by the State Department to evaluate

6 Ibid.


8 Charles R. Crane to Richard Crane, May 4, 1917, Hugh Scott Papers, Box 1 (Princeton University Library, Princeton, N.J.). Copies of this letter were found in several sources, and it appears to have been widely circulated at the time. When sent a copy of Crane's letter, George Kennan advised his correspondent, "Don't trust what Crane says." George Kennan to David Fairchild, May 16, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 8 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

9 Lasch, American Liberals, 6.
the situation, Harper replied that the aim of the revolution was "to create conditions that would make it possible for Russia to bring into force all her strength." This would result in "more effective prosecution of war and war until victory."\(^{10}\) Later, in a speech before a group of American businessmen, Harper said, "One of the reasons for the final success of the political movement \(\text{in Russia is}\) that the businessmen of Russia finally organized to support \(\text{it}.\)\(^{11}\) Three weeks later, he remarked that "the situation in Russia is clearing up" and that he had "not been anxious for a single moment."\(^{12}\) Washburn, the third person to whom Lansing turned for advice, was also quite sanguine. In fact, he had been warned earlier by his editor on The London Times that his reports were too confident.\(^{13}\)

Eventually, Lansing received more realistic evaluations, both from Russia\(^{14}\) and from sources in the United

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\(^{10}\) Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, March 16, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/297A, St. Dept.


\(^{13}\) Lord Northcliffe to Stanley Washburn, \(\text{no date}\), Stanley Washburn Papers, Box 1.

\(^{14}\) Especially the reports of North Winship, American Consul in Moscow.
States. On May 20, Lansing wrote to George Kennan, a man he considered "the highest authority in America on Russia," and asked his opinion "as to the meaning of events and their effect upon the conduct of the great war." Kennan sent lengthy letters of advice and copies of articles he was preparing for publication in The Outlook. He was concerned about the growing power of the Soviets and fearful that the war effort would be damaged if something were not done to counter the "no annexation, no indemnities" policy. As subsequent events would demonstrate, Kennan had a clearer understanding of the potential power of the Soviets, but even he thought of events in Russia only in terms of their relationship to the war effort.

The group departed from Washington by train on May 14, at 6:15 p.m. The four-day trip across the country

15 Robert Lansing to George Kennan, May 20, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 4 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

16 Robert Lansing to George Kennan, May 28, 1917, George Kennan Papers, Box 4 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

offered an excellent opportunity for the members to ex­change ideas about the situation they would encounter upon reaching Russia. Professor Harper had been advised of the Mission's route by Richard Crane who suggested that Harper accompany the group and give its members the benefit of his knowledge. Harper joined the train on its route to Chicago and spent one day presenting his "interpretation of the revolutionary situation" and descriptions of the current Russian leaders. He provided a list of newspapermen living in Petrograd and offered comments about their recent dispatches. His major criterion in evaluating the reporters appeared to have been their willingness to transmit news favorable to the Provisional Government. In assessing an Associated Press reporter, Harper pointed out that he wrote of the sensational aspects of the revolu­tion and neglected to point out "the constructive side of the events." Another reporter's dispatches, used by The Chicago Tribune and The New York Times, were described by Harper as "excellent because they have emphasized the constructive side."

18 Richard Crane to Samuel N. Harper, May 15, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4865c, St. Dept.


20 "May 14, 1917 Newspapermen Working in Petrograd Who Have Been Covering the News Services From Russia These Last Months," Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.
Harper's influence on the members of the Mission perhaps created unrealistic reassurance. The professor felt that his study of Russian newspapers had given him the "true picture" of the revolutionary situation, and he was confident that the government would be able to "withstand the friction that developed at Petrograd." 21

The group arrived in Seattle at 2:30 a.m. on May 20 and was joined by McCormick and Captain A. W. Hinds, Commanding Officer of the U. S. S. Buffalo which had been provided for their passage to Vladivostok.

During the first day of their voyage, McCormick pointed out to Senator Root the advantage of holding conferences during which the members could exchange information and views pertaining to Russia. At first, Root felt that such conferences would be of little value, since conditions in Russia would dictate the Mission's course of action. The following day, after discussing the idea with Mott and Bertron, both of whom favored his recommendation, McCormick again suggested the idea to Root. Root agreed and arranged for a session that afternoon. 22 During the next twelve days, members of the


Mission found ample time to discuss, and, in general, plan their activities in the Russian capital. The practice of holding such sessions continued after their arrival in Petrograd. Root used them to hear the informal reports from various members and to discuss and approve official dispatches to the State Department.

In the first conference aboard ship, Root began by summarizing the verbal instructions which President Wilson had given them on the day before their departure. Root reminded his colleagues of the "three general objectives" of the Mission, first and "most important" of which was their duty to "express to the Russian people the deep sympathy which the American people and their government have for the Russian nation and for the new Republic." The second objective was to ascertain the financial needs of Russia and to present the American government with information to be used in designating further loans to that country. It was Root's understanding that future loans to the Allies would depend on the "real needs" of each, a matter to be determined by which country was

23 There appear to have been no written instructions for the Mission. In a speech several months later, however, Cyrus H. McCormick referred to "sealed orders," opened after their departure from the United States. "McCormick Speech to Chicago Literary Club," Cyrus McCormick Papers, Subject File "Russia 1917-20".

"doing most to win the war." The third objective, described by Root as "a negative one," was to avoid the appearance of a strong nation dictating to a weaker one. He emphatically cautioned his colleagues against insisting on any particular course of action; in all discussions the representatives of the Russian government were to initiate specific programs.

Most of the discussions on the Buffalo were provoked by questions directed to Senator Root. Usually, they were attempts to secure information on current conditions in Russia, of what the Mission might expect to find upon arrival. The question of American war aims was also discussed. The topic had already come up in a conversation between Root and Russell while they were still in the United States. Walling had suggested to Lansing that the President should publicly denounce and condemn the "no annexation, no indemnity" concept. After Root received this advice, he sought the counsel of Russell, who said he not only agreed with Walling but had already written to Lansing endorsing this position and suggested Root do the same. Root disagreed, feeling that sufficient information was not available to make such an important decision, but that, of course, Russell was free

25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
Los Angeles to express his views to the Secretary of State. 27

In one of the shipboard conferences, James Duncan, Labor's representative, stated that the United States should "join with Russia on a platform of pursuing the war for the highest principles of humanity, and say publicly that there is to be no indemnity and no acquisition of territory," since this would place the United States "in a fine position with the new Russian government." 28 The information available to Root indicated that the term "no annexation and indemnity" was of "German origin." Perhaps because of his experience as Secretary of State, Root realized that such issues as the war aims of the United States, not to mention those of the Allies, were far beyond the scope of the Mission he headed. Root agreed that President Wilson in his speech to Congress on April 2, 1917, had stated that the United States sought no compensation and indemnities from its entry into the war. This did not, however, exclude the possibility of compensation to other nations. The United States might join with Russia in denouncing any compensation, but "there are quite likely to be some occasions arising in the future for demanding from Germany


large payments for the damage she has done."\textsuperscript{29}

Lest there be any question regarding Wilson's statement, Root read to the members of the Mission that portion of the President's Address to Congress. Wilson had "weighed very carefully his words," and Root warned his colleagues against trying "to improve" upon the President's statement. He advised members of the Mission to avoid, if possible, any discussion of war aims so as not to be misunderstood and reminded them, "This \textit{war aims} is no part of our errand."\textsuperscript{30}

On several occasions, discussion turned to the topic of the socialists in Russia and potential problems which could arise concerning them. Russell ventured his opinion of the socialist role in the revolutionary movement and suggested several factors that would make the work of the Mission more difficult. There were, he said, several factions or groups of socialists in Russia who "hate each other more than all of them together hate those who are not socialists."\textsuperscript{31} He added,

There is no use disguising the fact that the large class of socialists in Russia believe that there is no essential difference between the political government of the United States and the autocratic rule of old Russia. They believe that the United States is not a democratic republic, but is a Republic in form

\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{30}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{31}"McCormick Diary," May 30, 1917.
only, and in reality the wealthy classes rule everything and make all the laws.  

Russell remarked that socialists who "would probably be hostile to the United States" would control a majority of the delegates to the Constituent Assembly, which was to determine the permanent plan of Russian government. Therefore, it would be desirable for him to establish contact with the socialists, and he had brought his "old clothes" for just this purpose. Russell was incorrect in his evaluation of the Russian socialists' view of America. At this time, the socialists who held the view he described were mainly Bolsheviks and Mensheviks who had this opinion of all capitalist countries. They were, however, a small minority and not the "large class of Socialists" to which Russell referred.

Russell also informed his colleagues that the political stability of Russia could be injured greatly by the activities of groups he referred to as "radicals" or "reds." This element, according to Russell, was similar to the "I. W. W." in the United States, and consisted of "trouble-makers" who could be counted on to oppose the Russian government regardless of its form. But, despite what Americans in general and the Mission in particular

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33 Ibid.
might think of them, "they are an influential body of men in the new Russian Government, and their views and their force must be reckoned with." 34

Russell considered one of the major tasks of the Mission to be that of persuading the Russian people that the United States was in fact a democratic nation. He indicated three major stumbling blocks in the path of reaching an understanding with the Russian socialists. The first was an effort by socialist elements in the United States, described by Russell as "strong, resourceful, persistent, and ingenious," to do everything possible to discredit and hinder the work of the Mission. Russell named Morris Hillquit as the leader of this movement and explained that Hillquit had already begun a campaign of letters to his friends in Russia to undermine the work of the Mission. 35 The second obstacle was "pro-German socialist propaganda," described by Russell as an attempt to gain a separate peace treaty between Germany and Russia along the lines of "no annexation--no indemnity." 36 The last barrier was the practice by "Germans and misguided men in Russia" of translating for publication in Russia articles originating in the United States

34 "McCormick Diary," May 21, 1917.
which, in Russell's opinion, presented a distorted and inaccurate view of the influence of the capitalist element in controlling American politics. Russell was, he indicated, only repeating what was accepted by most Americans. Hillquit openly opposed Russell as the representative of American Socialists and Russell assumed that he had so notified "his friends in Russia." All attempts to discredit the United States in Russia or to end the war with a separate peace Russell considered part of a "German plot."

Strangely, there is little evidence of lengthy discussions among the Mission relating to the actual situation in Russia. Thus, it is impossible to evaluate accurately the Mission's views prior to their arrival in Russia. On the few occasions when Russian political institutions were mentioned, the comments were usually vague if not inaccurate. When Admiral Glennon requested a clarification of the relationship between the Duma and the Zemstvo, Root replied that the Duma and the Cabinet were "the highest authority in the land," and the Zemstvo was "as influential . . . as the duma." Whether through ignorance of the current political situation or simply omission, Root failed to indicate that the Duma was a

national institution whereas the zemstvo was primarily a local agency. No one on the Mission mentioned the Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, or Soviets, even though these had received considerable attention in the American press, 39

Another topic which received scant attention in the conferences was the importance of organized labor in Russia. James Duncan's major task would be to explain the American labor movement to Russian workmen. Duncan told the Mission that the workmen of Russia were unwilling to do anything to aid the German cause and would do everything possible to secure a democratic Russia. 40 He anticipated, however, temporary problems which might result from the Russian workers' almost certain insistence upon the right to strike. Duncan hurriedly assured his colleagues that workmen given this right would not be too likely to exercise the power. Senator Root interjected his understanding that there were two types of strikes in use in Russia at the time. There were grievances either "real or fancied" in one, but the other was a "purely political affair." Duncan agreed and explained that the first type resembled strikes common in the United States, whereas the latter was associated with the Russian

39 Ibid.

Socialist parties, which used the strike as a political weapon. Duncan proposed to differentiate between the two types with the aid of Russian workers who had returned from the United States and were familiar with the system there. Root gave no indication of his reaction to Duncan's explanation of the right to strike but pointed out that "it must be made clear" to the Russian worker "that industrial development along economic lines is very different from the political movements which are just now in such a very unsettled state."  

In addition to discussions of problems which would confront the Mission while in Russia, questions frequently arose as to routine procedure. It was agreed that Root would serve as spokesman for the group in official statements as well as in interviews with newsmen. Root frequently warned his colleagues about their public statements and suggested that they be especially cautious when talking with reporters. He felt that Russian reporters and the foreign correspondents in Petrograd would "require quite different treatment" from that accorded American newsmen. Consequently, during his stay in the

43 "McCormick Diary," June 1, 1917.
Russian capital, Root held separate press conferences for Russian and foreign correspondents.

Another issue which received frequent attention was the proposed agenda. Root explained that questions as to the schedule of receptions would probably be answered by Basil Miles, the Secretary of the Mission, who would join them in Vladivostok. McCormick suggested limiting the official receptions, and Root agreed that they would discreetly inform the appropriate officials that the Mission did not expect elaborate entertainment. 44 Secretary Lansing had anticipated the burden which would be placed on the Russian Government by such a large group and had already instructed Ambassador Francis that only the members of the Mission and their "immediate personnel" were to be considered as "guests of the Russian Government." By excluding clerks and interpreters, the "guests of the government" were limited to approximately fifteen persons. 45

The members of the Mission also discussed the length of their stay in Russia, since the State Department had placed no time limit on their journey. Root explained that their departure from Russia would depend

44 "McCormick Diary," May 24, 1917.

entirely upon their ability to gather the required information but suggested they keep the visit as brief as possible. It would be far better to anticipate a tour of ten days rather than a month, since they could always extend their stay if it became necessary. This would have a much better effect than cutting the trip short after announcing a lengthy stay, thus giving the impression there was not enough business to keep them occupied. "Nothing would be more embarrassing than to have the Russian people or the government feeling that they had to entertain us after we have finished our business." 46 Colonel Judson later wrote his son that Root felt the Russians might suspect they intended to "watch them" if the Mission remained too long. Judson, however, believed the time proposed was too short to make any adequate observations, and he hoped to get permission "to stay behind long enough to get some real dope." 47

McCormick mentioned that a Russian commission bound for the United States might be in Vladivostok when they arrived and suggested a meeting with the group. Root, however, thought that the Americans should not "make any attempt to delay or meet them." In his opinion,


it was unfortunate that the two missions should be working simultaneously, but it would be up to the State Department to "reconcile any matters that arise." McCormick wanted to invite officials of the Trans-Siberian Railroad to meet with them during their journey from Vladivostok to Petrograd and furnish them with information pertaining to local conditions. But Root, while conceding that the Mission could "receive them politely and hear what they have to say," thought it incorrect to "request interviews or information from anyone until we have presented ourselves to the government at Petrograd."\(^\text{49}\)

Inevitably, the question arose as to their relationship with Ambassador Francis. Root explained that Francis had been the first to recognize the Provisional Government in "a very dignified and emphatic way" and should be given due consideration during their stay in Russia. The Ambassador would probably present the members of the Mission to the Russian Ministers on the occasion of their first meeting. After that, more informal conferences would be conducted "without his presence." Warning his colleagues that "special missions, as a rule, are not looked on with favor by regular ambassadors," Root suggested that "it is quite important that we must show that we feel well-satisfied


\(^{49}\)Ibid.
with the good impression he has already made."

Root was accurate in anticipating Francis' attitude. Although the Ambassador cabled Lansing that he welcomed the Mission, he expressed misgivings in a letter to his daughter. Francis admitted that he was "looking forward to its arrival with some concern" as it might "interfere with the pleasant relations I have established."

Since little of the time aboard ship was devoted to formal conferences, the Mission occupied its waking hours in other fashions. Many read material which they hoped would prepare them for the task that lay ahead. Root mentioned reading *Russia and Reform* by Bernard Pares. Mott, oddly, read two volumes of Elihu Root's published addresses. Movies were usually shown during the evening, and on one occasion the members of the Mission and the crew of the *Buffalo* were treated to a film on "how to care for and dress a little baby." Most of the men played deck golf, introduced by John Mott, or tossed a sand-filled football, provided by Colonel


51 David R. Francis to Jane Francis, May 8/21, 1917, David R. Francis Papers, Box "May 1917."


McCormick mentioned frequent "dog trots" around the deck. Most of the men made the crossing with little ill effect. General Scott, however, suffered from seasickness during most of the voyage. After a week at sea he wrote to his wife that she never need worry that he would "turn pirate and take to the sea."  

From the first days of their journey, the members of the Mission established close personal relationships which were not predictable in view of their diverse backgrounds. Although selected for various reasons, all the members demonstrated strong support for the war effort and a feeling that the Mission had an important role to play in winning the war. There appears to have been a genuine feeling of camaraderie. Years later, Colonel Mott noted in his memoirs, "We went out a happy family and came back united."  

Each man had a rich background in his own chosen field which the others respected and found interesting. While crossing North Dakota and Montana, General Scott told stories of his youth in the Indian country which


56 Mott, Twenty Years, 195.
fascinated the others. Russell, engrossed in the exploits of the old Indian fighter, filled pages of his diary with Scott's stories. These excerpts indicate a nostalgia for the frontier completely unexpected in a leader of the socialist movement. Due to seasickness, Scott spent much of the day relaxing in a deck chair, but he recalled that each morning McCormick brought a blanket on deck and "insisted upon tucking me into my chair and wrapping up my feet." 

Every man in the group who recorded his reaction to the Chairman of the Mission expressed respect and admiration for Senator Root. Colonel Judson found Root to be "most affable and frank" and possessing "a sense of humor I did not suspect." Two weeks later he remarked, "Mr. Root grows on me ... It is a treat to be so close to him." Scott described Root as "a very great man" and considered himself "most fortunate to be associated

with him." Later, when writing of the Mission and what it had meant to him personally, Scott stated that the "greatest advantage" had been the opportunity to know Root at "close range" and noted that Root always appeared in "good humor" with "something kindly to say to everybody." Scott believed he "had had the rare privilege of close association with the most far-seeing, wisest, and sagacious man I had ever seen, and hereby classify him—to my mind—the foremost citizen of the Republic." Colonel Mott credited Root's "wisdom" and "the charm of his nature" with preventing the Mission from breaking up into "quarreling groups" and felt that the members "truly fed out of his hand."

On one occasion, Mott told Root that he had read two volumes of Root's published addresses and complimented him: "In going quite carefully over these addresses my conviction has been made stronger than ever as to your own absolutely unique and exceptional qualifications for the presidency of the United States." As important as the presidency was, Mott believed there was still another position for which Root was "qualified as


64 Mott, Twenty Years, 195.
no other living man in this or any other country," namely
the "leading part" he could play in the peace negotiations
at the end of the war. McCormick agreed and said that he
had had several conversations along these lines with
others in the Mission. This great admiration for Root
clearly illustrates the political conservatism of most of
the Mission members.

On the last day on board the Buffalo, Root again
warned his colleagues to be careful that any statement
was not misunderstood and stressed the "absolute necessity
of discretion." He also repeated President Wilson's
instructions that the Mission was to "bear a friendly
greeting . . . to find out Russia's needs" and to refrain
from giving "any advice or direction as to how to conduct
Russia's affairs in the present crisis." 66

On the afternoon of June 2, the coast of Russia
became faintly visible. At 5:30 a.m. on the third of
June, the U. S. S. Buffalo steamed into Vladivostok. 67

CHAPTER V

VLADIVOSTOK TO PETROGRAD

Although Captain Hinds had signaled and also used the ship's wireless to notify the port of his arrival, no official met the vessel to assign it anchorage. The Captain of the Buffalo, therefore, selected an anchorage and waited.¹ On their first encounter with Russia, the Mission had confronted the confusion that prevailed. As the Army Chief of Staff later recalled, "Here was a ship of a foreign navy coming into a port in war time and receiving no notice from anybody. Evidently all officials had abandoned their duty."² Perhaps one reason for the less than routine port procedure was the fact that the Mission arrived on the day of the Russian Feast of Trinity or Whitsuntide.³

Unwilling to accept the service of the Russian navy's small boats which swarmed around the vessel in search of passengers, the group remained on board to await some Russian official. After an hour, the vessel

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was boarded by Lieutenant Yestrebev, an aid to the Commander of the Russian fleet stationed at Vladivostok.  Later, the American Consul in Vladivostok, John K. Caldwell, came on board along with Major Stanley Washburn, assistant secretary to the Mission, Lieutenant E. Francis Riggs, military attaché to the American Embassy at Petrograd, Eugene Prince, a Mission interpreter, Hugh A. Moran, a Y. M. C. A. official, Charles S. Smith, Associated Press correspondent in Peking, and Lieutenant General Krylov, Commander of the Post of Vladivostok.  The American Consul explained that he had expected the Mission to arrive on Monday, June 4, and had received a telegram informing him of the arrival only after the vessel was in port.  Nevertheless, the special train provided for the Mission would be ready to leave at 2:30 that afternoon.

Lieutenant Riggs had accompanied the Bakhmetev Commission bound for Washington, D.C., as far as Vladivostok.  This group, headed by Boris Bakhmetev, was composed of men who would supervise purchases made with money already loaned the Provisional Government by the

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4 Ibid., 6.
5 Ibid., 6-7.
7 Ibid.
United States. Eugene Prince had left the Russian capital two days after Riggs' departure. Smith joined the Root Mission in Vladivostok and obtained permission to travel with the party to Petrograd. Lansing let Root decide whether Smith could accompany the Mission but indicated his own approval in a wire which stated that Smith was known to the State Department as a correspondent of "fine character and discretion."  

August Heid, the general agent for International Harvester in Vladivostok, also boarded the Buffalo soon after it docked and gave his interpretation of conditions in Russia. He was perhaps the first of many persons who informed the Mission that discipline in the Army since the Revolution had almost disappeared. He attributed many of the problems confronting Russia to the radicals who were "gradually winning converts to their views." Many of the "loud talkers" were those who had recently returned from the United States. In Vladivostok, this element had attempted to discredit the Mission and had attacked Root, labeling him a representative of the capitalist class. Heid felt, however, that the mass of

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8 Warth, The Allies And The Russian Revolution, 106-07.  
9 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, May 18, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4792, St. Dept.  
10 Robert Lansing to Elihu Root, May 28, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5121A, St. Dept.
the Russian people were friendly toward America and that the situation could be improved greatly if this element could be reached. He suggested that the Mission in some way institute a "propaganda of publicity" which through "stirring messages" could persuade the people to support the war effort. The view that adequate "propaganda" could persuade the Russians to support the war effort was perhaps the most universally held opinion of Mission members and persons with whom they consulted during their trip. At times it appears that they saw it as a cure-all for the problems of Russia, a naive and unrealistic appraisal of the true state of affairs in that country.

At two in the afternoon of June 3, the group boarded two launches for the pier. They were met at the landing by the "Local Executive Committee" of Vladivostok, representatives of the Soldiers' and Workers' Soviets, Captain V. M. Yakouborsky who represented the City of Vladivostok, and two young girls who presented a bouquet of flowers to Root. N. P. Matveov, spokesman for the group, described by one of the Americans as a "typical Russian" with a "full beard and bald head," welcomed the Mission to Russia and inquired as to its "aims and purposes." "It is our aim," Root replied, "to convey to the Russian democracy the good will of America, her sister

democracy; to seek to establish closer cooperation and
friendship between the two nations, and to learn what
the needs of Russia are and to assist her in every way
possible." Matveov responded that he hoped the Mission
would meet with success and that "cordial and friendly"
relations between the two nations would continue.

Although the Mission learned that there had been
some unfavorable discussion about its composition and
objectives, neither the diaries nor the official report
indicates any significant attempt to prevent their land-
ing or delay their departure for Petrograd. Bertron later
wrote that some "agitators" attempted to stage a protest
but that it was "ineffective." General Scott recorded
that upon arriving in Vladivostok they were uncertain if
they would be allowed to proceed to Petrograd without


13 Ibid., 7-8; Three days earlier, when the
Steven's Commission arrived, one of the members drew
political implications from a similar reception. The
reception was headed by a representative of the "Council
of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies" and "following in
his wake" were the Military Governor of the Province,
the Mayor of Vladivostok, and a General "all looking
cowed and mortified at their part in the performance."
George Gibbs, "Russian Trip Notes," 8, George Gibbs
Papers (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison,
Wisconsin). Hereinafter referred to as Gibbs, "Russian
Trip Notes."


15 Samuel R. Bertron to Edward M. House, June 18,
1917, Edward M. House Papers, Drawer 3.
some attempt to "blow up the Train." More important is the fact that on their first encounter with Russia, the members of Root's Mission failed to recognize the power of the local Soviet, which prevented any hostile demonstration.

At any rate, less than an hour after leaving the Buffalo, the party was comfortably quartered on a special train provided by the Russian government; and under the supervision of Vladimir Gorbatenko, an official of the Chinese Eastern Railway, they began their trip across Russia. The train consisted of seven cars powered by two wood-burning locomotives. Root was assigned the private car of the railroad's general manager. The other members were provided with two bedrooms. Their first meal as guests of the Russian Government was in keeping with their accommodations. McCormick described it as "a most delicious affair" which included caviar, crab, St. Germain soup, a rice dish with chopped eggs, fish, potatoes, and roast lamb as well as other "tidbits."

Notwithstanding their excellent accommodations, the Mission observed with unanimous concern the obvious

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17 White, Survival, 142.
inability of the Russian railway system to relieve the port of the tremendous amount of material awaiting shipment inland. Russell described the city of Vladivostok as containing between seven and eight hundred tons of freight that the Russians were unable to ship inland. Many of the crates had been broken open, their contents exposed to the elements. Russell saw "munitions of war, guns, shells, explosives, food, steel, hospital supplies" and, in fact, "everything that Russia needs" gradually ruining in the streets or in poorly protected warehouses in Vladivostok. He felt that this collection of material was "a monument to the hapless incapacity of the Russian government." 19

Gibbs, who was with the Railway Commission, was also shocked at the large amount of material stored in Vladivostok. He estimated that the stockpile included 150,000 tons of chemicals, 86,000 tons of barbed wire, 100,000 tons of railway material, 160 bales of cotton, and 50,000 tons of munitions and explosives. Unlike Russell, however, Gibbs thought that "most of these materials have evidently been systematically cared for, considering the circumstances, and the result reflects credit upon the industry of the port authorities." 20

19 "Russell Diary," June 3, 1917.

20 Gibbs, "Russian Trip Notes," 11.
Gibbs added, however, that the situation illustrated a complete lack of "forethought and co-ordination on the part of the government." He described as a "crime" a situation which allowed material to continue to be brought in after there was no possibility of its reaching its destination.  

This unfavorable impression of the Russian railway system was later underscored by interviews with Russian officials, who constantly mentioned the need for locomotives and all types of railway supplies. The Mission considered improved transportation so essential to the successful prosecution of the war that its final report, while acknowledging this to be an area specifically assigned to the Stevens Commission, placed great emphasis on this problem.  

The special train arrived in Harbin about twenty-four hours after leaving Vladivostok and was met by General Dmitri Horwarth, commander of the Chinese Eastern Railway. Horwarth retained his position held under the old regime and was described by the socialist member of the Mission as a "typical Russian officer," very tall and impressive in his elaborate uniform and

21 Ibid.
"autocratic to his finger tips." The group was also met by a delegation of three Chinese officials headed by Wa Wang Tingva, a representative of the Foreign Office in Peking, which was to greet the Mission and accompany the train through Chinese territory.

Stevens and Charles K. Moser, American Consul in Harbin, also greeted the Mission. The Stevens Commission had left Vladivostok at approximately the same time the Root Mission arrived. Its members had already spent several days in Russia and were very aware of the confusion and poor condition of the Russian railway system.

The two official American groups, appearing in Russia at the same time, could have worked at cross-purposes. The Railway Commission was created before the decision to send the Root Mission and sailed from Vancouver for Vladivostok the day before Root and his party left Washington. Stevens had asked Lansing to give his group diplomatic rank, but Root strongly opposed this, explaining it would be awkward to have two diplomatic missions in the same country at the same time. During

23"Russell Diary," June 4, 1917.
26Gibbs, "Russian Trip Notes," 9-11.
27Browder, Provisional Government Documents, II, 702.
their stay in Petrograd, a certain amount of ill-feeling developed between the two groups, due primarily to what Stevens considered interference by members of the Root Mission. At least one member of the Railway Commission believed that his group received inadequate consideration in such matters as hotel accommodations due to the Provisional Government's preoccupation with the Root Mission.\(^{28}\)

Be that as it may, there was some feeling of rivalry from the two groups' first encounter. Russell recorded that the departure of the Stevens Commission from Harbin ahead of the Root Mission "occasioned some comment." He, however, was impressed with the personnel of the Stevens Commission and said that he had "never seen a body of men likely to inspire one with greater confidence .... The government has the pick of the best railroad ability in America."\(^{29}\)

During the brief time they were together, Stevens briefed Root on the situation. He explained that it was neither the congestion in Vladivostok nor the lack of terminals that was hindering the movement of freight. Although there was a "great lack" of rolling stock, the major problem resulted from the "organization of the

\(^{28}\)Gibbs, "Russian Trip Notes," passim.

\(^{29}\)"Russell Diary," June 4, 1917.
railway." "A change in the personnel is absolutely necessary if there is to be any success in getting a movement of freight." He thought the subordinate workers were efficient but the "supervising authorities" were "wholly incapable." The same opinion was expressed by another member of the Railroad Commission who thought that the major problem was a "complete lack of authority" with subordinates "moving in circles . . . ignorant of the general plans of operation."

The Mission was also met in Harbin by a second Chinese delegation, this one representing the Chinese Government. It was headed by Wang Lin-goh, a member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and personal representative of Wu Ting-fang, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and acting Prime Minister of the Peking government. Wang presented a letter of introduction from the acting Prime Minister which welcomed the group to Chinese Territory and also extended them an invitation to visit Peking before their return to the United States. Root's letter

31 Ibid.
34 Wu Ting Fang to Elihu Root, May 10, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.
of reply to Wu, whom he addressed as "my old friend," stated that he and the other members would be pleased to visit Peking, but that the nature of their duties would not permit it. Wang and the other Chinese officials boarded the train in Harbin and traveled with the Mission until they reached the limits of Chinese territory the following day.

The Mission later considered visiting Peking. They were strongly advised to do so by Charles S. Smith who had just come from that city. Political developments which occurred in Peking while they were still in Petrograd prevented any possibility of a visit.

The Mission was detained briefly in Harbin. The party was to board the special train which only a few weeks before had been the personal train of Tsar Nicholas. In fact, for the next few days the group would be crossing Russia in the very car in which the last Autocrat had penned his abdication. The train, nine cars in all, included dining cars, a salon, and even a rolling

35 Elihu Root to Wu Ting Fang, June 5, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.


37 "McCormick Diary," June 6, 1917.

38 "Mission Report," 4. In July, Peking was the scene of an armed clash between the supporters of the Ch'ing Dynasty and those who favored a Republic thus making any diplomatic visit impossible.
slaughterhouse. One member of the Mission remarked that the train included "everything that can be thought of for the comfort of the traveler." One feature that provoked much comment was the amply supplied game area which contained almost every conceivable gambling device. Root sent his daughter Edith a letter written on a score pad from a card table in the Tsar's sitting room. Colonel Mott "ransacked" the drawers of the card tables and found a bridge score card bearing the name "Nicky."

The long trip across Russia was pleasant. After the first night, McCormick awakened from a "sound sleep" in "the most comfortable bed I ever had on a sleeping car." Compared to American railroads with their "banging and hammering," Russell considered the trans-Siberian like a "sleigh upon ice." Colonel Ortel, who had been in charge of the Tsar's train for fifteen years and still remained in that capacity, occasionally told the group of his memories of the Tsar and his family.


40 Jessup, Elihu Root, II, 361.

41 Mott, Twenty Years, 196.


At almost every stop there were brief speeches. Gorbatenko would usually explain briefly to the Russians at the station the purpose of the Mission and introduce Senator Root. Root would then make a few remarks, usually pertaining to the friendship which existed between the two countries, and would then refer to the need for both countries to vigorously pursue the war. The members of the Mission seldom left the train and then only for a few minutes in the various stations. Thus, most of their personal observations were restricted to the geography of the region through which they passed. They were impressed by the large number of persons, both civilian and military, present at all stations. The apparent lack of disorder and violence re-enforced their opinion that the great mass of Russians were law-abiding. The eleven days required to reach the Russian capital offered the Mission a second opportunity to consider their situation in Russia and how best to fulfill their purpose. The time spent on board the Buffalo had been used to exchange views on Russia, but no one on board the vessel had been in Russia since the overthrow

45 "Mission Log," passim; copies of several similar speeches are found in Box 136, Elihu Root Papers.

46 "McCormick Diary," passim; "Russell Diary," passim; and "Mission Log," passim.
of the Tsar, and most of the men realized that their knowledge of Russia was wholly inadequate. The second leg of their lengthy trip, however, was one in which the members began to receive impressions and form opinions which were to be reflected in the final report which they submitted to the Wilson Administration.

One superficial source of information was personal observation, if only from the window of the Tsar's train and from railway stations. More important were the many hours of conversation with Americans who had been in Russia during the past few months. Other Americans, not officially attached to the Mission, frequently met the train and offered the party information and interpretations. Many Russians who accompanied the group also contributed to the opinions formed by the Mission members prior to their arrival in Petrograd.

Although the Mission had a keen interest in a multitude of topics, their major concern lay in two areas: the events of the past few months which had led to the creation of the Provisional Government, and the chances of its survival. They were equally interested in the Russian war effort and the chances of Russia's staying in the war.

General Scott, later describing the Mission's arrival in Vladivostok, made a point of the fact that
during wartime a vessel of a foreign nation had entered the port without the knowledge of the commander of the port.\textsuperscript{47} For the first few days after the Mission left Vladivostok, there was little to change this first impression of Russian negligence and disorganization. The Mission was constantly confronted with trains loaded with soldiers traveling away from the Front.\textsuperscript{48} On their first full day of travel, McCormick observed that the "predominant feature" of all the railroad stations they passed was the large number of soldiers "without any apparent reason for their being there." This led him to believe that the Russian soldiers were apathetic toward "all the issues of the war."\textsuperscript{49} After almost a week of travel, a troop train was finally seen going toward the Front.\textsuperscript{50} One member of the Mission described this event as "the first real good sign we have had since reaching Russia."\textsuperscript{51} Root remarked that "the saddest thing as I see it is the apathy of the Russian soldiers. They seem to have

\textsuperscript{47}Scott, "The Russian Revolution," 5.

\textsuperscript{48}"Russell Diary," passim; "McCormick Diary," passim; and Hugh L. Scott, "Diary," passim, Box 71 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress). Hereinafter cited as "Scott Diary."

\textsuperscript{49}"McCormick Diary," June 4, 1917.

\textsuperscript{50}"Mission Log," 16.

\textsuperscript{51}"Scott Diary," June 11, 1917.
no snap, no objective and to be generally taking things easy."\textsuperscript{52}

This pessimistic view came not only from the Mission's own observations but also from its discussions with persons who had been in Russia during the past few months. Heid believed that Russia's future would be determined by the military. He painted a pessimistic picture of the Army:

At present they are entirely without discipline. The soldiers come and go as they please and take no orders from the officers except as such orders may be approved by the soldiers' committee. They get up at 9 or 9:30, have no drill, walk about the streets, . . . and, in short, seem to be enjoying a complete vacation from all military duties. This atmosphere pervades everything else, and there is no discipline anywhere.\textsuperscript{53}

Lieutenant Riggs, who joined the Mission in Vladivostok, also furnished information about Russia's military strength. He informed John Mott and McCormick that Russian troops were "about ready to lay down arms" prior to the Revolution and would have done so had not the United States entered the war. The Russian troops found the war "a very distasteful cause" and America's entry into the war was the "only influence" capable of keeping the Russian soldiers in the war.\textsuperscript{54} No evidence

\textsuperscript{52}"McCormick Diary," June 3, 1917.
\textsuperscript{53}"McCormick Diary," June 3, 1917.
\textsuperscript{54}"McCormick Diary," June 4, 1917.
substantiates this observation, which probably resulted from America's distorted opinion of the effect of its entry into the war.

Riggs estimated that "fully 12 or 15 percent" of the Russian troops along the front had deserted. There had also been cases of fraternizing between the Russian and German troops. If the Germans wished to make an advance, they would be able to "go through the Russian lines like a circus rider through a paper hoop." Riggs felt, however, that the German armies were waiting quietly in the hope of winning over the Russian troops by "inaction and generosity."  

Riggs was quick to point out that the situation in the army resulted primarily from conditions which had existed—and which he had personally observed—prior to the Revolution. Army discipline and conditions were so harsh and inhuman that one could not expect the common soldier to react in any other manner. After the Revolution, soldiers and citizens were intoxicated with their new-found freedom. "All discipline had stopped" and they were "enjoying a grand holiday." Riggs then explained

55 Ibid. Lieutenant Riggs was wrong in his estimate that American entry into the war had maintained military discipline in the Russian Army. He was apparently unaware of the primary cause of the collapse of army discipline; neither he, nor any other observer, mentioned "Soviet Order No. 1."

56 Ibid.
to the Mission that if Russia were to leave the war, the United States would be the "next nation in line" to supply troops for the Allied cause. He therefore emphasized that everything possible should be done to keep Russia in the war even if it was only "an appearance of continuing the war." 57 Reuben H. Smith, an interpreter who had joined the Mission of June 8 at Krasnoyarsk, 58 gave essentially the same evaluation as Riggs. 59 At least one observer believed that the crisis in the Army had passed. It was Vladimir Gorbatenko's opinion that many soldiers had returned home expecting an immediate division of the land. When they found that this was not forthcoming, they began the return to their units. 60 Gorbatenko's view was completely erroneous.

During their first few days in Russia, the members of the Mission came to believe that the military situation was far from satisfactory. They unanimously voiced the urgent need to persuade the Russian people to pursue the war vigorously. From both Russians and Americans living in Russia, the members heard that opposition to the war was largely the work of German

57 Ibid.
60 "McCormick Diary," June 10, 1917.
propagandists and that a propaganda bureau would be the most effective for fighting this technique. Members of the Root Mission were so ignorant of the deeply rooted desire of most Russians to end the war that they assumed that anyone who tried to halt the fighting must be a German sympathizer or under the influence of German propagandists.

In addition to their concern over military problems, the Mission demonstrated an intense interest in the political situation. Not only had the entire Tsarist governmental structure been overthrown, but there had already been a shift in the membership of the Provisional Government. The new government, known as the First Coalition, was created at approximately the same time the Root Mission left the United States. The change resulted from Miliukov's failure to alter Russia's expansionist war aims. Although non-socialists were still in the majority, the new cabinet contained six socialists whereas the first had had only one. As events were occurring so rapidly, the Mission engaged in very little discussion of current politics prior to their arrival in Vladivostok. After their coming, however, they frequently analyzed the shifting political scene.

Basil Miles, the Mission Secretary who along with Lieutenant Ramsey of the Russian Foreign Office joined the
group at Ekaterinburg on June 11, attempted to brief the Mission on current political trends. He requested the American Consuls in Vladivostok and Harbin to secure newspapers for the use of the Mission. After he joined the group, he frequently read articles from Russian newspapers which dealt with politics. But, as with military affairs, the Mission's greatest source of information seems to have been conversations with Americans and Russians who traveled with them across Russia.

Without exception, persons who had been in Russia during the past few months and had expressed an opinion felt that politics would not become stable for several weeks or even months. Heid was one of the first to give an evaluation of the political situation. He pointed out that the Revolution had brought general instability and little if any direction. A major cause for this, said Heid, were the Russian "anarchists" who recently returned from the United States. This element, an extremely small minority of the Russian people, albeit the most active element, was "gradually winning

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61 Basil Miles to American Consul, Harbin and Vladivostok [no date], Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.

62 "McCormick Diary," passim.

63 This view was expressed by Heid, Eitikoff, Katterfield, Smith, and Brittenham. "McCormick Diary," passim.
converts to their view." Heid believed that the Mission could render a "great service" if it created an agency to persuade the "large middle class of quiet thinking people" to exert an influence on Russian political life. In Heid's opinion, the situation had "improved somewhat under the coalition government," which he predicted "will succeed." 64 Heid's reference to the existence of a large middle class and its potential influence on politics was obtuse, if not stupid. Advice of this caliber prevented the Mission from acquiring a realistic view of the situation in Russia.

Another impression that the Mission received from these discussions was that the recent cabinet changes strengthened rather than weakened the Provisional Government. Lieutenant Riggs, who described former Minister of War Guchkov as "a man of autocratic temperament," considered Kerensky an improvement who would "be able to do more with the materials at hand." Tereshchenko would "do just as well" as Miliukov, whom Riggs described as a "student and idealist." 65 This opinion of Miliukov was also held by Eltikov who told Duncan that the Russian leader had "lost his standing with the people" as he had been "too opinionated, too

64 "McCormick Diary," June 3, 1917.
idealistic, too impracticable." Smith was optimistic about the recent changes in the cabinet and pointed out that Kerensky had made speeches which had "strengthened the soldiers very much." He described the new Minister of War as "a man of purpose" who would try to "bring order out of the chaos that surrounds his department." In expressing their reactions to the recent Cabinet changes, the observers made no mention of the party or ideological affiliations of Guchkov, Miliukov, or Kerenksy, nor did they mention that the changes increased the power of the socialists.

Another viewpoint was that the unstable political situation would probably change several times before a period of stabilization developed. This led some observers to suggest the possibility of a takeover by a dictator, a development which might be desirable. At least one member of the Mission appears to have accepted this view. Samuel Bertron wrote Colonel House that a takeover by a dictator who would remain in power until a constitutional assembly met "may be a good thing." 69

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68McCormick Diary," June 5 and 9, 1917.
69Samuel R. Bertron to Edward M. House, June 18, 1917, Edward M. House Papers, Drawer 3.
Although there was considerable discussion by the Mission of "radicals" and "anarchists," there is no evidence that the members, any more than others in Russia at that time, were aware of the Bolshevik threat to the Provisional Government. Perhaps the only specific reference to the Bolsheviks came from Gorbatenko, who informed the Mission that "the only menace to the new Republic is at Petrograd." The danger came from a small group of extreme socialists. Led by Lenin, who possessed "cleverness in planning" and an "unscrupulous character," they were able to exert far more influence than their numbers would indicate. Gorbatenko's solution to the problem would be to arrest Lenin and "put him where he cannot communicate with the outside world." In view of later political developments, Gorbatenko's fears were well-founded. In May, 1917, however, few persons, and certainly no member of the Mission, recognized that threat.

It is apparent, therefore, from conversations and interviews with persons who had been in Russia during the past few months, that Mission members received a fairly hopeful view of the political situation. Although all observers had agreed that there would be a period of considerable political unrest, no one seemed

70"McCormick Diary," June 10, 1917.
to doubt that the Provisional Government would stay in power. Obviously, such advice proved to be incorrect. Perhaps the most noticeable error was the inability of the observers to discern the division of power between the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet. In fact, the Petrograd Soviet was not even mentioned.

On June 13, 1917, at five in the afternoon, after approximately one month of travel, the Mission reached its destination. The train bearing Ambassador Root and his colleagues arrived in a "dingy and far from imposing" Petrograd station, where they were joined by Charles R. Crane, the remaining member of the Mission. 71

CHAPTER VI

OFFICIAL RECEPITIONS

The Mission was welcomed at the Petrograd rail-
road station by a Russian delegation headed by Russian
Minister of Foreign Affairs M. I. Tereshchenko, American
Ambassador Francis, members of the Embassy staff, mili-
tary advisors, and members of the consular corps.¹ The
Mission did not record any displeasure at their recep-
tion. A young Russian naval officer who was present,
however, recorded in his diary that the whole affair had
been "sloppily managed." He suggested that the Mission
failed to notice the Russian Honor Guard because the
dingy khaki uniforms "blended perfectly with the dirty
yellow walls of the station." The reception did not
include a military band due, no doubt, to its refusal
"to be bothered."²

Following a few brief remarks and a good deal of
confusion,³ the group was assigned to automobiles and
driven to the Winter Palace where quarters had been

²White, Survival, 138.
provided for their stay in Petrograd.\textsuperscript{4} Ambassador Root and General Scott were assigned adjoining rooms on the second floor overlooking Palace Square. The other members were assigned rooms on the third floor with a view of the Winter Gardens.\textsuperscript{5}

Those who recorded reactions to their accommodations were impressed with the tremendous size of the structure. Russell compared the distance from his bedroom to the dining area to the "distance from 27th to 32nd Street on Broadway." Anyone unfamiliar with the "maze of intricate corridors, passages, stairways and twisting and twining" needed a guide.\textsuperscript{6} McCormick observed more precisely that the distance from his room to the front exit required "440 steps."\textsuperscript{7}

Other impressions of the Winter Palace tended to reflect the personality and past experience of the individual. General Scott, who occupied a suite once used by Catherine the Great, commented on the "heavy and expensive" furniture. He was more impressed with the Palace's almost fortress-like structure and described in

\textsuperscript{4}Charles Russell commented that during the trip across Petrograd, "tense crowds filled the near-by streets and stared upon us but without the least ripple of a cheer." "Russell Diary," June 13, 1917.

\textsuperscript{5}"Mission Log," 18.

\textsuperscript{6}"Russell Diary," June 13, 1917.

\textsuperscript{7}"McCormick Diary," June 13, 1917.
some detail the walls three feet thick and the doors covered with steel plates. McCormick complained of having to share a bath. Russell did not know the "imperial parasite" who had formerly occupied his suite but suspected "for reasons to be mentioned delicately if at all" that it had "housed a woman." On the afternoon of June 14 the Mission was formally presented to Tereshchenko by Ambassador Francis, who had been temporarily delayed by a conference with the Stevens Commission. The group walked the short distance to the Foreign Ministry in "solemn state and long-tailed coats." In his introductory remarks, Francis stated that the purpose of the Mission was to bring "good will and sympathy" from the oldest democracy to the youngest. Tereshchenko made appropriate remarks of welcome in excellent English which impressed the Mission members. He referred to the war only once.

10 "McCormick Diary," June 14, 1917.
11 "Russell Diary," June 14, 1917.
12 Francis consistently referred to the group as a "Commission" rather than a "mission." White, Survival, 143.
13 "McCormick Diary," June 14, 1917. This reference to the youngest and oldest democracies was a favorite cliché among the Mission.
Senator Root then explained to the Foreign Minister that the Mission brought friendship and sympathy and was prepared to "show our sympathy in stronger ways than words." He continued, "We will bring you money, we will help you with commodities ... and we will help you with men." Plans were made to present the Mission to the remaining members of the Provisional Government on the following day.  

The Mission gathered at 9:30 p.m. on June 15 in the Gold Room of the Winter Palace. Accompanied by aides and others who were attached to the Mission, they proceeded to the Palace of the Council of the Empire where they were joined by Ambassador Francis and his staff. Foreign Minister Tereshchenko greeted the men and escorted them into the Council Chamber. Ambassador Francis introduced Senator Root, who then read his prepared statement. 

Root's address may well be considered the most significant message the Mission delivered. He began by complimenting the Russian people on their recent revolution and explained that news of the revolt was greeted

14"McCormick Diary," June 14, 1917.


16A copy of Root's speech had been provided Tereshchenko in order that he could prepare a reply. The Address had been translated into Russian, and members of the Cabinet followed Root's remarks in copies available to each. "McCormick Diary," June 15, 1917.
with "universal satisfaction and joy" in America. In an obvious attempt to emphasize the reluctance of the American government to interfere with the course of the Revolution, Root assured his audience that "America knows little of the special conditions of Russian life which must give form to the government and to the laws which you are about to create." Turning to the war, Root expressed a view which he and other members of the Mission repeated on several occasions: "The triumph of German arms will mean the death of liberty in Russia." In order to save the Revolution, Germany must be defeated. Root left no doubt as to his government's desire for more active military participation: "We are going to fight . . . . for your freedom equally with our own, and we ask you to fight for our freedom equally with yours." Root concluded by stating that Mission members wanted to discuss "practical and specific methods" for cooperation between the two governments.\(^{17}\)

The Russian Foreign Minister's reply to Root was also couched in generalizations, and reference was again made to the "oldest and newest republics in the World." Tereshchenko read long passages from the American Declaration of Independence and noted numerous similarities

\(^{17}\)"Root's Address to the Council of Ministers, June 15, 1917," Elihu Root Papers, Box 136.
between the two nations. With regard to the war, Tereshchenko pointed out that the Russians had "no wish of conquest or domination and are opposed to those ideas in others." He emphasized that this change "in our international relations and in our international policy" had come as a result of the Revolution.  

The Americans were obviously disappointed in Tereshchenko's reply. McCormick observed that it was "most general" and made no reference to "the very important points made by Senator Root." General Scott commented that the speech "failed to put the emphasis on the fighting of Germany" and observed that, if Germany were not defeated, "all these other airy superstructures of the freedom of Russia will go by the board." The members of the Mission might have been more sympathetic toward the Foreign Minister had they known the degree of anti-war sentiment. Even as Tereshchenko made his reply to Root, one member of the Provisional Government requested that a Russian officer attached to the Mission explain that "we

18 "Address of Minister Tereshchenko of Foreign Affairs At Reception of Special Diplomatic Mission From America, June 2/15, 1917," Elihu Root Papers, Box 136. One million copies of Root's address and Tereshchenko's reply were printed and distributed. David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, June 7/20, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/6073, St. Dept.


are tired of this war / we are weary of the long and bloody struggle."\textsuperscript{21}

Following the formal addresses, members of the Mission held short conferences with officials of the Cabinet.\textsuperscript{22} During these informal discussions Russell thought he detected a reluctance to accept the necessity of vigorous prosecution of the war. In conversations with the Minister of Food Supplies and the Assistant Minister of Agriculture, both of whom were moderate socialists, Russell stated that it was necessary to pursue the war "for the sake of democracy." Although they agreed with Russell, they "admitted it in a manner perfunctory and juiceless."\textsuperscript{23}

McCormick found that "the personality of the ministers was most interesting." Prince Lvov he characterized as "a quiet looking, rather shabbily dressed, silent man, who did not appear to have the knowledge and executive ability which his record credits him with." McCormick's concern with Lvov was unnecessary, for he was merely a figurehead by this time. McCormick described the Minister of Foreign Affairs as "easily the leading figure among the ministers." He found Minister of War

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{21}White, \textit{Survival}, 144.
  \item \textsuperscript{22}"Mission Log," 22.
  \item \textsuperscript{23}"Russell Diary," June 15, 1917.
\end{itemize}
Kerensky to be "forceful, persuasive and persistent ... Were it not for his inexperience and his strong socialistic tendencies, he would be one of the strong leading figures in the ministry." McCormick's assessment of Kerensky was erroneous. Kerensky was still very much a socialist and was perhaps the strongest member of the Provisional Government. Minister of Finance Shingarev, with whom he would be most directly concerned, impressed McCormick as "a man who is trying to do his very best under a difficult situation," but he doubted that medical training "fitted him for such a position as he now holds."  

The group returned to the Winter Palace after approximately one hour with the Provisional Cabinet. Having presented the United States' formal greetings to the Government, each member of the Mission began to concentrate on his individual area of interest and to hold interviews and conferences with appropriate Russian officials to gather information for his report.

During the trip across Siberia, Root had cautioned the Mission that Ambassador Francis might resent their coming and suggested that the group do nothing which might complicate their relationship. Root knew that the regular Ambassador might view their presence as an infringement on his authority, and he was correct in that assumption.

When Francis first heard of the creation of the special mission he entertained serious reservations as to its effectiveness. The Ambassador knew most of the members of the Mission, and when their names were announced from Washington, objected only to the chairman. In Francis' opinion, Root was a "partisan Republican," and this might influence his actions.  

Following his first meeting with the Mission, Francis still felt that their coming was a mistake which would burden him with additional work. In fact, throughout their stay in Russia, Ambassador Francis was occupied with the task of introducing Root and the others to the members of the Provisional Government. His feeling of suspicion soon disappeared, however, and Francis established an extremely cordial relationship with the group. As early as June 18 he wrote that he was "getting along very pleasantly" with the Mission.  

25David R. Francis to Edward B. Lilley, May 1/14, 1917; and David R. Francis to Willoughby Smith, May 1/14, 1917, David R. Francis Papers, Box "May 1917."

26David R. Francis to Jane Francis, May 31/June 13, 1917, David R. Francis Papers, Box "June 1917."

27Francis' appointment book indicated that he had appointments or lunch with one or more members of the Mission almost every day. "1917 Appointment Book," David R. Francis Papers, Box "Miscellaneous 1917."

28David R. Francis to Perry Francis, June 18, 1917, David R. Francis Papers, Box "July 1917."
departure, he reported to the State Department that his relationship with "Senator Root and every member of the Mission" was "exceedingly pleasant."29 His doubts about the Mission's effectiveness, however, remained unchanged.

The presence in Petrograd of the American Railroad Commission headed by Stevens was another area of potential conflict for the Root Mission. Root wanted the railroad group attached to his Mission in some way, but Wilson denied this request. Since any request for large-scale loans to aid the Russian railroad system had to come through Root's Mission, this led to problems. The two groups met from time to time and, for the most part, they attempted to coordinate their efforts.

Shortly before the Mission's departure from Petrograd, Stevens developed the feeling that his work was being hindered by interference from Root and his colleagues. This conclusion was also expressed by the diplomatic group. This conflict, however, in no way affected the Mission's view that assistance to the Russian railroad system was perhaps the most vital service that Americans

29David R. Francis to Frank L. Polk, July 13, 1917, Frank L. Polk Papers, Drawer 85. This is also expressed in personal correspondence. "My relations with them were pleasant and there was no friction whatsoever." David R. Francis to Perry Francis, July 3/16, 1917, David R. Francis Papers, Box "July 1917."

30"McCormick Diary," June 17, 19, and July 3, 1917.
Members of the Mission hoped that they would be able to "stir up enthusiasm" for the war effort in Russia. They thought that this could be accomplished by visiting several Russian cities. In a discussion of this topic on June 18, the Mission mentioned the cities of Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, Ekaterinostav, and Kharkov. Russian officials were asked their views of such a tour. The Minister of Finance told McCormick that it should be avoided unless the Mission was prepared to explain the extent of American financial aid, and Kerensky appeared "cold but polite" when General Scott described the proposed travels. Peshchechonov, Minister of Food Supplies, concurred with his colleagues, explaining that the proposed tour might be misinterpreted by "a certain part of the Socialist circles." In view of these reactions, the Mission dropped the idea of an extended tour. The only other city it visited was Moscow.

Shortly before midnight on June 21, the Mission left Petrograd by special train for the ancient capital.

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32 "McCormick Diary," June 18, 1917.
34 "Scott Diary," June 20, 1917.
35 "McCormick Diary," June 20, 1917.
Russell and Colonel Judson remained in Petrograd. The former had "little taste . . . for sight seeing at a time when hell is popping" and felt that it was more important to try to make contacts in the Petrograd Soviet. The latter preferred to remain in Petrograd in order to gather further information and noted that he had "seen the sights" of Moscow before.

The others arrived in Moscow early on the afternoon of June 22 and were met by the Mayor of the city, Nicholas I. Astrov. Root addressed a group of approximately seventy-five members of various organizations in Moscow later in the afternoon. At 8:30 that evening the Mission attended a meeting of the Moscow Duma for their official welcome. Members of the Mission had been provided a translation of the Mayor's address but were unable to follow the addresses given by other members of the Duma. One member of the Mission observed that "no adequate preparations" had been made to provide sufficient interpreters. Root's reply to the welcome was optimistic and emphasized Russia's ability to govern itself at

36"Russell Diary," June 22, 1917.
the local level. As there were no provisions for housing the Mission, they returned to their special train for the night. They continued to live on board while in Moscow.

On the next day, Root spoke to four groups before lunch. For the most part his remarks were general in nature, but while addressing the War Industries Committee he referred to the willingness of American Labor to suspend the eight-hour day for the duration of the war, a remark which no doubt was intended to suggest a possible course of action for the Russians. Before a meeting of the Bourse, Root made the only public speech which can be interpreted as a recommendation in the area of domestic politics. He described to his audience the safeguards to property written into the United States Constitution and explained that a person had the assurance that his property "cannot be taken away from him." "We shall," he said "look with the greatest interest to the work of your Constitutional Convention to see how far you find it desirable, or find yourselves able to include guarantees and safeguards, against


42 America's Message, 29-34.
destroying the fundamental basis of enterprise."  

Following a luncheon at the National Hotel as guests of the City of Moscow, Root met with the Procurator of the Holy Synod of Russia. The conversation almost immediately shifted from the Russian Church to Russian politics. Root was pleased to hear the conservative leader say that the government would be able to pursue the war vigorously.

On June 24, their last day in Moscow, the Mission occupied itself with seeing the sights of the city, including the Kremlin and Sparrow Hills, and attending a choral concert. They then boarded the train for the return to Petrograd. An American newspaper reporter who accompanied the Mission to Moscow felt that the group left there with a "distinct sense of encouragement" and now viewed the situation with "greater optimism."

The Mission arrived in Petrograd in midafternoon on June 25, following a twenty-hour train trip. After resting a few hours, Ambassador Root, General Scott, and the military members of the Mission boarded their special

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43 *America's Message*, 40-41.

44 "Account of a conversation between Mr. Root and Mr. Lvov, Moscow, June 10/23, 1917," Elihu Root Papers, Box 136.


train once more, this time bound for the Russian General Staff Headquarters at Mogilev under the command of General Brusilov. 47 General Scott and the military personnel planned to continue the journey to include a visit to the Russian Front. 48

Minister Tereshchenko accompanied the Mission, thus giving Root an excellent opportunity for uninterrupted discussions with him. Thus far, Root's chances for conferences with Tereshchenko had been limited, since the Foreign Minister had become ill shortly after the group arrived in Petrograd and had been confined to bed for two weeks. 49 Root remained at Headquarters for less than twenty-four hours. During that time Brusilov stressed the need for immediate aid, especially railway equipment. 50

Root was impressed by the General's plea or perhaps by the unrecorded conversations he and the Foreign Minister had during their two days of travel. Shortly after his return to Petrograd, Root held a conference during which he outlined Brusilov's estimate of his needs

48 Described in Chapter on Military.
50 "Address of General Brusiloff at Stafka, June 14/17, 1917," Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.
and for the first time agreed that the United States should extend new credit for additional engines and freight cars. He was also pleased to inform the members of the Mission that Brusilov planned a military offensive for the near future. It was decided at this conference that they would leave Petrograd for home on July 9. This would allow General Scott ample time for his tour of the Russian Front and his trip to Rumania.

The day following Root's return, reports reached members of the Mission that the government anticipated problems in connection with demonstrations and parades which were planned for Sunday, July 1. Major Washburn had been informed by a secretary in the Foreign Office that the Mission's special train would be made ready and that the government desired the group to visit Finland on Sunday. Root agreed, but was opposed by Russell and Duncan who felt that this channel of information was not official. Furthermore, their sources of information indicated that the planned demonstrations would be peaceful.

The Mission decided to inform the government that


52 Ibid.

53 "Russell Diary," June 30, 1917; and Russell, Bare Hands and Stone Walls, 360.
they had already made appointments for the following day and would prefer to remain in Petrograd. The matter remained undecided until the evening of June 30, when Tereshchenko told Root that he would like the members to remain if they chose, since he anticipated no trouble. Had he felt otherwise, he would not have planned to be absent from the capital.\textsuperscript{54} Therefore, only Root accompanied the Foreign Secretary. They left Petrograd on the evening of June 30 and returned the following evening after a brief visit to Tereshchenko's dacha in Finland.\textsuperscript{55} Sunday proved to be quite uneventful. Although the citizens of Petrograd turned out in large numbers to parade and demonstrate, there was no violence.\textsuperscript{56}

Following his visit to Finland, Root remained in Petrograd until his departure for the United States on July 9. During this week he continued his appearances before various organizations and his daily conferences with both Russian officials and Allied diplomats. Ready to end their stay, Root did so as soon as possible after Scott's return from the front.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{54}"McCormick Diary," June 30, 1917.

\textsuperscript{55}"Mission Log," 31-32.

\textsuperscript{56}"McCormick Diary," July 1, 1917; and "Russell Diary," July 1, 1917.

\textsuperscript{57}"Mission Log," 32-36; and Elihu Root to Michael Terestchenko, July 3, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.
CHAPTER VII

FINANCE

In trying to determine Russia's financial needs, the Mission was continuing an established American policy. Less than twenty-four hours after President Wilson presented his war message to Congress in 1917, Secretary of State Robert Lansing cabled the American Ambassador in Petrograd to "ascertain if financial aid or credit is desirable by the Russian Government." Ambassador Francis was instructed to determine the amount desired and to what extent such credit would be used to purchase goods in the United States. ¹

Following conferences with Russian Minister of Finance Shingarev, Francis informed the State Department that the loan "would be highly appreciative by Council of Ministers and all Russians." He also quoted the Minister as saying that all of the money would be used "in the United States by direct purchases and not through British intervention as heretofore." The Russian government expressed a need for $500 million, "provided tonnage . . . can be secured." The Russian Minister understood that both

¹Robert Lansing to David R. Francis, April 3, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/131, St. Dept.
England and France were to receive loans of that amount and that anything less "would be injurious to the new government and humiliating to Russia."  

Francis strongly supported the loan. He thought it "advisable from every viewpoint of policy" and "absolutely" backed by Russia's "boundless forests, immeasurable deposits of ores and oils, and immense areas of tillable lands."  

Two weeks later the Ambassador again urged his government to extend credit and told the Secretary of the Treasury that "Russia can undoubtedly meet all obligations."

On April 21, 1917, Lansing advised Francis that Congress had provided three billion dollars for loans to the Allied governments. He pointed out, however, that reports had reached the United States "of the [[Russian]] Government being under the influence of extreme socialist parties that aim at a separate peace."  Lansing emphasized the bad effect of such reports in the United States and added that the Ambassador should "widely inform the Russian leaders . . . that measures should be taken in order to redress the unfortunate bad impression produced on the American people."  To prevent any possible

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2 David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, April 6, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/133, St. Dept.

3 Ibid.

4 David R. Francis to William G. McAdoo, April 21, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/135, St. Dept.
misunderstanding of the position of the United States Government, Lansing concluded his dispatch unequivocally: "A separate peace would preclude the possibility of any kind of assistance on the part of America."  

On these orders from the Secretary of State, Francis conferred with Guchkov and Miliukov on the question of the stability of the Provisional Government. Pointing out to them that he had done all he could to "assist the Ministry," Francis explained that he "felt considerable official and personal responsibility concerning a stable Government in Russia." If the Ministry, however, was unable to give more "satisfactory evidence" of its stability, the Ambassador would be "compelled to advise [his] Government not to extend the aid which [he] had been continuously recommending." The Russian ministers did not appear to resent the implication. In fact, "Goutchkoff seemed very much pleased at the statement" and suggested that Francis make it public.

With this background in mind, it is not surprising that one of the Root Mission's most important functions was to ascertain the financial needs of the new government.

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5 Robert Lansing to David R. Francis, April 21, 1917, quoted in Browder, Provisional Government Documents, II, 1053.


7 Ibid.
This assistance would presumably help persuade Russia to remain in the war as well as enable it to prosecute it more effectively. Although Wilson never stated a policy of "no war, no dollars," this policy was well-established prior to the departure of the Root Mission and was never neglected by the President's representatives during their sojourn in Russia.

On the day of the Mission's departure, Root, in a conference with Lansing and McAdoo, supported a policy of immediate aid to Russia. He asserted that "the need for rolling stock in Russia is so urgent and so necessary to the conduct of the war that it would be unwise for the Government of the United States to wait until the Special Mission . . . reaches Petrograd before giving any aid in this respect." Lansing and McAdoo agreed and arranged a loan of $100 million to the Provisional Government on the following day. Information concerning the loan was released to the press immediately and added to the prestige of the Mission in the United States.

On the first full day of the Mission's voyage from Seattle to Vladivostok, May 21, the topic of loans to

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8 Elihu Root to William G. McAdoo, May 16, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.

9 William G. McAdoo to Elihu Root, May 16, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.

Russia dominated the afternoon conference. Root reported that the Milner Commission of England had set $175 million as the amount that could "properly be utilized, in view of the congestion of the means of transportation," by Russia in 1917. He explained that the Russian Chargé d'Affaires in Washington had given him "the distinct impression that he was much disappointed that Lord Milner had thus arbitrarily limited the amount to be loaned to Russia." Despite that complaint, Root warned the members of the Mission: "We must be very careful in any recommendation we make which would go beyond the $175,000,000 settled upon by Lord Milner." 11

Both McCormick and Bertron, who would be most directly concerned with Russia's finances, appeared to be more generous with their government's money. Bertron questioned Root's use of the Milner figures as a guideline: "Will not the measure of the cordiality with which we are received be determined by the amount in excess of $175,000,000 which we recommend our government to appropriate to Russia?" He answered his own question with another: "Is it not quite desirable that we should make our recommendation cover a substantial sum in excess of Lord Milner's $175,000,000?" 12

12 Ibid.
McCormick next conceded that extension of $100 million in credit would create a favorable impression in Russia. He then revealed a vague understanding of the Mission's purpose with his question, "How far does this commission have anything to say upon the question of further loans?" McCormick proposed that the Mission follow one of two possible procedures. They could wait until their return to the United States to make any specific recommendations, or they could "immediately cable to the President" the financial needs of the Russian Government. McCormick obviously favored the latter course, as he remarked that the first procedure "would delay the application of any further money to Russia for a period of say three months." Root accepted the validity of McCormick's argument but, more aware of the workings of the Executive branch of the government, replied: "I feel that the line of natural action [for the Mission] would be a medium one between the two you have suggested." Root's view prevailed and the Mission requested the extension of limited credit while in Russia. They delayed further recommendations until they returned to Washington.

During the same conference McCormick introduced the

13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
topic of a commercial treaty with Russia. Root briefly explained the cancellation of the Russian-American Commercial Treaty of 1832, indicating that this action had resulted from considerable political pressure applied to the Taft Administration by Jewish elements in America. Root specifically referred to the action of Representative William Sulzer of New York, who "took it upon himself to frame a congressional resolution which in its language was most insulting to Russia." Root squelched any desire McCormick and Bertron may have had to arrange a new commercial treaty: "I do not think it would be wise for us to take up now in our interviews and negotiations any question of the formation of a new treaty." This in no way implied that Root failed to see the potential of such an agreement. He felt, however, that any such negotiation would "come up in its own way at the proper time." During a conference a few days later, McCormick again introduced the topic of a commercial treaty: "I have several interesting papers which the State Department has sent me relating to the commercial treaty with Russia, which expired by notice on January 1, 1913, and I submit them to you, Senator, and to any other members who would like to look them over." As in his earlier discussion of

16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
a commercial treaty, Root pointed out, "According to our instructions we have nothing to get from Russia. Therefore, it is best that we say nothing about a commercial treaty." Root indicated the pitfalls in any attempt on their part to discuss such a treaty and emphasized:

In fact we want to keep as far away as possible from any assertion that we have come for any commercial advantage whatever to the United States. The charge has been made and will again be repeated by those who are our enemies, or by those who are ignorant on the subject, that the United States is always after money; that it will do anything for a pecuniary profit. This sentiment we have to counteract. 18

Four days later, Root told the Mission of a request from citizens in Nome, Alaska, that the Mission secure a "post for trading with Russia." He intended to turn the request over to Ambassador Francis and warned his colleagues, "We are not here on a business errand. We must keep clear of promoting American business or American interest of any kind . . . . We must not merely refrain from suggestions of getting a benefit of any kind for the United States, but we must avoid even the appearance of such a thing." 19 That seemed to settle the matter of a commercial treaty if not of loans.

On May 22, McCormick again attempted to gain information about the precise lending policy of the

American government. He asked the chairman: "Is it a
c Condition precedent to the making of our loans to Russia
that the money provided to them shall all be spent by
them in the United States, or is any portion of the loan
to be available for the Russians for use in Russia?" Root
replied, "I understand that at least three-fourths of the
money provided by the United States is to be spent in the
United States for supplies to be sent to Russia." It
is apparent from McCormick's questions and comments that
he was not altogether sure of the scope and limitations of
the Mission beyond the fact that he and Bertron were to
ascertain the financial needs of the Russian government
and report these to his own government. Bertron had
conferred with Secretary McAdoo prior to departure, yet
he appears to have been equally uncertain as to their
position.  

In a conference on May 24, Admiral Glennon sug-
gested the possibility of making "some direct contribu-
tion to the Zemstvo organizations to strengthen their
hands." Root replied that he felt the Mission should not
"distinguish in . . . financial arrangements between two
different branches of the Russian government's operations,"


21 Samuel R. Bertron to William G. McAdoo, July 2,
1917, Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.
and that "all financial arrangements should go through one channel." 22

On May 30, General Scott asked the members if it were not possible that they would "be asked pointedly as to what kind of co-operation we are proposing? Are we to bring to Russia men or money?" Root answered:

It was clearly pointed out to us by the President that we have no authority to make any proposition the acceptance of which would be a contract on the part of the United States . . . We are not carrying to Russia a bunch of propositions . . . although if they have any definite suggestions or any wishes we will hear them. 23

On May 31, Bertron read to other members of the Mission "some figures with regard to the finances of Russia." The New York banker pointed out that the Russian debt, which had stood at nine billion rubles before the war, had now reached a figure of twenty-eight billion. During the same period the annual budget had risen from two and eight-tenths billion to four billion rubles. In a somewhat optimistic tone he stated that "after the war financial matters will adjust themselves to the former normal conditions." Senator Root's reaction expressed exactly what he had warned them against voicing openly:

22"McCormick Diary," May 24, 1917. Glennon did not indicate to which "zemstvo" organization he referred.

As I think over the question of Russia's finances, with the richness of its mines and the wealth of its agriculture, I feel that ample American capital is ready to come to Russia to help in its development if only one question could be settled, and that is the stability of the present government. That is the only menace I see to Russia's future prosperity.24

Russell, sounding more like a banker than a socialist, responded to Bertron's summation of the Russian financial situation with a question: "What are the chances of Russia's returning the money that we lend? . . . It seems significant that no advance on the eastern front has been made—no effort in fighting has been made since the revolution." This caused Russell to "wonder how badly Russia wants the money from the United States." Duncan, pointing out that the United States should not expect the Russian Army to make any immediate military advance due to problems of establishing a sound government, was confident that "as soon as the government is in working order . . . you will see discipline and action and results."25

Dissatisfied with this explanation, Russell wondered why the Russians had "not utilized their forces to make any attempt to go forward against the enemy" if the Revolution had not affected the Russian military potential. Root concluded the discussion with the statement that the Russian military potential was one subject they would

25 Ibid.
attempt to measure. It was quite natural, he said, that "the United States cannot put in its money unless it is for the very best interest of Russia." 26

The railway trip from Vladivostok to Petrograd had given all members of the Mission the opportunity to gather firsthand information on conditions in Russia. Because of their special interest in Russian financial problems, McCormick and Bertron were particularly interested in the reports of representatives of International Harvester Company who joined the train on its journey across Russia.

At the request of McCormick, August Heid joined the group in Vladivostok on board the Buffalo and accompanied them for a brief time. Although Heid was primarily concerned with the cause and the eventual course of the Revolution — a matter which he thought depended almost entirely "upon the question of the military" — he was able to provide illustrations of the effect the Revolution had had on business. To Heid, the major problem for Russian business was the uncertainty of a labor force even with the inflated wages. He felt that time would solve the problem, since "a majority of the business and workmen are tired of the present situation and the prevailing disorder." 27

26 Ibid.
When Lieutenant Riggs joined the group in Vladivostok, his observations and impressions were concerned primarily with the war effort, but he also offered suggestions with regard to Russian finances and American loans. He first noted it would be wise to explain to the Russians that the sending of a Mission to ascertain need in no way indicated reluctance on the part of the United States to extend aid to the Russian government. In particular, Riggs advised the group that the United States should not "be too particular about the terms" for granting aid. "To ask a definite promise from the ministry that they would continue the war," he said, "would bring a speedy acquiescence, but what is the promise of a ministry worth that is subject to change at any moment?" Riggs thought it possible that the loan would not be repaid in full, but "the need is so imperative that we must make the advance, even if we charge a large share of them [Loans] to profit and loss later on." 28

Root agreed with Riggs and probably spoke for the Mission when he remarked, "If the Russian soldiers will not fight, then the United States must quit giving them large sums of money; but we can afford to take great chances on the question of their fighting — I should say

chances of ten to one would be reasonable." A few days in Russia hardly equipped Root to handicap the Russian Revolution.

On June 9, McCormick was met at Novo-Nikolaievsk by representatives of International Harvester. Business conditions in this area were unstable as a result of the Revolution. McCormick learned that although the company had granted forty-five per cent wage increases to its employees, approximately half of them had quit. The company had received a letter from one of its customers saying he "supposed all machines belonged to the government . . . and that would release him from the necessity of paying the note he owed." The Harvester official felt that the letter "was not written in a spirit of trying to defraud us, but from an ignorance of the conditions, and from a supposition on the part of the peasants that now everyone could do as he liked."30

Although officially excluded from consideration, the topic of post-war commercial relations inevitably crept into discussions of the Russian situation. Smith, an interpreter attached to the Mission, had been in Russia for seventeen years. Most of this time he had been connected with English mining interests. Smith, pointing out

that Germany "had always been more active than any other
nation in seeking Russian trade," felt that Russian com-
merce would again be dominated by the Germans once the
war was over, "unless there is a strong law passed pro-
hibiting German trade." 31

The same position was taken by the International
Harvester representative at Ekaterinburg. When McCormick
asked him about the "effect of German trade" after the
war, he replied, "I believe the Germans will come into
Russia in strong force . . . trying to capture all the
trade which they had before." He suggested that "the
United States will have to join together in concert with
Russia if they intend to prevent Germany from resuming
the large share of the trade after the war." 32

On the last day of the trip to Petrograd, E. A.
Brittenham, manager of International Harvester in Russia,
joined the train and conferred with Root and the other
members of the Mission. Root found his evaluation of the
situation "more hopeful" than that of other representa-
tives of the company. Brittenham pointed out, however,
that industrial production in Russia had fallen off as
a result of the Revolution. Using the Harvester works at
Lubertzy as an example, he explained that although wages

31 Ibid.
had increased in some cases as much as one hundred per cent, production had fallen by twenty-five per cent. He was confident that, given time, the situation would stabilize. Brittenham said that the American loan of $100 million had brought "a general feeling of great relief and satisfaction" not only because the money was desperately needed but because it allowed the Russians to "feel a certain independence of England upon whom they have heretofore been obliged to rely solely for their financial support."\textsuperscript{33}

Brittenham supported other observers about the advisability of a commercial treaty with Russia. Satisfied that the Germans would "make a great effort to recover the supremacy in trade that they had in Russia before the war," he proposed an immediate effort "to get some law which would make a discriminatory tariff in favor of the Allies."\textsuperscript{34}

The Mission arrived in Petrograd on June 13. McCormick and Bertron were invited by Ambassador Francis to lunch with Shingarev, Minister of Finance, on June 16. Their first meeting consisted of a briefing on the general nature of Russian finances. To pursue the financial needs

\textsuperscript{33}"McCormick Diary," June 13, 1917.

\textsuperscript{34}\textit{Ibid.}
of Russia in more detail, they met again on June 18 and for two hours conferred with Shingarev and his assistant Samen, who spoke excellent English. The two Americans left the conference with material pertaining to Russia's financial situation and examined this the same afternoon. They also carried away the impression that Shingarev expected that further loans would be arranged while the Mission was in Russia. They noted that "he seemed disposed to hasten the procuring of all the information we could ask for."

That Shingarev expected financial arrangements to be made immediately was confirmed in a conference held the following day. When asked about the advisability of the Mission's visiting various Russian cities, Shingarev replied that the reception and usefulness of such a junket would depend upon whether the Mission was prepared to announce substantial loans to Russia. McCormick replied, "We are not a financial body, and we are not empowered to make any loans." He explained, however, that the Mission's recommendations were to be used by the American government in reaching a decision on the subject. Shingarev "showed a great deal of concern at this statement" and asked if it


36 "McCormick Diary," June 18, 1917.
would be possible for the Mission to cable their recommendations, thus hastening the process. McCormick said it might be, but he must first consult with the other members.

To emphasize his position, Shingarev explained that "all the people of Russia are waiting now to know what America, which is now our friend, can do for us in a financial way." McCormick's reply, designed to leave "the ball in the other camp," was that "all the people of America" were also waiting for the answer to a question: "When will the Russian soldiers be able to make an advance against their enemies ?" The Russian, shrugging his shoulders, replied, "I wish I could answer that question, but I am not able to do so." The two Americans left the Minister's office after being told that further financial information which they had requested would be delivered within the next two days.

Bertron and McCormick left Petrograd en route to Moscow shortly before midnight on June 21. They had not yet received the information requested from Shingarev. Upon reaching Moscow, they asked Root if they could call the Embassy in Petrograd and ask that it secure the promised information from the Finance Ministry. Root strongly opposed this action, feeling that "any indication of haste on our


part would be a sign of weakness." "An inquiry upon special points made in such an unusual manner would almost commit us later on toward recommending that our government on these points at least should comply with the wishes of the Russians."39 This was an indefensible position, since one of the very purposes of the Mission was to gather pertinent information so as to accurately assess Russia's financial needs.

Finally, after a two-week delay, McCormick and Bertron received from the Minister of Finance the information necessary to complete their evaluation of Russia's financial needs.40 The delay is difficult to explain. Perhaps Bertron's opinion that the Ministry was "busy with politics" and had given "little thought to how our services can be applied in aiding them" was correct.41

While in Petrograd Bertron and McCormick had conferences with Peshchechonov, Minister of Food and Supplies, and Stephanov, Acting Minister of Commerce and Industry.42 The few records of these conferences indicate that the Americans held discussions on a rather general plane in order to gather information for their recommendations to

41 Samuel R. Bertron to Edward M. House, June 18, 1917, Edward M. House Papers, Drawer 3.
42 "Interviews by Cyrus H. McCormick."
the United States government. On one occasion, however, Stephanov's assistant showed Bertron and McCormick "ingenious charts" of proposed improvements in transportation. Although the men were "favorably impressed" with the plans, they "were not surprised [sic]" that they had not been put into effect. This was to be done in the "next few weeks." 43

In addition to the conferences with the Russian Ministers of Finance, Food and Supplies, and Commerce and Industry, Bertron and McCormick also held interviews with other Government officials, Russian bankers and manufacturers, and representatives of American business and financial interests in Russia. 44 They limited their inquiries to the more conservative elements of the Russian financial community and on at least one occasion met with a former financial advisor to the deposed Tsar. 45

All of the bankers whom they interviewed were optimistic, although to varying degrees, over the ultimate establishment of a stable and responsible government. The bankers criticized the Provisional Government for its laxness in gaining control over the population, especially the soldiers. The president of the Azov-Don Bank, described by McCormick as "one of the highest financiers in Petrograd,"

44 "Interviews by Cyrus H. McCormick."
45 "McCormick Diary," June 17, 1917.
suggested that Russia needed a dictator who would maintain control until elections provided for a permanent government. He also informed Bertron and McCormick that there had been a noticeable increase in subscriptions for the Russian "Liberty Loan" in the past two weeks and repeated this claim to other members of the Mission. Of the three billion rubles guaranteed by banks, over one-half had already been purchased by individuals and, "notwithstanding this large subscription, the deposits in the banks have also increased." Two other bankers interpreted the sale of the Liberty Loans as an indication of a growing confidence in the government, as two-thirds had been purchased by early July. These figures failed to impress the two Americans, and they later reported that the total amount had not been sold and that less than one-third of one per cent of the Russian people had purchased the bonds.

On whether America should attempt to aid in stabilizing the ruble, Bertron and McCormick received

47 "McCormick Diary," June 17, 1917.
49 Ibid.
conflicting advice. A representative of the International Bank wanted the United States to purchase rubles on the New York market. The president of the Russian Bank of Foreign Trade opposed this approach. He thought that such a policy would "attract an indefinite supply of rubles for sale." In his opinion, the value of the ruble could be restored only through increased confidence in the Russian government and increased Russian exports. This led him to suggest that any American support should "be an economic one and not artificial."\(^1\) Bertron and McCormick supported the latter's arguments. Since the beginning of the war the ruble had dropped from a par value of fifty-one cents to twenty-two cents in relation to the American dollar. This was due in part to the tendency of "local capitalists" to liquidate their assets and to "remove the proceeds to foreign countries."\(^2\)

There is no evidence that Bertron or McCormick discussed the question of a new Russo-American commercial treaty, although it is quite possible that the topic arose in the many unrecorded conversations with various representatives of Russian finance and industry. That the leaders of Russia's commercial interests were not only willing but anxious to discuss the possibility of closer

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\(^1\)"McCormick Diary," July 4, 1917.

commercial ties with the United States is obvious. On
the afternoon of June 21, Bertron and McCormick, accompa­
nied by Root and other members of the Mission, attended a
special meeting of the Russo-American Committee, an organi-
53zation created to promote trade with the United States. In a speech before the assemblage, N. N. Pokrovsky,
President of the Committee, advocated closer economic
ties with the United States. He felt that the United States had attained its current level of "economic development and prosperity" because it had "not crushed personal initiative and energy" but had "given it full freedom in developing the natural resources of the country." 54

Thirteen short speeches delivered by representatives of the various economic interests in Russia followed. With few exceptions the speakers followed Pokrovsky's lead. They pointed out that Russia's past form of government had prevented a close economic relationship with the United States. Abdication of the Tsar, however, had re­moved any obstacle to the creation of closer economic ties. 55

Although he apologized "for mentioning such prosaic


54 "Address Delivered by N. N. Pokrovsky, President of the Russo-American Committee," Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.

business matters at such an exceptional occasion," E. S. Karotygin, President of the Chamber of Export, suggested: "Simultaneously with ... the successful conclusion of the war preparatory steps [should be made] for the building up of peaceful economic relations and the elucidation of the mutual interests of the Allies in different branches of trade and commerce." The speaker indicated that the United States could easily replace Germany as a source of supply for manufactured products and could receive directly from Russia "certain raw materials" which heretofore had been "obtained from Russia through Germany."56 The same view was expressed by the president of the Association of Industry and Commerce. Recognizing that currently assistance was limited to "the task at hand," namely the successful prosecution of the war, the speaker then stated that there was "no reason to doubt that this collaboration in warfare against the mutual enemy will prepare the road for a more complete rapprochment in various economic questions, from which both Allies can expect nothing but advantage."57

Senator Root, delivering the reply to the various
speeches, explained that "the Mission has no function to discharge in respect to industrial and commercial life." The topic had, in fact, been "intentionally excluded from the scope of its duty." He did suggest that after the war "all those relations of industry and commercial life" would no doubt result. Bertron and McCormick supported this viewpoint.

Throughout their stay in Russia, McCormick and Bertron were anxious to hasten the process of securing American loans for Russia. On at least two occasions, following interviews with the Russian Minister of Finance, they asked Root to cable Washington to request additional money. Assuming that the Wilson Administration would extend further credit to the Provisional Government, they wished to capitalize upon the favorable reaction which would result. The amount they usually mentioned was an additional $100 million, though on one occasion Bertron suggested a sum of twice that much. This amount was along the lines of the "medium" that Root had suggested during their journey to Russia, yet Root opposed the idea and offered different reasons on each occasion. He first objected because he felt that any request for money should come from the Minister of Foreign Affairs rather than from

58 Americas Message, 17-18.
the Minister of Finance. He later argued that Germany might overrun Russia and it would be like putting "money on the sidewalk for Germany to pick up."\(^6^0\)

The last attempt of McCormick and Bertron to secure an immediate loan to Russia occurred on July 7, two days before their departure for the United States. In a morning conference of the Mission, McCormick proposed that a cable be sent to Washington seeking an additional fifty or one hundred million dollars credit to Russia. They were supported by Russell. The other members supported Root's view that requests for further credit should be delayed until their return to Washington.\(^6^1\)

In an afternoon session of the Mission on July 8, the day before their departure from Russia, Root informed the others that he had received an urgent request from the Minister of Foreign Affairs for an immediate loan of seventy-five million dollars. The money was needed to pay Russian troops in Finland, where the Russian ruble was unacceptable.\(^6^2\) With the approval of the Mission, Root and Ambassador Francis sent a telegram to Lansing to strongly recommend the loan. They emphasized that the

\(^6^0\)"McCormick Diary," June 20 and June 28, 1917.

\(^6^1\)"McCormick Diary," July 7, 1917; and "Russell Diary," July 7, 1917.

\(^6^2\)"McCormick Diary," July 8, 1917.
existing government and Russia's military security would be seriously endangered if the loan were not forthcoming.63

Less than twenty-four hours after receiving the request, Polk, Acting Secretary of State in Lansing's absence, replied favorably. He instructed Francis to inform the Minister of Foreign Affairs that the seventy-five million dollar loan would "be made available immediately."64 The Mission had left Russia before the reply reached Petrograd, and they were not informed of the government's action until their arrival in the United States. This was the only specific request for immediate credit made by the Mission during the trip to Russia, and the prompt action of the State Department left the members no room for criticism. This loan, like other efforts made by the United States during this period, did not succeed in keeping Russia in the war or in stabilizing the political situation. Russia's problems were such that the infusion of American dollars alone could not solve them.

63Elihu Root to Robert Lansing, July 8, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/154, St. Dept.

64Frank L. Polk to David R. Francis, July 9, 1917, Doc. No. 861.00/157, St. Dept.
CHAPTER VIII

MILITARY

The Root Mission's most important function was to evaluate Russia's financial needs. Another major chore was to determine Russia's ability to remain effectively in the war. President Wilson tactfully avoided any reference to this latter phase of the Mission's work in his message to the Provisional Government, but Russian officials were well aware that American aid would be contingent upon their ability to continue as an effective force in the war against Germany. Although each member of the Mission would pay close attention to Russia's military potential, this part of the Mission's work fell primarily to two men, Major General Hugh L. Scott, and Rear Admiral James H. Glennon.

President Wilson's choice of General Scott, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, as a member of the Mission is difficult to explain. Perhaps the selection of Scott was intended to increase the prestige of the Mission and flatter the Russians, but it removed from Washington a man who should not have been spared at such a critical time. General Scott was unenthusiastic about his
appointment to the Mission. He later recorded that when approached by Secretary Baker he had replied that he "did not wish at all to leave the United States at that time while we were preparing to go to war with Germany." He was, however, "completely at the disposal of the President" and would "cheerfully" follow his wishes. General Scott accepted the President's decision gracefully, but Colonel Judson wrote to his wife that he had the impression that Scott did so reluctantly and suggested that "his coming was doubtless arranged for more reasons than one." The implication was that the President utilized the Mission as a means of removing Scott from Washington, D.C.

Apparently, the Chief of Staff viewed the trip with some trepidation. During the lengthy voyage from Seattle to Vladivostok, Scott wrote his wife, "I wish I knew . . . what the war Dept. is doing—No doubt I would be surprised if I knew some of the things being done." Almost a month later, he wrote her again that he had been "wondering a great deal" about his position when he returned. Realizing that he might have been replaced as Chief of Staff, Scott

1Scott, "The Russian Revolution," 2.

2William V. Judson to Mrs. William V. Judson, May 17, 1917, William V. Judson Papers, Box 4. Judson apparently realized that Scott's appointment was being used to get him out of Washington. When Scott returned to Washington, he was immediately relieved of his position as Chief of Staff.

stated that "none of us" is indispensable and that "the Secretary may have discovered this for himself." 4

Although Scott accepted the position with the Root Mission unwillingly, he conscientiously fulfilled his duty as a member. Russell noted that during a stop at Spokane the General was as "nervous as a school boy" for fear their drive through the town would delay the Mission. 5 This was due perhaps to his years of military service in which strict adherence to a prearranged schedule was essential. On one occasion, he complained to his wife that the Mission's agenda was too unstable to suit him. 6 He later commented that the Mission had "wasted enormous amounts of the most valuable time waiting around for people to get together . . . owing to lack of organization--it makes me very cross sometimes but it is no use for me to get angry. I have to swallow it and wait for the others long after the appointed time." 7 His diary and letters reveal that he was anxious to proceed with the business at hand during his stay in Russia, and an examination of his schedule

4Hugh L. Scott to Mrs. Hugh L. Scott, June 27, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 5 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

5"Russell Diary," May 19, 1917.


7Hugh L. Scott to Mrs. Hugh L. Scott, June 24, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 5 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
shows that he utilized his time with a great degree of efficiency.

Scott began the journey with an extremely pessimistic attitude and, unlike other members of the Mission who might have had reservations about its success, voiced this pessimism. On the day of departure from Washington he wrote a friend that from the available information, "it looks very much as if Russia is breaking up and we will be too late." He felt that "only a miracle" could prevent the Russian Army from "going to pieces." In a letter to a fellow officer he stated that in his opinion "Russia's Army" was "crushed" and he was leaving Washington "with very little hope of any successful results."

In his initial encounter with Russian authority, Scott found nothing to change his opinion. When, upon arrival in the port of Vladivostok the Captain of the Buffalo found anchorage with no assistance from any official of the port, Chief of Staff Scott found this absurd. Scott interpreted the large numbers of Russian soldiers present at each train station as an indication that

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8Hugh L. Scott to Mrs. H. L. Schelling, May 15, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 29 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).


discipline in the army had been destroyed.

The day after they arrived in Petrograd, Scott wrote his wife that the Russian situation was extremely unstable. "There is" he said, "no real force in the Govt—the army is run by town meeting votes of soldiers who do not obey their officers." Approximately five million Russian soldiers were absent from the Front, and "according to all the rules of the game Russia is out of the war."

For the first time, however, Scott qualified his pessimism: The "great recuperative power of the Russian people" might possibly enable Russia to "pull herself together and fight but no one has any money to bet on it." He cited the Provisional Government's recent refusal to accept the demands of the "dock men" and "socialist and German spies" for political control of Kronstadt naval base as one of a number of encouraging signs.\(^1\)

During his first two weeks in Petrograd, Scott met with the leaders of the Provisional Government, obtained from the appropriate military leaders estimates of Russia's needs in war material, and conducted a series of military inspections in the Petrograd area.\(^2\)

\(^1\)Hugh L. Scott to Mrs. Hugh L. Scott, June 14, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 5 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

\(^2\)Scott, "Report to Secretary of Mission," [no date], Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 1, Folder 1 (Princeton University Library, Princeton, N. J.).
Minister Tereshchenko at a reception in the Foreign Office. Following the reception, the military and naval members of the Mission called on Kerensky, the Minister of War. Tereshchenko spoke "excellent English," but Scott spoke with Kerensky through an interpreter. The General was most favorably impressed with Kerensky, whom he described as a "young man of great force and energy." Scott explained to Kerensky that he was primarily interested in determining how the United States could best aid Russia's war effort. Kerensky acknowledged the offer of aid and pleased Scott by suggesting a visit to Army Headquarters in Mogilev to be followed by a visit to the Front.

The next day, Scott was presented to the Council of Ministers. Tereshchenko's reply to Root's address was a disappointment to Scott, who felt that the Foreign Minister had "failed to put the emphasis in the fighting of Germany." During a conversation after the speeches, Tereshchenko warned Scott that he would encounter many pessimists during his stay in Russia, but the Russian


14 Hugh L. Scott to Mrs. Hugh L. Scott, June 14, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 5 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

15 "Scott Diary," June 14, 1917.


asked that the American "not believe them" and assured him that Russia would be able to overcome its current difficulties. 18

Two days later Scott had a conference with Kerensky. Again the Secretary of War impressed Scott as a "forcible young man" whose words came from his mouth "like shots from a gatling gun." 19 In the course of the conversation Kerensky cited the vote of the Petrograd Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in support of the government's position in the Grimm case 20 as an example of the stability of the Provisional Government. Scott told Kerensky of the success the French and English Missions had enjoyed in "rousing the people" in various American cities and suggested that the Root Mission undertake a similar task in Russia. The Secretary of War, however, "seemed cold but polite." 21 When Scott asked what he should avoid in his visit to the Front, Kerensky replied, "Politics." 22

Both Tereshchenko and Kerensky impressed Scott as men of energy and ability. As was to be expected, both

18 Ibid.
19 "Scott Diary," June 17, 1917.
20 The Petrograd Soviet had upheld the action of the Provisional Government in expelling Grimm, a Swiss diplomat, because of suspected pro-German activities.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
tried to persuade the General of the stability of the Provisional Government. Scott later described Kerensky as "a bit too radically inclined to suit me," but his diary and letters written at the time did not make this distinction.

One of Scott's major tasks during his stay in the Russian capital was to obtain estimates of materials sought from the United States by the various departments of the Russian Army. In order to facilitate the gathering of this information, Scott arranged a conference for June 18. Accompanied by Colonels Michie, Judson, and Mott, Scott conferred with General Manikovsky, Assistant to the Minister of War, and the heads of the various military departments.24

Scott began the conference by briefly explaining the purpose of the Mission. He emphasized the need for both America and Russia to continue the war against Germany


24 In addition to General Manikovsky, the conference was attended by the following Russian officers: Colonel Jakoubovitch, assistant to the Minister of War, General Paltchinsky, Assistant to the President of the Metal Conference, General Michelson, Chief of Management of supplying troops from foreign countries, General Romanovsky, Chief of the General Staff, General Bozatko, Chief of the Commissariat, General Lechovitch, Chief of the Artillery Department, Admiral Kavin, Assistant Minister of Marine, General Ovchinnikov, Assistant Chief of the Military Technical Department, Colonel Yakovlev, Chief of the Department of Aviation. "Mission Log," 23-24.
in order "to make democracy safe." The Mission's "one object here" was to offer "cooperation and assistance" and to determine how best this aid could be rendered. Manikovsky expressed gratitude and assured Scott that with American assistance "we are certain that . . . we will be able to crush Germany and the foes of democracy." Since the Provisional Government had decided that "all negotiations of a financial nature" should be conducted by the Minister of Finance, Manikovsky suggested that they limit their discussions to the specific needs of the various departments. As these lists were presented, General Scott and the other officers frequently asked for clarification or more detailed information. A tabulation of the requests was eventually submitted to the State and War Departments in both the McCormick-Bertron Report and in the report submitted by General Scott.

One point which the Russian officers emphasized was that without immediate aid to the Russian railway system

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25 "Transcript of Proceedings of Conference between General Manikovsky, Assistant to the Minister of War, and Officers, and General Scott, Chief of Staff and Officers, June 5/18, 1917," 1, Elihu Root Papers, Box 192. Hereinafter cited as "Conference between General Manikovsky and General Scott."

26 Ibid.


28 "Conference between General Manikovsky and General Scott," 4-14.
all other assistance would be useless. General Michelson explained that the military had been "keenly disappointed" to hear that 500 locomotives and 10,000 freight cars expected in July would not reach Russia until December. Using the part of Vladivostok as an example, he pointed out that material was being shipped from the port at a rate of 150 cars per day. This represented only twenty-five per cent of the railroad's potential capacity if sufficient cars were available. He concluded, "We will hardly be able to avail ourselves of any other assistance unless the rolling stock is given." 29

At the close of the conference Manikovsky again brought up the question of assistance for the railroads. He asked that Scott telegraph his government immediately about the drastic need in that area. Scott agreed to arrange such a message after conferring with other members of the Mission. He pointed out, however, that his government would ask if "the Russians intend to advance." 30 Scott later recalled that this question had the effect of "exploding a bombshell in their midst" with the Russians "looking first at each other and then at me." 31

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29 "Conference between General Manikovsky and General Scott," 3-4.

30 "Conference between General Manikovsky and General Scott," 15.

Jakoubovitch then informed the Chief of Staff that the Russian Armies intended to advance "in the shortest possible time." He emphasized the difficulty of accumulating material for an offensive because of inadequate transportation facilities and explained that the advance would occur in an area already well supplied where troop morale was "improving all the time." The advance was to be a part of a gradual advance on all Fronts and was to occur in no more "than ten days or two weeks." Scott found this information "most encouraging," and the conference ended on an optimistic note.

In addition to conducting interviews with officials of the Provisional Government and conferences to determine the needs of the Russian Army, General Scott visited various military installations during his first week. Although he had been told that he would be able to visit the Front almost immediately, the days dragged by. Scott became impatient and frequently wrote to his wife complaining about the delay. Later events suggest that the Russian officials wished Scott to visit the Front at

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32 "Conference between General Manikovsky and General Scott," 15. The advance occurred on July 1, 1917, twelve days later.

33 "Scott Diary," June 14, 1917.

the time of the July 1st offensive. If this is indeed true, it is not unreasonable to assume that the tours in and around Petrograd were designed primarily to keep the impatient General occupied.

Upon the invitation of General Polotsav, Commander of the Petrograd Military District, Scott and his staff inspected the Guard Infantry Regiment and the First Regiment of the Don Cossacks. Scott was told that this "crack Regiment" of the Guard had occupied the same barracks for 160 years. This led Scott to record in his diary that "if we had been told the barracks had never been cleaned during that time we would have believed it." Nor did the Cossack Regiment impress the General, who described conditions there as "fully as dirty as the infantry." Scott also noted the absence of such necessities as adequate bedding, and that available he described as "Rags." He was appalled to find that the commanding officer could not recall when the last drill had occurred. Scott's impression of the Russian Army was not helped by this inspection, which he later described as "a great shock."

35 Scott, "Report to Secretary of Mission," 2.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
The following day Scott and Colonel Michie visited the Pavlovsky Infantry School and the Mikhailovsky Artillery School. These institutions, which Scott had been told were "the two best military schools in Russia," were a disappointment to him. He was particularly amazed at the lack of sanitation. Although the artillery school was "a great improvement" over the infantry school, he found neither to be "at all clean."

In an inspection of a hospital in a portion of the Winter Palace, Scott finally found something which he could compliment. The large reception rooms of the Palace had been converted to wards to accommodate 100 men and were "high and airy." Scott found the men "well taken care of and cheerful."

On June 19, Scott toured the Putilov Steel Works in Petrograd. The plant was producing munitions almost exclusively, and its normal work force of 30,000 made it one of the largest in Russia. Scott was disappointed to find that the plant was producing at only fifty to sixty

39 Scott, "Report to Secretary of Mission," 3.
40 "Scott Diary," June 16, 1917.
42 "Scott Diary," June 17, 1917.
per cent capacity. The General attributed this situation to worker absenteeism and observed that many of those present were not working. At one point in their tour, described as five miles in length, they came to a room where some workmen were holding a meeting. General Scott was prompted to suggest that this was "a fair sample of what is going on everywhere."

On the same day Scott toured an airplane factory where he saw many planes, mostly French and German, but observed "none ready for flight."

Scott also accompanied other Mission members on a brief visit to Moscow. Although the General welcomed the opportunity to see Moscow, since he felt that one had not seen the "real Russia" if this city were omitted, he complained of having to wait for the others. He was obviously becoming increasingly anxious to tour the Russian Front. He had expected to go much sooner and wrote that the "many disappointments" and "the exasperating delay would drive me to drink."

45 Ibid.
46 Hugh L. Scott to Mrs. Hugh L. Scott, June 18, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 5 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
47 Hugh L. Scott to Mrs. Hugh L. Scott, June 24, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 5 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
48 Ibid.
The Mission left Moscow on the evening of June 24 and arrived in Petrograd the following afternoon.\textsuperscript{49} Upon arrival, Scott discovered that the long awaited visit to the Russian Front was to begin. After a ten-hour delay in Petrograd, Scott and Colonels Michie, Judson, and Mott and American officers assigned to the American Embassy boarded a special train for the Russian General Staff Headquarters at Mogilev. Root and Tereshchenko were also on board the train but planned to return to Petrograd after interviews with General Brusilov rather than continue to the Front.\textsuperscript{50}

The train arrived at Mogilev at 9:00 p.m. on June 27. Scott, Tereshchenko, and Root called on Brusilov immediately. The Americans were invited to lunch with the Russian Commander the next day. Scott was told that arrangements had been made for him to leave for the Front after lunch.\textsuperscript{51}

Scott's brief visit to Mogilev was his first encouraging experience with the Russian military. None of the criticism which characterized his earlier tours of inspection occurs in his description of Brusilov's Headquarters, and his evaluation of the commanding officer.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{49}"Mission Log," 28.

\textsuperscript{50}Ibid., 29.

\textsuperscript{51}"Scott Diary," June 27, 1917.

\textsuperscript{52}Hugh L. Scott to Mrs. Hugh L. Scott, June 27, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 5 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress); "Scott Diary," June 27-28, 1917.
He described Brusilov as a "forceful man" whose command seemed to have a "more businesslike air . . . than any so far seen." 53

For the trip to the Front the Americans were joined by Colonel Navielskoy, assigned to them as a special aide. 54 The two-day trip was interrupted at one point by a bombing attack by a German plane. No damage or injury resulted, although many members had no time to dress in their haste to leave the train. The group arrived at Tarnopol late in the evening of June 29 and transferred to automobiles for the remaining portion of the journey. 55 After a brief visit with General Erdley at Eleventh Army Headquarters in Ezerna, the group proceeded to Budilev where the Sixth Corps Headquarters was located. 56

The Russian Chief of Staff of the Sixth Corps met the group. After explaining the next day's battle plans he suggested that the party might wish to observe the artillery bombardment already in progress. Scott and his aides welcomed this opportunity and proceeded on foot to a Division Commander's observation post southwest of the

53 Ibid.
village. From this vantage point Scott and his aides could observe the forty-mile section of the Front where the advance was to take place. After watching the artillery assault for some time, Scott and his group returned to a village eight miles to the rear to await the attack.

After a night's sleep on hospital cots reeking with formaldehyde, the group returned to their observation post shortly before 8:00 a.m. The artillery barrage was lifted and the Russian infantry began its assault at precisely 9:00 a.m. Scott soon observed large numbers of men returning from the Front. He assumed that they were retreating Russians but soon discovered that they were Austrian and German prisoners. Scott and his aides returned to Corps Headquarters at 4:00 p.m. Thus, after traveling thousands of miles and being absent from Washington for almost three months, the Chief of Staff of the United States Army visited the Russian Front for approximately twenty-four hours and observed a combined artillery and infantry assault which lasted three hours.

The visit, however, was far from insignificant. Prior to this time Scott had shown nothing but concern for the ability of the Russians to continue the war. As a result of these observations, however, Scott was impressed

with the potential of the Russian Army and most enthusiastic. The American Press quoted the General as saying:

The Russian Army is going to fight, the spirit among the troops everywhere is excellent, and the July 1st advance . . . has every chance for successful continuation . . . The precision and exquisite working of the Russian machinery was a marvel to me . . . there was not the slightest sign of insubordination or reluctance among the men.58

An American journalist in Russia wrote to his wife that the Russian advance "was almost as if it had been staged especially for Gen. Scott and his staff; they could never have arrived at a better time. Previous to their arrival there was nothing doing on the Russian Front."59 Whether by accident or design, General Scott had arrived at a very propitious moment. Years later, when asked if the offensive had been designed for the effect it would have in Russia or on the Allies, Kerensky replied, "Both."60 Kerensky and the Russian General Staff, however, did not stage the advance for Scott's benefit although Allied pressure, especially French and British, on the Provisional Government prompted an offensive at this time.

After the July 1st offensive, Scott and his aides began the trip to Jassy, the temporary capital of Rumania.

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59 Donald C. Thompson to Mrs. Donald C. Thompson, July 8, 1917, quoted in Donald C. Thompson, Donald Thompson in Russia (New York: Century Co., 1918), 258.

60 Warth, The Allies And The Russian Revolution, 176.
The trip was delayed by a brief visit to the Eighth Army Headquarters of General Kornilov at Czernowitz. General Scott was deeply impressed with Kornilov and later recalled that he had come "to regard him as the hope of Russia." After his death there was "no hope for Russia." During their brief conference Scott explained the purpose of the Mission and told of the preparations for war being made in America. Kornilov outlined his plan for a proposed attack against the Austrians. He invited the American General to return in four or five days, in order to observe the advance of the Eighth Army, which consisted of about 200,000 men.

The trip to Rumania was the result of a request made by the Rumanian government through its Minister at Petrograd. Although Root was unable to visit Rumania, he arranged for General Scott to go there after his inspection of the Russian Front. His mission was to assure

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62 "Memorandum of Conversation Between Gen. Kornilov, Commanding the 8th Army, and General Scott at Chernovitch, July 2, 1917," Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 71 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress). General Korniloff also told Scott of his task at the beginning of the Revolution of placing the Czarina under arrest. One of General Scott's aides would later recall that the General had an "insatiable" curiosity about Russia prior to the Revolution, and "questioned Baron Ramsey for hours on end as to every detail of Russian court-life." Mott, Twenty Years, 198.
the Rumanian government of the "warm sympathy and friendship" of the United States and of America's intention to "help bear the burdens of war."\(^{63}\)

General Scott's party arrived at Jassy early on the morning of July 3.\(^{64}\) Although the American legation at Jassy had not been informed of the visit until the afternoon before Scott's arrival, the Rumanian Government had prepared a full day's activities for the group.\(^{65}\) Scott was met at the Station by Vintila Bratianer, Minister of War, General Prezan, Chief of Staff, and other Rumanian officials.\(^{66}\) The Minister of War accompanied the group to the Palace of the Metropolitan of Jassy where accommodations had been provided. The morning was devoted to a series of conferences which included both the Rumanian Chief of Staff and the Commanding General of the Russian forces in Rumania.\(^{67}\)

Scott's most important conferences were those with the Rumanian Prime Minister, Jean I. C. Bratiano, who

\(^{63}\) Elihu Root to King Ferdinand and Queen Marie, of Rumania, June 14-27, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 1, Folder 5 (Princeton University Library, Princeton, N.J.).

\(^{64}\) Scott, "Report to Secretary of Mission," 8-9.

\(^{65}\) Whiting Andrews to Robert Lansing, July 7, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/6109, St. Dept.


\(^{67}\) Scott, "Report to the Secretary of Mission," 9.
explained that his government wanted to establish military cooperation as well as an "intimate friendship with the United States" after the war.\footnote{68} The Prime Minister explained that the loss of Rumanian territory had come about "through the fault of our allies." According to Bratiano, Rumania had not wished to become a belligerent and had done so only after the Allies "demanded with the greatest insistence that we enter the war." They had been told that there would be a general offensive in which the Rumanian Army would be opposed by ten or twelve divisions. As no general offensive developed, the Rumanian Army was opposed by thirty-seven divisions and was, therefore, unable to hold the lines.\footnote{69}

In his request for military aid the Prime Minister stressed the strategic position held by the Rumanians. Rumania had ten divisions already equipped and five more which could be used on the Front if proper supplies were made available. The United States would require ten times the amount requested to supply and transport an equal number of men to Europe.\footnote{70}

The Prime Minister also pointed out that a great demand for non-military goods such as farm machinery would

\footnote{68}{\textit{Memorandum of Conversation Between Mr. Bratiano, Prime Minister of Roumania, and General Scott,"} July 3, 1917, 1. Elihu Root Papers, Box 71 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

\footnote{69}{\textit{Ibid.,} 1-2.}

\footnote{70}{\textit{Ibid.,} 3-4.}
develop as Rumanian territory was evacuated by the Germans. Bratiano introduced in more than one instance the possibility of trade agreements between the two countries. At one point he stated that the United States would "make no mistake from any point of view in helping Roumania, not only during the war, but in the time to come after the war." Scott hesitated to discuss "anything commercial," as the Americans wished to "keep our skirts clear of every ulterior purpose." After the war, however, such "questions" would no doubt "be welcomed" by the United States.

In Scott's opinion, transportation presented the major problem. Bratiano assured Scott that the material could be handled when it reached the Rumanian border, though he readily acknowledged that any aid to Roumania was tied to the problem of transportation in Russia.

Although Scott was unable to make any specific promises, his sympathetic reception to the needs of Roumania was encouraging to the Prime Minister. There was one problem, however, which might delay or possibly prevent American aid. The failure of the Rumanian government to grant full civil rights to Rumanian Jews could lead to opposition from Jewish-Americans. The Prime Minister

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71 Ibid., 6.
72 Ibid., 6-7.
73 Ibid., 6.
assured Scott that a decision had already been made to "remove all the inequalities of civil rights" between Jews and other Rumanians. This was later confirmed in a conversation Scott had with the Rumanian Queen, who said that the decision had the "warm approval" of the King.

The Prime Minister explained that the decision had been made for two reasons: Rumanian Jews had supported the war effort, and Jews living in areas of Rumania then controlled by Austria had full civil rights. These rights could not be taken away when the territory was reacquired by Rumania. Scott suggested that it would be well for these reforms to take place immediately, but the Prime Minister explained that it would be extremely difficult to accomplish the required constitutional changes due to the occupation of large areas of Rumania by foreign troops. He agreed, however, to furnish the American State Department with statements from prominent Rumanian Jews indicating their acceptance of the necessity of delay. Such letters could then be used by the State Department to influence American public opinion.74

At 1:00 p.m. General Scott and his aides were presented to King Ferdinand and Queen Marie, who entertained them at a luncheon. If the luncheon had been intended to

74 "Memorandum On The Jewish Question In Roumania," 104, Elihu Root Papers, Box 71.
serve any purpose other than a courtesy to the Americans it was a complete failure. Scott failed to record any reference to this meeting with the King except for one sentence in his diary in which he stated that he was not impressed with the Monarch. He found the Queen to be "a beautiful woman" and described her as being "far more intelligent than the King." 75

That afternoon the group was received by the Rumanian Senate with "a wild ovation." 76 General Scott delivered the major address of the day. 77 He restricted himself to a description of the war mobilization in the United States, but his audience received the impression that the General would strongly recommend generous aid for their country. 78 Scott's translator had trouble following the rapid flow of figures and suspected that if the General had ever given a speech before it had been in Indian sign-language. 79

75 "Scott Diary," July 3, 1917; Colonel Mott and Judson both agreed with Scott's evaluation of the Royal Couple. Mott, Twenty Years, 200; and William V. Judson to Mrs. William V. Judson, July 9, 1917, William V. Judson Papers, Box 4.


77 Scott, "Report to Secretary of Mission," 9.


79 Mott, Twenty Years, 198-199.
The Prime Minister was favorably impressed and remarked that the General's speech had "produced a tremendous effect" and "was exactly what our people needed to hear." The acting American chargé d'affaires said that Scott's speech made "a most excellent impression" and his visit aided "enormously in raising . . . their morale." He added:

It gave the Roumanians the idea that the United States would give them everything they asked for. This last result of General Scott's speech may possibly in the near future cause the United States some embarrassment. The Roumanians are saying that . . . General Scott made them concrete promises.

Later in the afternoon Scott accompanied the Rumanian King on an inspection of a contingent of the Second Rumanian Division which was stationed in Jassy. Following dinner with the Prime Minister, Scott and his aides boarded the train, ending their brief visit to the Rumanian capital.

The lengthy trip to Petrograd was interrupted by brief visits to the Headquarters of General Kornilov at Czernowitz on July 4 and General Brusilov at Mogilev

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80 Mott, Twenty Years, 199.
three days later. In order to "keep faith with Mr. Root,"
Scott reluctantly declined invitations to return to the
Russian Front but was assured by both officers that the
offensive was advancing as planned. By July 8, Scott
and his party were back in Petrograd, and the Mission
departed for the United States on July 9.  

The real significance of General Scott's brief
tour of the Russian Front lies in the fact that it gave
him a false impression of the military situation in
Russia. Up to the time of his visit General Scott had
failed to see anything in Russia which indicated a stable
military situation. The brief assault that he viewed on
July 1, he interpreted as an indication of what the
Allies could expect from the Russian Army.  

Scott thought he detected an improvement in the morale of the
Russian troops after July 1:

As a result of this offensive it has been gen­
erally noticed that the Russian soldiers are imbued
with a much better spirit and apparently desire to
get to the front. On many troop trains passed by
us on our return from Jassy it was observed that
the soldiers were singing and apparently enthusiastic

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84 "Scott Diary," July 4-9, 1917; and Scott, "Report
to Secretary of Mission," 9-10.

85 General Scott was not alone in this impression.
Colonel Judson described the battle of July 1st as "re­
markably successful and spectacular." William V. Judson
to Mrs. William V. Judson, William V. Judson Papers,
Box 4.
on the prospect of their being taken into action.86

On July 8, Scott recorded in his diary, "We are leaving the Russians fighting which seemed impossible a great part of our stay in Petrograd."87

The Russian offensive of July 1st on the Galician front about which Scott was so optimistic was of short duration. The early success of the offensive came because the attack was against Austrian rather than German troops and the Russians had a large numerical superiority. The offensive, which at best lasted only two weeks, was halted as soon as German troops were brought up. The ambitious advance was turned into a rout, with the defeated Russians burning and pillaging as they retreated.88 This was the Russian Army's last major military offensive. It proved that the Russian Army was incapable of any major offensive operation and precipitated the political demonstrations in Petrograd known as the "July Days" which caused the reorganization of the Russian cabinet.

General Alfred Knox, the British military attaché who was also observing the advance, returned to Petrograd on July 4. Knox cabled his government that the Russian

86 Scott, "Report to Secretary of Mission," 10.
88 Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution, I, 163-64.
Army was "irretrievably ruined as a fighting organization." As late as July 9, however, Scott remained extremely optimistic about the advance.

It is impossible to understand how Scott maintained his faith in the July offensive. Perhaps because it was his first opportunity to observe modern warfare, he was too impressed by the initial success he witnessed. More important, however, is the fact that Scott spent only a few hours at the Front and was on board the train or in Rumania for the next few days. He was, therefore, out of touch with the actual situation from July 1 through July 8. These factors alone do not explain the General's failure to understand the military crisis in Russia. One can only conclude that the "old Indian fighter," unlike General Knox, was incapable of grasping the significance of the military situation he was sent to observe.

In addition to a report on the Russian Army, President Wilson also sought information about the Russian Navy. Naval personnel assigned to the Mission were Rear Admiral James H. Glennon, representative of the President with the rank of Minister, Captain N. A. McCully, naval attaché, and Lieutenant Alva D. Bernhard, aide to Admiral Glennon.  

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89Warth, *The Allies and The Russian Revolution*, 112.

Glennon's role was to determine the needs of the Russian Navy and to appraise its potential under the new government. Glennon learned of the Navy's needs in a series of conferences with naval officials in Petrograd and, in visits to three fleet headquarters, observed conditions existing in the navy. Lieutenant D. Fedotov White, assigned as aide to Admiral Glennon during his stay in Russia, was among the various officials who greeted the Mission upon its arrival in Petrograd.

During his first three days in the capital Admiral Glennon was presented to the Provisional Government and conferred with naval authorities there. At the first major conference, held on June 17, Admiral Glennon and his aides met with Captain Dudorov, the newly installed Vice Minister for Marine, and Vice Admiral Kedrov, who had recently retired from that position. Kedrov stressed the "urgent necessity of vessels of war" for the protection of shipping in "Russian Northern waters." As German submarines were the major threat to Russian shipping there, it was suggested that "American destroyers would be of the greatest possible assistance to Russia."

93"Glennon Report," 1, Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.
94Ibid., 2; The Russian Naval Attaché in Washington had made similar requests earlier to Secretary Daniels. Cronon, Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 132, 145-46.
Glennon learned that there were no destroyers available to the White Sea Fleet, that England's promise to provide such vessels had not yet been fulfilled, and that the two Russian destroyers attached to the Fleet were being repaired in England. The presence of American war ships would not only minimize the dangers from German submarines, but would also have a "moral /sic/7 effect on the Russian people, especially the soldiers and sailors."\(^{95}\)

Other vessels requested, in addition to the destroyers, were nine patrol boats capable of speeds of not less than ten knots and armed with three-inch guns, and seventeen trawlers similarly armed.\(^{96}\) The Russian Navy asked for guns of various sizes, large amounts of ammunition, and articles needed primarily for repairs. The total estimate presented by Admiral Kedrov at this first meeting came to approximately $50 million.\(^{97}\) On the following day Admiral Glennon again conferred with the Russian officers, at which time he received more requests.\(^{98}\)


\(^{96}\)"Report of Interview With Naval General Staff In Regard To Naval Needs," 5, appendix to "Glennon Report," Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.


\(^{98}\)A four-page appendix to Glennon's Report contains a detailed statement of the requests of the Russian Navy, "Recommendations of Board of Naval Construction For Russian Navy," Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.
Unlike General Scott, who remained in Petrograd for over two weeks before visiting the Russian Army in the field, Admiral Glennon and his aides began the first of three trips to inspect the Russian Fleets on June 17, only three days after their arrival in Petrograd. Before leaving Petrograd, White took Admiral Glennon on a tour of the Naval Gun Factory at Obukov, a few miles from Petrograd. After a pleasant trip up the Neva, they arrived at the Obukov Gun Works, a large plant which employed approximately 12,000 workmen.

Admiral Glennon was favorably impressed and described the plant as "most remarkable." He was somewhat surprised to find that the plant was operated completely by Russians without "a single foreign engineer." He found the workers "intelligent and capable." His experience was quite unlike that of General Scott, who found labor problems in the munitions plant he visited. In one of the shops Glennon made a brief speech, after which the workers "cheered lustily for America and the Americans." This surprised his Russian aide who described

99 "Mission Log," 21; and White, Survival, 146.
100 "Visit to Obkhoff Gun Factory, Petrograd," appendix to "Glennon Report," Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.
101 White, Survival, 147.
102 "Visit to Obkhoff Gun Factory, Petrograd."
the workers' mood as "quite beyond my expectations." It was White's opinion, quite possibly correct, that Admiral Glennon received a false impression of Russian industry from this one visit.

Glenon's first trip of inspection was to the Black Sea port of Sevastopol where he was to meet Admiral Kolchak, Commander of the Black Sea Fleet. White secured the use of Kerensky's railway car for the trip and stocked it with food and liquor obtained from the cellars of the Winter Palace. The three-day trip to Sevastopol was comparatively uneventful, although the group suffered some minor discomfort when they exhausted their supply of soda water and had to substitute an inferior local product.

Approaching Sevastopol on the morning of June 20, the group learned from persons leaving the port city that on the preceding day the local Council of Soldiers, Sailors, and Workers had, for all practical purposes, assumed control of the Black Sea Fleet. Unlike the revolts which had occurred in the Baltic Fleet during March, the

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103 White, Survival, 147.
104 Ibid.
105 "Glennon Report," 2; and White, Survival, 145.
106 White, Survival, 145.
107 Ibid., 147-48.
seizure of power was not accompanied by the murder or execution of any of the officers. Admiral Kolchak had been relieved of his command and was replaced by Admiral Lukine, and all officers had been forced to surrender their weapons.

The party decided that, regardless of the events of the past two days, it would continue into Sevastopol in order to witness conditions firsthand. Shortly after breakfast the train pulled into the Sevastopol station, where the group was met by a delegation consisting of Admiral Lukine, two members of his staff, and two representatives of the Executive Committee of the local Soviet. White immediately began making preparations for attaching their car to the next train for Petrograd. He did not want to prolong their stay any longer than was necessary.

Glennon began his tour of the Fleet. He visited two battleships and watched as the crews went through gunloading drills. The drills were "voluntarily given by the men, a fact which they desired to be understood." 

In the afternoon Glennon and his aides attended a

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108 "Glennon Report," 2; and White, Survival, 149. The Secretary of Navy erred when he later wrote that a hundred officers were murdered. Josephus Daniels, Years of War, 60.

109 "Glennon Report," 2-3; and White, Survival, 149.

meeting of the Sevastopol Soviet. Following several speeches, the visiting admiral was asked to address the group. Glennon spoke to the gathering about the American navy. He told his listeners that, although its organization was based on democracy, a certain amount of discipline was necessary for its proper functioning. Turning to the question at hand, the American admiral asked the sailors to fight for their new freedom but stressed the need for discipline. Glennon praised Admiral Kolchak and asked the men to remain loyal to their commander and return the side-arms to the officers of the fleet.  

Glenmon's Russian aide later described the incident as "an instance unique in all naval history ... a foreign officer made a speech which helped to quell a mutiny." Although Glennon's accomplishment was exaggerated, it helped to persuade the Sevastopol Soviet to rescind by a vote of sixty to three all of its actions except the removal of Admiral Kolchak.  

The group returned to Petrograd on the evening train. Kolchak and his Chief of Staff, Captain M. I.  

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Smirnov, boarded the same train for the capital. This gave Glennon the opportunity to discuss the naval situation in more detail. From their conversation they developed the idea of a Russian naval mission to the United States. Headed by Admiral Kolchak, this visit took place later in the year.

Admiral Glennon and his party arrived in Petrograd on June 23. After a brief conference with the Vice Minister of Marine to discuss the situation in Sevastopol and a meeting with Ambassador Francis, Glennon began preparations for a tour of the White Sea Fleet. Accompanied by Crosley, McCully, Bernhard, and White, Admiral Glennon left Petrograd on the evening of June 24 en route to Archangel. The party reached its destination on the evening of June 26. They were met by Captain Petrov, Chief of the Russian Naval General Staff at Archangel, who

115 White, Survival, 154.

116 Warth, The Allies And The Russian Revolution, 109-10; White, Survival, 155-58; and Daniels, Years of War, 60.


118 "Report from W. S. Crosley office of the Naval Attaché, to Francis, Subject--Visit to Archangel, Russia--30 June 1917," William V. Judson Papers, Box 4; and "McCormick Diary," June 30, 1917.
represented Captain Vikorsk, the commanding officer.\(^{119}\)

Since Archangel was a major port of entry, Glennon was especially concerned with its facilities and its ability to handle cargo. Upon his return to Petrograd, Glennon reported to Francis that two German submarines had been sighted laying mines near Archangel the day before their arrival there. Shipping had been halted temporarily to enable trawlers to clear the area of mines. Glennon believed "this condition clearly shows the necessity for destroyers or other suitable fast vessels in Russian northern waters."\(^{120}\) Ambassador Francis cabled home Glennon's recommendations that "at least six of our destroyers be sent to Archangel immediately."\(^{121}\)

In a conversation with another member of the Mission, Admiral Glennon described the situation in Archangel as "fairly satisfactory," as he had "found everything at Archangel in ship-shape order."\(^{122}\) White did not share the Admiral's viewpoint. He commented that while the officers at Archangel did not live under an "immediate apprehension of murder," conditions there were "about as

\(^{119}\)Ibid.

\(^{120}\)"Glennon Report," 7.

\(^{121}\)David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, July 12, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5854, St. Dept.

\(^{122}\)"McCormick Diary," June 30, 1917.
bad as at other seaports." \(^{123}\)

On the evening of July 1, Glennon and his aides set out for Helsingfors, on the third and last of their tours of the Russia Fleets. \(^{124}\) En route to Helsingfors the group stopped at Revel, a Russian naval base on the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland. Glennon spent the entire day inspecting ships and the shore batteries which guarded the entrance to the Gulf. Next, they went to Gausal. There they boarded a Russian destroyer for their trip to the northern port of the Gulf where the fleet was anchored at Roggekuel. \(^{125}\) Admiral Glennon reported that "the condition of material and spirit of personnel on these vessels was the best seen in any Russian Fleet." The "ships and men were ready for battle." \(^{126}\)

That afternoon Glennon inspected a shore battery of four twelve-inch guns which commanded the southern entrances to the Gulf. Captain Knuepfer, commander of the installation, guided the group on the inspection tour. According to Glennon, there was "no sign of friction or disaffection among his men, who . . . seemed to be under good discipline." The inspection was interrupted briefly

\(^{123}\) White, *Survival*, 158.


\(^{125}\) "Glennon Report," 8.

\(^{126}\) Ibid.
by a raid by a squadron of German planes. No damage was done and one observer felt that Glennon enjoyed the excitement. 127

On July 4, Glennon's group traveled to Helsingfors for the last important stop of their tour. Conditions they found to be "very bad." Admiral Glennon had again managed to arrive at the precise moment of an insurrection led by local radicals. Admiral Verderevsky, Commander of the Fleet at Helsingfors, therefore requested that the American officers make their visit as brief as possible, which they did. 128 They left for Petrograd that same day and arrived there on July 6. Admiral Glennon utilized the time left in conferences with various Russian naval officials.

While in Russia, Admiral Glennon saw little to give him a favorable impression of the Russian Navy. At best, on a few occasions he saw adequate vessels in service. Twice, however, he had observed local Soviets supersede the authority of commanding officers who had the approval of the Petrograd government. Perhaps more so than any other member of the Mission, Glennon had seen the power of the Soviets. There is no indication that he fully appreciated the significance of this power.

127 White, Survival, 160.
128 "Glennon Report," 9-10; and White, Survival, 162-64.
In his formal report, Glennon did not see fit even to comment on it.
CHAPTER IX

THE SOCIALISTS

A third major area of concern for the Mission was the growing strength of the socialist parties in Russia. Charles Edward Russell, a well-known American socialist, was chosen by President Wilson to establish contact with these groups. Russell conceived of his task as being twofold. He was to serve as a link between the Mission and Russian socialists, and he was to explain to them why they should support vigorous prosecution of the war.

Russell informed his colleagues that he did not know any of the Russian socialists personally but had obtained several letters of introduction from American socialists in order to offset this liability. Russell's work with the Russian socialists would be further complicated because he had been dismissed from the Socialist Party of America when he had accepted an appointment from a "capitalist" government. He believed that a conspiracy of "pro-German" socialists led by Morris Hillquit had caused his dismissal and felt that this group would do

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everything possible to discredit the Mission. According to Russell, Hillquit was "writing letters to his friends in Russia warning them that this commission is a capitalistic propaganda for the commercial exploitation of Russia."  

Because of his strong support for the Allied war effort, Russell had no trouble reconciling his belief in socialism with the idea of vigorous prosecution of the war against Germany. His first opportunity to explain his position to Russian socialists came in the remote Russian town of Irkutsk. He was sought out by two socialists who explained that they "thoroughly disbelieved in war" yet were "urged to go on with this one." Russell replied that he, too, hated war but was forced to support this one, since it was between the forces of democracy and autocracy. More specifically, he told his visitors that if Russia were to withdraw from the war the principles of both democracy and socialism would be destroyed. This brief statement contained the premise on which Russell based his frequent arguments of the next few weeks. He supported vigorous pursuit of the war in order to insure the democracy that he considered an essential preliminary

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4 "Russell Diary," June 7, 1917.
to the establishment of socialism.

Upon his arrival in Petrograd, Russell began work immediately. On the afternoon of June 14, when the members of the Mission briefly called on Tereshchenko, Russell was disappointed. He believed that the Mission was out of touch with realities. He contrasted their "long-tailed coats" to the Foreign Minister's "sack coat and soft collar." Russell thought their "regalia" looked "stupid" and was completely out of place in a nation where "the red flag floats from one end of the country to the other."  

The following day, when the Mission was presented to the entire membership of the Provisional Government, Russell talked informally with various members of the Cabinet. He recognized Kerensky as the unofficial leader and described him as the "coming man in Russia . . . the most popular member of the cabinet." Russell felt that "our plea for immediate action on the front rests first of all with him." He was somewhat disappointed in his conversation with him, however, and described their talk as "little more than the flub-dub of such an occasion."  

On June 19, when Russell attended a luncheon given by Ambassador Francis, he and Duncan had the opportunity

6 "Russell Diary," June 14, 1917.
7 "Russell Diary," June 15, 1917.
8 Ibid.
to discuss at length the situation in Russia with M. I. Skobolov, I. G. Tsereteli, and V. M. Chernov, Ministers of Labor, Posts and Telegraphs, and Agriculture, respectively.  

Again he thought he detected a hesitancy on the part of the ministers—"Socialists of the most amiable kind"—to accept the necessity of continuing the war. When asked whether they agreed that "the safety of democracy in the world depended upon the defeat of Germany," they did so "without enthusiasm." Russell asked, "What can America do that will most effectively help Russia?" Their unanimous reply was: "Induce the Allies to agree to revise all their treaties and agreements of alliance and cooperation so as to eliminate imperialistic aims." Ambassador Francis replied that the United States was not a party to these treaties and therefore could "do nothing in this matter." Russell thought that this viewpoint had "never occurred to any of the three." During the course of the same conversation, Duncan explained America's entry into the war and its tremendous military potential. Again Russell was disappointed in the reaction and "noted that our three Ministers showed no enthusiasm about the United States whether for its disinterested motives or the extent of its resources."  

9 "Mission Log," 25; and "Employment of Charles Edward Russell." Skobolov and Tsereteli were Mensheviks and Chernov, a Socialist Revolutionary.  

10 "Russell Diary," June 19, 1917.
No doubt influenced by the disappointing interview with the Socialist members of the Provisional Government, Russell recorded in his diary:

... the masses of the people are sane and reasonable, and committed to a practicable conception of democratic government. But they are sick of the war, dead sick and weary. At present, they can see no reason why they should go on with it. What we have to do is to reach them with the adequate reason. Until we do that we are wasting time talking to this government. It isn't the power that will decide whether the Russian armies continue to fight. The masses of the Russian people will determine that. I am sure we give too much heed to the existing government and exaggerate its importance. 11

This proved to be a very perceptive observation. Apparently, Russell was the only Mission member who correctly interpreted popular sentiment toward the war or the ineffectiveness of the Provisional Government.

Russell attributed this tendency of the Mission to think only in terms of the Provisional Government to the fact that Americans were accustomed to dealing with established governments which could speak and act decisively. Such was not the case in Russia. "If anyone thinks this government is in any such situation ... how huge is that blunder! And what consequences may depend upon it!" 12

Thus, soon after his arrival in Russia, Russell became convinced that the members of the Provisional Government,  

11 Ibid.   
12 Ibid.
or "Bureau Chiefs" as he usually referred to them, were without sufficient power to determine policy for Russia, and he increasingly turned his attention to other areas.

From the first day of his arrival in the Russian capital, Russell had been aware of the potential power of the masses in Revolutionary Russia. Upon returning to his quarters in the Winter Palace long after midnight on the day of his arrival in Petrograd, he stayed up until three o'clock recording his impressions. He had traveled around Petrograd for several hours and was overwhelmed by the "literally hundreds" of public meetings in parks or on street corners which were attended by "great crowds silently listening." While he thought that this might be nothing more than the result of the Russian's

...new-found freedom / a voice tells me it is something more . . . Here is / a new and tremendous power unleashed and what do we know of it? If the crowds were not so silent we could think we understood it; but vast, inexpressive throngs listening and thinking and gathering power, nobody knows what they may mean. 13

This revolutionary fervor of which Russell was so aware found its voice in the Petrograd Soviet which was created immediately before the Abdication. Shortly after the Petrograd Soviet was formed, similar groups sprang up throughout Russia. With a membership of almost 3,000 delegates, the Petrograd Soviet was too unwieldy to function.

effectively. Therefore, most of its power was delegated to an Executive Committee. In time, this committee became too large. Finally, most of the decisions were made by a group of twenty-four men who were members of the various political parties represented in the Soviet. In June, delegates of the various Soviets met in Petrograd to form the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. This meeting was in session when the Root Mission arrived in Petrograd. It was dominated by the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks controlled less than twenty per cent of the votes. Thus, the Congress, in which the Petrograd Soviet had a disproportionate influence, maintained a relatively moderate character.\textsuperscript{14}

Russell did not understand many of the events which were taking place in Russia. He did, however, recognize the necessity of contacting the All-Russian Congress.\textsuperscript{15} On June 15, he made the first of several attempts to communicate with the Congress. On that day and three days later he sent a messenger to the presiding officer of the Congress to request an interview. Both attempts proved unsuccessful. He then requested assistance from members of the Provisional Government in order to obtain a pass to the meetings. When the pass was not forthcoming, Russell

\textsuperscript{14}Chamberlin, \textit{Russian Revolution I}, 109-14; and Treadgold, \textit{Twentieth Century Russia}, 146.

\textsuperscript{15}Throughout his diary Russell referred to the group as the "National Council of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates."
called to remind the Ministers of their promise. He was told that the pass would be brought to him that afternoon by members of the Labor Department with whom he had an appointment. The officials arrived without the pass but promised it would be sent the next morning. Russell felt the delay was "merely characteristic of the race, which is essentially oriental and cannot see any occasion for haste and few for observing a promise"—an excellent example of Russell's superficial evaluation of the Russian character and his somewhat patronizing attitude. Although he believed the delay "means nothing else," he was disappointed, as he saw "that the National Council is the real power here and we have not touched it."16

Disappointed over his interviews with members of the Provisional Government and unable to establish contact with the All-Russian Congress after a week's efforts, Russell became despondent. He described the morning's work of June 21 as "wasted time . . . which is the usual thing" and believed that "if this commission is to accomplish anything besides looking pleasant and eating copiously the fact has not yet been established."17

That afternoon Russell attended a reception given by the Russian American Committee. He described it as a

16 "Russell Diary," June 20, 1917.
"function calculated to produce weariness and tears" with a guest list made up of "agents and employees of the International Harvester Company." As he was leaving the reception, Russell was approached by Arno Dosch-Flevrot, correspondent for The New York World. Dosch-Flevrot had heard Root's address at the reception and described it as "so absurd it made me angry." The reporter sought to find someone who could understand his sentiment. After a brief conversation with Dosch-Flevrot, Russell decided not to accompany the Mission to Moscow but to remain in Petrograd in order to "try to break into the Council." The following day Russell attended his first session of the All-Russian Congress. He never explained how he gained admission after such a long delay. Perhaps it was due to his meeting with Dosch-Flevrot. The reporter later wrote that in an attempt to show that the Root Mission "was not altogether 'bourgeois,' the American newspaper correspondents in Petrograd took Russell to it." While at the meeting Russell was approached by a Russian

18 Ibid.


21 Dosch-Flevrot, Through War to Revolution, 163.
A Jew named Rabitsch, who stated that he had heard Russell speak in New York. Rabitsch offered to assist Russell in making arrangements to address the Congress. Russell accepted this offer but was not too pleased with the situation and recorded that "he would be a simple person that would depend much upon this son of Israel, for in his face is guile and in his eyes . . . lurks deception." 22 Perhaps because there was no one else to rely upon, Russell allowed Rabitsch to make the arrangements for his speech.

For two days Russell returned to the Congress expecting to deliver his address. Each time he was informed that it had been postponed. 23 When he arrived on the morning of the third day Rabitsch told him that the Executive Committee had decided it would be better if he limited his address to "a few words of greeting and cut out all . . . that dealt with the war," since such references might cause a riot. Russell agreed to comply with these instructions, although his views on the war were well known. He was sorry, however, to see that the Russian democracy had adopted a policy of censorship. Rabitsch left Russell for a few minutes, presumably to confer with the Executive Committee. Upon his return he explained that it might be best if Russell did not speak

22 "Russell Diary," June 22, 1917.

at all as he represented the American government and not the American Socialist Party. Rabitsch then suggested that Russell cable the Socialist Party in the United States for credentials. Russell replied, "It would be a cold day when I stood hat in hand at the door of any body on earth asking permission to speak." If the Congress did not want to hear him it could "go to hell."

Dosch-Flevrot and Shepherd, another American newspaperman, prevented Russell from leaving, and Dosch-Flevrot went to confer with the Executive Committee. In a few minutes Skobolov and another Cabinet member appeared and told Russell that the Committee "had never made nor entertained the slightest objections" to his address. Russell was "perfectly free" to discuss the war or any other issue and was extended a formal invitation to speak that evening.24

In Russell's mind there was no doubt that this episode represented an attempt by pro-German socialists in the United States to prevent him from addressing the Congress. He referred to the incident as "a little tribute from the East Side of New York and men that used to call themselves my friends" and added that Rabitsch had "admitted to Shepherd and Dosch-Flevrot that he was a friend of Morris

Hillquit." Dosch-Flevrot does not substantiate this story. When he wrote of the incident he recalled that "the committee of control said it was useless to have him speak" since "America was so closely associated with Russia's other imperialist allies." According to Dosch-Flevrot, Russell was allowed to speak because the newsmen "put it on a personal basis with some of the leaders . . . they let him speak then, for no better reason than as a personal favor to us."  

Regardless of the reasons for delay, Russell finally spoke on the evening of June 25 before what represented to him the true voice of the Russian Revolution. In an obvious and naive attempt to associate with his audience, Russell wore "the reddest red ribbon in Petrograd" and "a flaming scarlet tie." Before he began his speech he held aloft "the red card of the Socialist Party of the United States" and his membership card in The International Typographical Union.  

In the first portion of his address, Russell

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25 Ibid.

26 Dosch-Flevrot, Through War To Revolution, 162-63.


explained that he came "from the plain people of America, the workers, the radicals, the American Socialists, the champions of democracy . . . to greet the freemen and free-women of Russia." Russell praised the recent Revolution and told his audience that as news of the events reached all parts of the world "it was as if in the darkest night a new planet had suddenly arisen greater than the sun." The Revolution was "the grandest event in the human history" of "the emancipation of man."

Proceeding to his favorite topic, the need for a renewed effort in the war, Russell emphasized what the United States was doing. The United States had for several years "clung to the illusion that . . . there could be some other solution than the use of physical force." It was only after the Americans "perceived that autocracy was bent upon the destruction of liberty on earth" that we "took up the sword." Once the decision was reached, however, America "plunged with all its might and resources" into the contest and was now in the process of raising "an army of millions."

He then turned to the question of American war aims and told his audience that the United States "makes war that we may have peace." Russell went well beyond Wilson's idea of making the world safe for democracy:

Without democracy there can never come socialism, never come peace, never come the emancipation of man. We see that without democracy we can never right the
ancient wrongs of labor, never gain for the producer the just fruits of his toil, never free men's hearts and lives from the frightful blight and cold horrors of the competitive system.

Only in his closing paragraph did Russell specifically urge the Russians to continue the war. In words better suited to encourage an emotional American rather than a war-weary Russian, Russell told his audience that "our word to you" is "Lead on. You know the road . . . Lead on, and Russia and America, bound by the same great purpose will drive the last oppression from its seat and beat the last shackle that binds the limbs on the minds of men into emblems of liberty, progress, and light." 29

Russell believed his speech had been effective. In his diary he wrote that when he spoke of the need to continue the war "the right and center roared and cheered enthusiastically," although "the extreme left, headed by the strange figure Lenine [sic], sat still and did not applaud." He also mentioned that his interpreter described the presiding officer's response as "pleasing." 30 Russell's impression of his reception was relayed to the United States. Readers of The New York Times were told that Russell's speech "was cheered to the echo" and that

29 Ibid.


"he was received with a warm welcome by the Congress and his speech was loudly applauded." 32

An American newspaperwoman who heard Russell's speech, however, recalled that "they listened to his message, but it had no meaning for them. He had come to Russia to help make Russia fight, and the dream of the Russian revolutionist was not only to stop Russia from fighting, but to put an end to all wars." 33 Another newspaper correspondent, Robert C. Long, described a speech to the Congress made by an unspecified member of the Root Mission in which the speaker was unaware of the attitude of his audience because of the deliberate deception of his translator. When a member of the Congress told the speaker that "he did not know what he was talking about" and that the United States should "mend her own affairs before advising Russia," the translator "omitted half of this, and toned the other half down." The result was that the American "went away under the impression that he and America had been paid pleasant compliments; and that the


33 Beatty, The Red Heart of Russia, 40.
Council was solid with him."34

Russell was correct in his evaluation of the Bolsheviks' reaction. A few days after his speech, Pravda criticized the speaker for claiming to represent American socialism when he had in fact been expelled from the party. The Bolshevik organ described Russell as "the lackey of America's financial aces . . . bourgeois renegade and the traitor of the working people." The newspaper denied that the American people had "of their own initiative entered into this cruel war" which had instead been forced upon them by "Morgan & Company."35

Following his address to the All-Russian Congress, Russell attended its sessions virtually every day until it adjourned two days before the Mission left Petrograd.36 With the assistance of Alexander Gumberg, an American traveling in Russia, he met with members of the

34 Robert Crozier Long, Russian Revolution Aspects (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1919), 286. Warth says the speaker referred to was Russell. Long, however, only says that the speaker was a member of the Root Mission and that the speech occurred in June. Warth's assumption no doubt resulted from his belief that Russell was the only Mission member who spoke before the Council. Warth, The Allies And The Russian Revolution, 103.


On the evening of July 3, Russell met with three members of the Congress Committee of Economics. He joined the three for a meal of black bread, sausage, and tea in the cellar of the Congress building and began to explain the Stevens Plan for improving the Russian railroads. The members of the Committee admitted that they had never heard of the plan but agreed that transportation was the key to Russia's economic problems. Russell left the conference after midnight, returned to the Winter Palace with a great degree of satisfaction, and recorded that the three "with greatest enthusiasm and apparent sincerity" had "promised to put the plan before the Council at the earliest possible moment." On the following day Russell returned to the Congress and "had the satisfaction of hearing" one of the three men present the Stevens Plan to that body. Russell believed this to

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37 "Russell Diary," July 3, 1917. Alexander Guniberg, who would later serve as a link between the American Colony and the Bolsheviks following the October Revolution, was of great assistance to Russell, serving both as an interpreter and as contact with socialist elements. After leaving Petrograd, Russell thanked Guniberg for his "extreme kindness and invaluable assistance." Charles Edward Russell to Comrade Alexander Guniberg, July 20, 1917, Raymond Robins Papers, Box 12. Also, in his letter of introduction to Stevens, he said Guniberg was "of the greatest possible assistance." Charles Edward Russell to John F. Stevens, July 9, 1917, Alexander Guniberg Papers, Box I (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin).

be "the first direct and tangible result of our labors." Russell never named his contacts in the Congress and he made no mention of their party affiliation. It would appear, however, that they were insignificant members of a rather moderate socialist party, perhaps the Socialist Revolutionary.

On another occasion Russell was able to obtain financial information from the Treasury Department because of his contacts with the Congress. McCormick and Bertron had been promised certain reports by the Provisional Government on which they would base recommendations for a loan to Russia. When two weeks passed without their receipt, Russell suggested that he speak with his contacts in the Congress. The following day Russell "told the whole story" to his "committee friends in the cellarage." The upshot was that the Treasury Department was told to turn over the material within "24 hours" or "the whole matter would be laid before the Council and summary action demanded." Bertron and McCormick received the information in the allotted time, and Russell was even more convinced that this was "the way to get things done in Russia." By now, Russell was totally convinced that "all the time spent upon Ministers" was wasted. "If what you want is right and good ... go to the Council ..."

sit down in the cellar . . . and you can get it every time."

In addition to holding conferences with the members of the Provisional Government and working with the All-Russian Congress, Russell attempted to contact other Russian socialists. Several times he went to Gorky's newspaper office to see him. Each time he failed. Once he visited the office of Pravda in an attempt to find a printer who was a member of his Union in New York. Unable to find him, he struck up a conversation with a young couple who had recently returned from America, "to make trouble" in Russell's opinion. He also met Trotsky and had "a cordial, rather joshing talk with him." Obviously unimpressed with the future Bolshevik leader, Russell described him as a "hot-headed Utopian Jew: bushy haired, sanguine, highly strung, excitable, and a gifted talker."

40 "Russell Diary," July 7, 1917.

41 "Russell Diary," June 27, 1917; When Russell met Trotsky at the Pravda office on June 27, Trotsky was not a member of the Bolshevik Party. At that time he headed a "left-wing anti-war Menshevik" faction known as the "inter-district group." If not a party member, why was he in the office of the Bolshevik organ? The explanation is that Trotsky, although not an official member of the Bolshevik party, had told Lenin that he accepted Lenin's "April Thesis." The two men then agreed that Trotsky should avoid affiliation with the Bolshevik party until he could bring the "Interdistrict group" and certain other left-wing Mensheviks into Lenin's party. When Trotsky officially joined the Bolshevik Party in August, 1917, this "only formalized three months of close collaboration." Therefore, Russell's assertion that he had met Trotsky under the circumstances described in his diary can be accepted. Daniels, Red October, 35-36.
Marie Spiridonova, an old socialist revolutionary, was another person Russell sought. He later stated that he wished to see her more than any other person in Russia. After several attempts, he located her in "an old schoolhouse" which had been provided for the use of returning exiles. It was soon apparent that she had a hostile attitude toward Americans and everything American. When asked why, she explained that "America was a country wholly given over to selfishness, the pursuit of sordid wealth and material aims." She had received this impression during her years in prison when, in an attempt to learn to read English in order to study about America, she had requested an American magazine or newspaper. The Review of Reviews was the only available American publication, and after eleven years of reading it she had found America to be "cold, selfish, materialistic, interested in nothing but money." Critics of the contemporary American scene, many of whom contributed to The Review, would have agreed with her. Had Miss Spiridonova spent the same eleven years learning English from a different American periodical (the Ladies' Home Journal, perhaps?) her opinion might have been different.

Russell began "to analyze" for her "the forces and elements in America for progress." After a lengthy

42 Russell, Unchained Russia, 211.
conversation he felt "the ice was broken" and they had "a grand time predicting the remaking of the world and the emancipation of the worker everywhere." Russell may not have been as effective as he believed, but the experience confirmed his belief as to the extent of misinformation which Russians had about America.

Three days before leaving Petrograd Russell made a major speech before a convention of Trudoviks. As so often in the past, Russell argued that democracy was necessary for socialism. If democracy were to survive the forces of autocracy, Germany had to be destroyed. In emphasizing the need for socialism, Russell went much further than before. He described a world which had been "blighted, darkened and cursed with the capitalist system" but commented that all this would change "if only the capitalist system were abolished." This statement would have been most upsetting to other Mission members as well as to the President who had appointed Russell.

43 "Russell Diary," July 2, 1917.
44 "Employment of Charles Edward Russell."
45 "Address Delivered by Charles Edward Russell At The Convention Of The Trudoviks, Or Moderate Socialists At The Hall Of The Medical Academy, July 6, 1917," Charles Edward Russell Papers, Box 3. Duncan, who was present at the convention, probably had this speech in mind when he told Ambassador Francis that Russell's "Only object is socialistic propaganda." See David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, July 7, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5798, St. Dept.
On the same day Russell addressed the members of "the old British and American colonies" at a meeting held in the Astoria Hotel. The meeting was organized by the British suffragette Emiline Pankhurst to promote the participation of Russian women in politics. Russell warned "against trying to teach these people anything or looking down upon them from a height of superiority" and suggested that they "pay attention to the National Council as the only power in Russia." An American newspaperwoman who was present recalled that Russell deviated from the program to uplift the women of Russia and "spoke at length on the Soviet." She described his speech as "socialism, from beginning to end."

In order to gain insights, Russell, who understood no Russian, spent a considerable amount of time observing parades and listening to street corner orators with the aid of interpreters. Most significant, perhaps, was his observation of the reactions of the Russian people to the July 1st offensive. Although the newspapers in Petrograd issued extra editions, Russell perceived that the popular response was "nothing to be exhilarated about," a fact he found "ominous." "The Russian advance is a direct result

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46 "Russell Diary," July 6, 1917.

of our visit, and now that we have it, I don't know, by Jinx, whether it is good or bad." Russell was incorrect in his belief that the Mission's visit was the cause of the offensive. He accurately interpreted the political unrest to be a result of dissatisfaction with the military offensive, an opinion which no other Mission member held.

Two days later Russell wrote:

They are dead sick of the war . . . . The psychological effect of the recent Russian advance is something that ought to give us a jolt if we are willing to reflect upon actualities and what they mean. Outside of the minority that is bent upon carrying on the war anyway, there is no exhilaration.

He described the street demonstrations supporting the advance as "feeble" in comparison to the one of July 1 which opposed it. Pravda, as well as Gorky's newspaper, called for a diplomatic offensive rather than a military one. The most discouraging sign, however, was the All-Russian Congress's vote to congratulate the Army. The votes in opposition to the resolution included all the Bolsheviks, significantly joined by more than one hundred non-Bolsheviks.

In the last few days of his visit Russell became somewhat optimistic. On July 5, he obtained the promise of Minister Skobolov to support the Stevens Railroad Plan. On July 7, the Executive Committee of the Congress asked

48"Russell Diary," July 2, 1917.
49"Russell Diary," July 4, 1917.
him to "intervene" in a threatened strike at a factory operated by Americans. On his last day in Petrograd he was sought out by a "committee of soldiers" from the National Congress, who requested his aid in establishing a newspaper to oppose Pravda. Russell believed these events indicated that the "bitter prejudice" which had existed upon their arrival had finally disappeared. "I am," he wrote, "overwhelmed with the thought that we are going away just as the prospect opens before us of opportunity and power to do good."  

Russell's personal diary contains many passages in which the American Socialist revealed his awareness of the power of the Soviets and the weaknesses of the Provisional Government. It is difficult, therefore, if not impossible to understand why he was heartened by the relatively minor events which occurred during his last few days in Petrograd. Russell repeatedly referred to the Soviets as the sole power in Russia. Yet, in his personal report to the State Department, no mention was made of these frequent observations. He was, therefore, guilty of a very serious omission. Wilson's hand-picked Socialist, like the more conservative members of the Mission,


51 "Russell Diary," July 7, 1917.
failed to present to the American Government anything approaching a realistic picture of Russia in the summer of 1917.
CHAPTER X

LABOR, RELIGION, AND PROPAGANDA

In addition to its major considerations, the Mission focused on three minor areas: labor, religion, and American propaganda in Russia. It will be recalled that Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, suggested James Duncan as the representative of American Labor on the Root Mission. Duncan was respected by and popular with his fellow Americans on the Mission. With the exception of John Mott, Crane considered Duncan to be the "ablest and wisest man on our commission,"1 and one military aide described him as "an absolute joy."2

Unfortunately, the Russians did not hold this view. A Russian naval officer attached to the Mission found all of the members somewhat patronizing in their attitude toward Russia but singled out Duncan as "a stupid and vulgar person practically devoid of manners."3 John Reed, American radical and famous chronicler of the Bolshevik Revolution,

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1Charles R. Crane to J. C. B., July 12, 1917, Charles R. Crane Papers.
2Mott, Twenty Years, 195.
3White, Survival, 139.
contended that Lenin's Party viewed Samuel Gompers as "more reactionary that J. P. Morgan" and "simply ignored" James Duncan, as did even the moderate socialists.  

Duncan set for himself the difficult task of convincing Russian labor that it must accept a conservative view of its political role. In a discussion about the two types of strikes in use in Russia, those associated with worker grievances and those caused by political reasons, Duncan emphasized his task of differentiating between the two. He planned to do this with the help of Russian workers who had lived in America and, for this purpose, had brought a list of people to contact. In words somewhat out of character for a labor leader he stated, "one of the most difficult things we have to do with foreign workingmen is to get them to be tolerant of their employers." Duncan believed, however, that the strike as a political weapon had been borrowed from the socialist movement in Russia and he thought it would be extremely difficult "to disentangle the socialist ... from the trade unions."  

Duncan and other Mission members obviously thought

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4John Reed, "Memorandum, Russia, The Soviet Government, 1918," Alexander Gumberg Papers, Box I.


6Ibid.
that Russian labor could be easily persuaded to accept the goals and methods of American labor. This was highly unlikely as the Russian labor movement differed drastically from that in America. Prior to 1905 there were very few labor unions in Russia, and from 1905 to 1917 the movement was extremely weak. In 1917, however, union membership multiplied and by 1918 slightly more than one-half of Russia's four million industrial workers belonged to some type of trade union. A struggle for the support of labor ensued and, as was true of the political struggle, the contest was primarily between the Mensheviks-Socialist Revolutionaries and the Bolsheviks.7 The result was that Russian labor divided itself into two factions after the March Revolution: the trade unions, which were usually dominated by the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, and the factory committees led by the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks obtained their strongest support from the industrial workers, and their support enabled the Bolsheviks to obtain a majority in the Petrograd Soviet in August.

Upon his arrival in Vladivostok, Duncan conducted "a somewhat hurried conference" with representatives of the local Soviet. After extending greetings and congratulations to the Russian workers, he briefly described the accomplishments of American labor and offered to provide

information pertaining to the movement in the United States. He also took advantage of the opportunity to urge strong support of the war effort.8

On several occasions during the journey from Vladivostok to Petrograd, Duncan made brief addresses to groups of Russians in the various railroad stations. His speeches followed a pattern: greetings, congratulations about the Revolution, and a plea for strong backing of the war.9

His first lengthy conference occurred on June 12 at Viatka, a suburb of Petrograd, with Alexander Samrov, representative of the railroad and electrical power plant workers in that area. Through Samrov, Duncan made arrangements to address the Petrograd union. In the address Duncan underlined "the possible necessity" of establishing two or three work shifts in the essential industries in order to achieve full industrial capacity as well as to obtain the eight-hour workday strongly advocated by Russian labor.10 The workers of Petrograd had already won an eight-hour day immediately after the March Revolution. Soon afterward, industries in other Russian cities offered this concession.11

9 Ibid., 1-2.
10 Ibid., 3.
Duncan's first conference in Petrograd was with Minister of Labor Skobolov on June 15. Duncan presented messages from President Wilson, the American Secretary of Labor, and Gompers. The Russian Minister was primarily interested in Duncan's description of the way the Department of Labor aided in settling labor disputes without resorting to "official government interference."

During the next three weeks Duncan met with Skobolov several times. They usually discussed the role of the American Department of Labor as mediator in labor disputes. On one occasion Skobolov sent men from his department to Duncan to obtain government reports on labor and material on Workmen's Compensation Laws. The eight-hour workday with three shifts per day was frequently discussed. Toward the end of his stay in Petrograd, Duncan received Skobolov's assurance that his department would "use all its influence" to see that this plan was implemented in Russia. Duncan's last conference with the Minister of Labor ended "with profuse thanks . . . for the advice I had given, which had been . . . to some extent put into use and was showing good results."¹²

In addition to conferring with members of the Provisional Government, Duncan also spent a considerable amount of time with various labor leaders in Petrograd and

Moscow. In these meetings Duncan first explained the history of the labor movement in the United States. He then distributed material which served to explain the organization of labor along craft lines and strongly suggested that the Russians follow the same pattern. He also stressed the necessity of establishing shifts for workers who were engaged in the production of war materials and, in general, counseled labor leaders to support the Provisional Government and the Russian war effort.\(^\text{13}\)

On the evening of June 29, Duncan appeared before the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and delivered his "principal address" in Russia to approximately 800 delegates and 4,000 spectators.\(^\text{14}\) Russell had assisted in making the arrangements for the speech and was present. He recorded that Duncan devoted most of his attention to the "problems and demands of labor."\(^\text{15}\)

Duncan did discuss such topics as equal pay for women, public education, child labor, the right to strike, the eight-hour workday, and other issues of interest to all workingmen. He explained that American Labor wished to furnish "information about our own progress" in order to

\(^{13}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{14}\text{Although Russell's address to the All-Russian Congress is frequently referred to by historians, they appear to be unaware of the one delivered by Duncan. Warth, The Allies And The Russian Revolution, 103.}\)

\(^{15}\text{"Russell Diary," June 29, 1917.}\)
assist the Russians and encourage them to follow the pattern set by American Labor. A careful examination of the speech reveals that his strongest appeal to the workers was to encourage them to supply adequate labor for war industries and to provide support for the Provisional Government and the Allies. He strongly defended the eight-hour day and explained the use of two or three eight-hour work shifts to increase production. Duncan felt that the production level essential for war could be maintained through the use of work shifts, but if a "very great emergency" arose the workers should temporarily suspend hour limitations and follow "the example of our workers in America." He discussed the strike as a "God-given privilege" which should be used sparingly and only "when more friendly methods of adjustment have failed."^{16}

Duncan believed his speech had been "well received," especially by the soldier deputies who were "exceedingly pleased" by his appeal for support for the war. He failed to mention an interruption by one delegate who objected to his speech.^{17} Like the other members of the Mission, Duncan spoke no Russian and was at the mercy of

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^{17}"Duncan Report,"; and "Russell Diary," June 29, 1917.
his interpreter who probably did not give a literal translation of the delegate's remarks.

On the following day Duncan delivered a speech to approximately 3,500 persons at a mass meeting at Pavlovsk in the suburbs of Petrograd. The meeting was held to honor a regiment leaving for the Front. The program included Russian folk music and dancing, which the Americans greatly enjoyed. In this speech Duncan devoted little attention to labor but emphasized the need for stronger backing of the war. At one point he stated that the United States "expects that the Russian armies will move forward." Another time he exceeded the Mission's authority by saying that it might be possible "to place the Stars and Stripes of the United States of America alongside of your own revolutionary flag on the fighting front." 19

Shortly before leaving Petrograd Duncan made a final appeal to Russian Labor. The occasion was a meeting of the All-Russian Trade Union Convention, which consisted of 388 delegates representing twenty-nine labor organizations. He restricted his remarks almost entirely to labor issues and advocated the creation of a labor movement


similar to the one in the United States.  

It is evident from his speeches as well as his official report that Duncan attempted to encourage Russian labor to give strong aid to the war effort. He hoped to influence the labor movement to progress along the lines developed by the American Federation of Labor. This was an ambitious objective at a time when Russian workers were being told that they should take over all the means of production and indeed were doing so.

Duncan was extremely optimistic as they left Russia. He described their visit as having had "excellent general results" and was "sure that the labor and soldier combination . . . is in much better condition than when we arrived in Russia."  

It is impossible to understand this optimism. Only a few days before the group left Petrograd, large numbers of workers and citizens demonstrated to demand that all power be placed in the hands of the Soviets. Approximately one week after their departure, similar demonstrations, the July Days, resulted in the overthrow of the First Coalition. Why was Duncan so completely ignorant about the true sentiments of Russian Labor? The only possible explanation is


that he saw only what he wanted to see. During his visit to Russia, Duncan spent most of his time with officials of the Provisional Government and union leaders. There is no indication that he met with or, in fact, even knew about the Bolshevik-dominated factory committees. Thus, like others of his group, he was so accustomed to institutions similar to those in the United States that he neglected all others.

Although most members of the Mission were primarily concerned with either political or military developments in revolutionary Russia, Crane and John Mott devoted their attention to changes within the Russian Church. Crane was in Russia when the members of the Root Mission were being selected and had cabled the State Department to suggest that, in addition to persons trained in law, politics, and finance, someone "of the greatest spiritual wisdom and authority" should also be included. He suggested Mott as the logical choice.22

Mott was subsequently appointed and Crane telegraphed him about the great changes that were being made in the Russian Church. Although the Church had "had no part in The Revolution," there was a revolution "going on

Crane remained in Moscow until June 10 and left in time to join the Mission in Petrograd on June 13. Both Crane and Mott were present at the initial meetings with representatives of the Provisional Government but left Petrograd on the evening of June 16 for Moscow.

They arrived in Moscow on the tenth day of a convention being held by the Russian Orthodox Church. Crane erroneously referred to this meeting as the National Sobor of the Russian Orthodox Church. Actually, the conferences in Moscow consisted of church leaders from all parts of Russia who were making preparations for the coming church session, the All-Russian Church Council (Sobor) which convened in August, 1917, and was the first such meeting since 1681. This provided an excellent opportunity for the Americans to bring the Mission's

23Charles R. Crane to John R. Mott, May 16, 1917, Robert Lansing Papers, Vol. 26. The revolution in the Church to which Crane referred centered around the meeting of the Russian Orthodox Church in June, 1917, in Moscow. For Mott's evaluation of the changes occurring in the Russian church, see his "Letter...Regarding Recent Religious Developments in Russia," in John R. Mott, Recent Experiences and Impressions in Russia, Extracts from Correspondence and Addresses of John R. Mott, member of the Special Diplomatic Mission of the United States to Russia (Private Printing, 1918), 15-26.

24Madding Summers to Robert Lansing, June 7, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/6099, St. Dept.


message to the group of over 1,000 representatives of the Russian Church from all parts of the country.

Mott was invited to address the conference, a singular honor for a Protestant. His speech was read by a church official prior to its delivery, and the Americans were surprised by a recommendation that they place more emphasis on the need for vigorous pursuit of the war. When Mott and Crane asked the church leader to clarify the position of the Church with regard to the war, he replied, "The church is for the war and is doing everything possible to sustain the army." 27

Therefore, on June 19, Mott delivered an address which was interpreted by Father Alexandrov whom he had known in San Francisco 28 and which underlined the need for the Russians to continue the war. Mott reviewed Russian-American relations and stated that there had always been a bond of friendship between the two countries. He told his audience that the United States "recognize that . . . the Russian soldiers and people have been fighting our battles for us." The people of the United States "are also deeply grateful because of what you are proposing and planning to do to continue this struggle to a successful

27 Crane, "Memoirs, Russia 1917," 185.
28 Mott, Recent Experiences, 18.
issue."  

Mott then described the preparations for war being made in the United States and told his audience that "the United States is with you in this conflict to the very end." In conclusion, Mott appealed for support for the war and asked the representatives of the Russian Church to "go back to all your parishes . . . Tell them to stand firmly behind the Provisional Government . . . Russia and her allies must continue steadfast to the end." Mott believed that his address was received with "sympathy and enthusiasm" and recalled that on several occasions the "entire audience arose," which he interpreted as "a sign of most signal approval." The reaction of the churchmen revealed their conservative leanings. The more reactionary members of the clergy, especially those who had been closely associated with Rasputin, had been removed from their positions in the Church soon after the March Revolution. But the majority of the church leadership was Conservative and supported the Provisional Government. Later, like most conservative Russians, many of the clergy

29 "Address of John R. Mott Member of the Special Mission of the United States of America to Russia, at the Great Sobor of the Russian Orthodox Church Moscow, June 19, 1917," appendix to "Mission Report," Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.

30 Ibid.

31 Mott, Recent Experiences, 18.
spoke out in favor of General Kornilov.\textsuperscript{32}

Mott and Crane were joined in Moscow by the others. They returned to Petrograd with them on June 25.\textsuperscript{33}

Two days after their return, Mott and Crane were invited to a session of the Cossack Congress which was in session in the capital. The 300 delegates who represented the twelve Cossack Armies in the Russian forces heard Mott compliment them for their determination to continue the war against the Central Powers. In language even more direct than in his address before the Conference in Moscow, Mott strongly urged a vigorous prosecution of the war.\textsuperscript{34} He complimented the Congress on its resolution calling for "an immediate offensive" and stated that their rejection of a separate peace was "precisely what we had expected from you." Mott pointed out that strong and loyal support of the Provisional Government was essential to the military effort. He referred to the "intrigues of the enemy within your gates" and suggested that "to wage a triumphant warfare at the front you must have no untaken forts in the rear."\textsuperscript{35} This remark reflects

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{32}Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution, I, 135-38.
  \item \textsuperscript{33}"Mission Log," 28.
  \item \textsuperscript{34}Samuel R. Harper, who translated the speech for Mott, expressed the view that the speech "was hardly the role of the Secretary of the Y. M. C. A." Harper, Memoirs, 102.
  \item \textsuperscript{35}"Address of Dr. John R. Mott Before The Cossack Congress, Petrograd, June 27, 1917," appendix to "Mission Report," Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.
\end{itemize}
an attitude shared by many of the Allied representatives in Russia. It gave voice to a belief that the Provisional Government would have to do something to suppress growing opposition to the war.

On Sunday, July 1, a special religious service was conducted at the Kazan Cathedral in Petrograd in honor of the American Mission. Those present included members of the Mission as well as representatives of the Stevens Commission and the American Embassy. The service, presided over by Archbishop Ploton, lasted three hours. Father Alexandrov delivered the sermon in English, and in it he compared the United States to the Good Samaritan.  

Mott and Crane then returned to Moscow in order to witness the election of Archbishop Tikhon, who had served for several years as Bishop of the Russian Church in America, as the new Metropolitan of Moscow. They had been invited to attend the service by the unanimous vote of the delegates to the conference and were presented with sacred ikons by the Archbishop of Moscow.  

In addition to conferring with the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church, Mott also met with the leaders of other religious groups in Russia. These included the

36Mott, Recent Experiences, 22-24; "McCormick Diary," July 1, 1917; and Gibbs, "Russian Trip Notes," July 1, 1917.

37Mott, Recent Experiences, 21.
Archbishop of the "Old-Believers," a conservative group within the Russian Orthodox Church, Dr. Keen of the "British and Foreign Bible Society," Dr. Simons of the Methodist Episcopal Church, a representative of the Roman Catholic Church, and Russian and Polish Jews. They discussed the progress being made toward reform within the Russian Church, and the leaders were quite hopeful.

Up to the time of Mott's visit, the Y. M. C. A. had been limited to working with prisoners-of-war. Mott was keenly interested in expanding both its work and its influence in Russia. As he traveled across Russia en route to Petrograd, Mott discussed the possibility of expanding Y. M. C. A. work to include the Russian soldiers. In conferences with both Y. M. C. A. officials and Russian citizens, Mott gained the impression that facilities were needed to provide the Russian soldier with constructive ways in which to spend his leisure time.

Mott was impressed by the large numbers of soldiers who were "not occupied at all with activities relating to the war" or were "devoting themselves to aimless and unprofitable political discussion." Like the other Mission members

38 Mott, Recent Experiences, 26; and "Outline of The Activities of John R. Mott," appendix to "Mission Report," Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.

39 Mott, Recent Experiences, 308; and "McCormick Diary," June 7 and 9, 1917.

40 Mott, Recent Experiences, 4.
Mott found the concept of soldiers holding political discussions completely foreign to his idea of proper military discipline. This provides another example of the Mission's practice of comparing the situation in Russia to American customs. If the practices differed greatly, they were assumed to be worthless.

Although he frequently referred to the need of spiritual leadership for the Russian soldier, his major desire appears to have been to help the soldiers become more effective in the war. The solution lay in organized activities which would occupy their leisure time.

I do not fear for Soldiers when they are fighting or when they are drilling. The time concerning which I have anxiety is their leisure hours... Shall these hours be spent in idleness, in dissipation, and in unprobatable agitation; or shall they be spent in helpful recreation... and in unselfish service among one's fellows?41

These were noble, Christian sentiments, indeed!

A number of Y. M. C. A. officials attached to prisoner-of-war camps had already begun work with the Russian soldiers. Mott supported these activities which should "be reproduced on a large scale" throughout Russia. 42

41 "Speech by Dr. John R. Mott Member of the Special Mission of the United States of America to Russia at a Dinner given by Mr. Emanuel Nobel at his home in Petrograd June 6/21, 1917," appendix to "Mission Report," Elihu Root Papers, Box 192.

His suggestion was endorsed by Root and other members of the Mission, who strongly urged the establishment of Y. M. C. A. facilities along the Russian Front. 43

Mott interviewed a number of Russian officials about expanding Y. M. C. A. activities. Prince Lvov and Tereshchenko responded favorably, as did other Russians. Before departing, Mott assigned ten Americans to work with the Army. 44 Both Crane and Mott left Russia secure in their belief that changes within the Russian Church would have a profound and beneficial effect throughout the country.

The third minor area of interest was propaganda. Prior to his arrival in Petrograd Russell had decided that the United States should create an official or unofficial press bureau in Russia which could explain the purpose of the war to the Russian masses. Russell was obsessed with the idea that the Russian people would continue the war if they could be reached with an appeal. His attitude had been formed in conversations with Russian and American observers who had accompanied the Mission between Vladivostok and the capital. By the time the Mission reached its destination, Russell had assumed the dual responsibility

43 Elihu Root to Robert Lansing, June 17, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 136.

44 Mott, Recent Experiences, 6.
of establishing contact with the Russian socialists and attempting to establish an adequate press or propaganda bureau. Actually, Russell saw the tasks as one and the same. On the one hand, he personally would explain the position of his government to the socialist leaders in Petrograd. On the other hand, the press bureau would do the same to the Russian masses.

Upon his arrival in Petrograd Russell immediately took up the task. During his first few days in Petrograd he gathered information and opinions about the proposed press bureau. Aided by Stanley Washburn, he acquired an automobile on the day of his arrival and drove "all about Petrograd looking up publicity men and conferring with the British and other representatives" until well after midnight. He called on Ambassador Francis, whom he found to be "wholly sympathetic with our idea of a propaganda campaign," and he invited local and foreign newspapermen to a press conference to be held by Root on the morning of June 15.

Russell soon concluded that the Allied approach to


propaganda was entirely wrong. The French and British
tactic was to persuade the Russians to continue the war
by "appeals to Russians to keep faith and carry out the
national agreements on treaties." To the American
socialist, this was "worse than useless," as the Russians
associated these treaties with the deposed Tsar and there­
fore did not consider them binding. Russell singled out
for particular criticism the use of war films of "British
troops being shot to pieces," which he described as "in­
teresting but entirely worthless as propaganda." In his
opinion, the Russians "knew too much about battle lines"
and needed instead "a living reason why they should offer
themselves to be shot." 48 The United States would do well
to take an independent course with emphasis on the "peril
to Democracy." 49

Russell had little trouble convincing the Mission
of the need for a press bureau, although at first some
members felt that the United States would be wise to join
with the Allies in a concerted propaganda campaign. 50 Root
cabled the State Department recommending the formation of
a press bureau. The Mission believed that "the people of

48 Russell, Bare Hands And Stone Walls, 366; and
"Russell Diary," June 28, 1917.


50 "Russell Diary," June 16, 1917.
Russia, particularly the soldiers, are going to decide whether Russia stays in the war" and it was mandatory to "get at them in some way." They, therefore, had "taken steps for the immediate distribution of information which will cost about $100,000." He stated, "We members of the Mission all agree that the business of disseminating information should be taken up on a much larger scale." The figure which he suggested was five million dollars. The money would be well spent if it could keep five million Russian soldiers in the war. Without going into detail Root explained that the money would provide "a supply of newspapers, printing and distribution of posters, leaflets and pamphlets, employment of numerous lecturers and moving pictures to go to the front." The work would "be done with the approval of the Russian Government," and would "not be conducted in the name of the United States."  

Russell was pleased with Root's dispatch, which "set forth the supreme necessity of propaganda" as well as the plans he and Washburn had proposed. He was somewhat surprised, however, at Root's opinion that the State Department might be reluctant to authorize the full

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51 Elihu Root to Robert Lansing, June 17, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5425, St. Dept.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.
appropriation. He recorded in his diary: "I don't see how [the State Department can fail to approve, but Root seems doubtful." 54

Events were to prove the former Secretary of State correct. Almost two weeks later the Mission received Lansing's reply. It proved far from satisfactory. Only at the end of his dispatch did the Secretary of State mention the request for appropriations: "The matter of establishing an efficient agency for publicity is receiving careful consideration." 55 According to Root this could be "translated" as meaning "your suggestions about publicity are hereby disapproved." 56

The reply was a disappointment to Russell as well as to the other members of the Mission. Anticipation of State Department approval had led Root, Bertron, and McCormick to sign personal notes for $30,000 to pay for the circulation of messages to the Russian people from Wilson and Root. 57

The Mission again attempted to gain authorization for the proposed bureau. In a message to the Secretary

54 "Russell Diary," June 17, 1917.

55 Robert Lansing to Elihu Root, July 27, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5782E, St. Dept.

56 "Russell Diary," July 2, 1917.

of the Treasury, Bertron stated that it was "the unanimous opinion of the commission that an extensive educational publicity campaign be undertaken in Russia." It would "be supervised by Ambassador Francis" with "the approval of the Russian Government." Bertron reminded the Secretary of their discussion of the subject before the Mission left Washington and urged that they be given a "prompt and definite answer." 58 On the same day, Root sent Lansing a dispatch requesting an answer to their plans. To emphasize the urgency he wrote, "I beg you to realize Germany is now attacking Russia by propaganda and is spending millions ... to capture the minds of the Russian people." A German victory "can be prevented only by active and immediate counter attacks by the same weapons." 59 The State Department replied that President Wilson "approves in principle of educational campaign ... the question of further outlay and a comprehensive plan is receiving the careful attention of the Department." 60

Russell had been disappointed about the brief period of time the Mission planned to spend in Russia.

58 Samuel R. Bertron to William G. McAdoo, July 2, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5693, St. Dept.

59 Elihu Root to Robert Lansing, July 2, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5795, St. Dept.

60 Frank L. Polk to David R. Francis, July 7, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5693, St. Dept.
After ten days in Petrograd he was convinced he would have to remain in Russia after the Mission's departure if any results were to be derived from his efforts. In a wire to the State Department he stated that "contingencies may arise" which would make necessary for him to remain in Petrograd longer than the others. He requested permission from Lansing and President Wilson to take this action.\(^{61}\)

Lansing referred the matter to Wilson and recommended that permission be granted.\(^{62}\) He later wired Russell that "the President and I heartily approve of your remaining in Russia as long as you believe you can be of service."\(^{63}\) This message never reached Russell. Ambassador Francis withheld the wire and replied to Lansing that unless he received "further instructions" he would withhold the message, since he and Root were of the opinion that "no party of the Mission should remain retaining diplomatic character."\(^{64}\) If Russell were allowed to remain, "it should be as private citizen or for some specific duty not related to diplomatic mission." Francis had found that Russell was


\(^{62}\) Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, June 28, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5553, St. Dept.

\(^{63}\) Robert Lansing to Charles Edward Russell, June 30, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5553, St. Dept.

\(^{64}\) All diplomatic notes to the Mission were sent in care of the American Embassy in Petrograd.
"in thorough touch with Workmen and Soldiers Deputies maintaining that they have the power. He talks of Provisional government disrespectfully and openly, consequently, if he remains in any capacity he might make trouble."\textsuperscript{65}

Two days later, Francis further informed the State Department that Russell had asked the Mission to recommend him for the position of director of the proposed publicity bureau. Root had already explained to Russell that the bureau would be under the direction of the American Embassy, and the Mission "would not formally recommend anyone to the Embassy." Francis made it clear that he did not want Russell to remain. He informed the State Department that "six of the members of the mission \textsuperscript{are} secretly unfavorable to his employment" and that Duncan believed "Russell's only object is socialistic propaganda."\textsuperscript{66}

Upon receiving this recommendation, Acting Secretary of State Polk consulted with the President,\textsuperscript{67} and notified Francis that the State Department agreed with him.

"Russell should return with \textsuperscript{the} diplomatic mission."\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{65}David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, July 3, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5579, St. Dept.

\textsuperscript{66}David R. Francis to Robert Lansing, July 7, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5789, St. Dept.

\textsuperscript{67}Frank L. Polk to Woodrow Wilson, July 5, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5680, St. Dept.

\textsuperscript{68}Frank L. Polk to David R. Francis, July 7, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5680, St. Dept.
There is no evidence that Russell was ever aware that Francis and Root and not the State Department opposed his remaining in Russia.

As late as July 6, three days before departure, Russell again introduced the topic of a press bureau and suggested that he be allowed to remain and "work on propaganda." Root's reply was that the Mission "could not entertain any such suggestion." Furthermore, because of Lansing's "cryptic remarks" about their publicity proposals, the Mission "was done with the subject of publicity" which "was now up to Francis and the State Department." Russell asked what the "commission's attitude" would be if the Ambassador requested that he remain. Root replied that "such a request would receive no answer." He added that if any member of the Mission remained in Russia, such action "must be taken strictly as an individual." The Mission "could not have anything to do with such a decision."

Russell was keenly disappointed and "strongly moved" to remain in Russia even without official sanction. His decision to return with the others was based on his opinion that he was "under the State Department's orders" and was, therefore, not a "free agent." As he had requested specific

69 "Russell Diary," July 6, 1917.

70 Ibid.
permission to remain and thought that the State Department had "failed to give that permission," he felt that he had no choice but to return to the United States with the Mission. 71 For all practical purposes this ended the Mission's concern with a press bureau, although their recommendations were repeated in their official report as well as in a supplementary document.

Like Russell, all the other Mission members were obsessed with the idea that the Russian people would pursue the war if properly informed, thus solving the problem of retaining Russia as a belligerent. There is no way, however, to determine whether the proposed Propaganda Bureau would have had any effect. The Bolsheviks had seized power before Wilson's representative of the Committee on Public Information finally arrived. In view of the rapidly changing political events in Russia, it is most unlikely that such a bureau would have had any impact at all.

71 Ibid.
CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

From the beginning, Root had been anxious to keep the length of the Mission trip to a minimum. Following his visit to Stavka, he grew anxious to return to the United States. Had it not been for the delay in General Scott's tour of the Russian Front, the Mission would have left for the United States earlier than it did. On June 30, Root informed the State Department of his plans to leave Petrograd on July 9.¹ Scott had been instructed to return to Petrograd by that time so as not to delay the departure date. When Scott confirmed his return by July 9, Root notified the Russian Foreign Minister so that arrangements for the departure could be made. Root explained to his host that he could "best promote the interest of both countries by returning to Washington without delay."²

Root was also prompted to leave Petrograd by the hesitancy of the State Department to respond favorably to his request for the creation of a propaganda bureau. Colonel

¹Elihu Root to Robert Lansing, June 30, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5771, St. Dept.

²Elihu Root to Michael Tereshchenko, July 3, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/7487, St. Dept.
Mott later recalled that Root, anxious to start for home as soon as Scott returned from the Front, had stated, "We receive no replies to our telegrams and our staying here under such conditions is useless. Perhaps by going to Washington in person we can get some action." 3

Charles F. Crane remained in Russia to observe the changes in the Russian Church and to attend the Russian Constituent Assembly, due to meet in the fall. 4 Colonel Judson also remained behind. Disappointed at what he considered the too brief trip, he had requested permission to stay. 5 After consulting Root and Ambassador Francis, Scott relieved Judson from duty as military attaché to the Mission and assigned him to the American Embassy in the same capacity. 6

On its last day in Petrograd the Mission made a round of farewells and took photographs. Some of the

3Mott, Twenty Years, 208.
4"McCormick Diary," July 9, 1917.
6Judson was to serve as chief of the American Military Mission to Russia as well as the military representative in connection with American supplies to Russia. Hugh L. Scott to Secretary of War, July 9, 1917, William V. Judson Papers, Box 4; and Hugh L. Scott to William V. Judson, July 9, 1917, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Box 1 (Princeton, University Library, Princeton, N. J.).
members bought souvenirs and gifts. Others enjoyed a visit to the Alexander III Art Gallery, which was opened especially for the members of the Mission.\(^7\) Shortly before midnight, twenty-seven days after their arrival in the Russian capital, the Mission gathered at the terminal where they boarded the same train which had brought them to Petrograd.\(^8\) For the next twelve days the Tsar's special train returned along the same route it had traveled four weeks earlier.

For the most part, the journey was uneventful and afforded each member of the Mission time to prepare the reports requested by their Chairman. The one notable break in the routine occurred on the second day near the town of Viatka. When the group arrived on the morning of July 11, they learned that there would be a short delay, as a bridge five miles ahead had been destroyed by fire. The stop, first estimated at twelve hours, stretched to thirty.\(^9\)

After spending the night on a siding, the group witnessed an incident the following morning when a fire destroyed a frame ice house near the main line of the track. Some members of the group mentioned the possibility that both fires were the work of German agents who wished to delay their return to the United States,\(^10\) but admitted

\(^7\) "McCormick Diary," July 9, 1917; and "Russell Diary," July 9, 1917.

\(^8\) "Mission Log," 36.

\(^9\) Ibid., 37.

\(^10\) "McCormick Diary," July 12, 1917.
that they had no proof of this.\footnote{Cyrus H. McCormick to Frederick Corse, July 11, 1917, Cyrus H. McCormick Papers, Subject File "Russia 1917-1920"; and Elihu Root to Erving Winslow, August 28, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 138.} At the time of the incident, Russell wrote nothing in his diary to indicate that he thought it was part of a conspiracy. Years later, however, he attributed the incident to radicals and stated that "the Bolsheviks . . . burned a bridge in front of us with the pious hope that we should be wrecked, and when we were blocked at Viatka by this incident, tried to set fire to the train."\footnote{Russell, Bare Hands and Stone Walls, 370.} This provides a good example of the way in which Russell and other members of the Mission recognized the Bolshevik threat only in retrospect, long after the November Revolution. The incident allowed members of the Mission to visit Viatka and provided a brief reprieve from their travels. McCormick and John Mott hired a "droshky" for some sightseeing and entered what they took to be a monastery in search of a cup of tea. To their embarrassment, they found that they had in fact entered a nunnery.\footnote{"McCormick Diary," July 11, 1917.}

As the Imperial Train made its way across Siberia, the group utilized the frequent stops to make speeches to gatherings and delegations of various officials. The
speeches were usually given by Root and followed the same pattern he had used earlier: Congratulations on the new freedom of the Russian people, expressions of friendship from the United States, and encouragement to continue the war effort. On July 14, Root spoke to a group of soldiers in the village of Nazuveskaya. He compared the recent revolution in Russia to the fall of the Bastille. Perhaps because of the remote location of the village or his spontaneous enthusiasm, Root's remarks were less conservative than usual and impressed the socialist member of the Mission as "surprisingly radical."  

By July 19, the train had reached the Manchurian border. Customs officials found that someone had hidden 20,000 rubles worth of opium aboard the train. There was some concern that this would cast a "reflection" on the Mission. However, the border officials explained that almost all express trains carried such smuggled cargo, and the Mission moved on without further delay. Shortly before noon on July 21, the trip came to an end at Vladivostok. Root consulted with the American Consul, sent a parting message to Tereshchenko, and the group boarded the Buffalo for the return to the United States.  

14 "Mission Log," 38; and "Russell Diary," July 14, 1917.  
Before their departure from the United States, Root had discussed with Secretary Lansing the possibility of visiting Japan on the return trip. Lansing originally favored such a trip, and Root left the United States with the impression that they were free to go.\textsuperscript{17} During the stay in Petrograd, Root cabled the State Department on two occasions to ask for further instructions on the Japanese visit but received no reply.\textsuperscript{18} This led some members to conclude that the State Department was ignoring their request in the way it had their recommendations for a propaganda bureau.\textsuperscript{19} The State Department had in fact decided that the Mission should return directly to Washington. The Department indicated that such a trip would delay their report and therefore should not be taken.\textsuperscript{20} The truth was otherwise. Lansing had decided that "the possible divergence of views" between Root and the administration made it "unwise for him to represent the Government" in Japan.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{17}Robert Lansing to Aimaro Sato, Imperial Japanese Ambassador, May 15, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/4677\textsuperscript{½}, St. Dept.
\textsuperscript{18}Elihu Root to Robert Lansing, June 17, 1917, and July 2, 1917, Elihu Root Papers, Box 136.
\textsuperscript{19}"McCormick Diary," July 16, 1917.
\textsuperscript{21}Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, July 5, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5737\textsuperscript{½}, St. Dept.
pertaining to the Japanese visit until July 19, only two
days before their arrival in Vladivostok. The message,
forwarded to the Mission by the American Consul at Vladi-
vostok, informed Root that the State Department considered
a trip to China or Japan "inadvisable" and instructed them
to return home directly. 22 The Mission also learned from
the Consul that an American Red Cross Commission headed by
Dr. Frank Billings was due to arrive the following day.
Root decided to meet with the group and offer information
which might be helpful in their work. 23 When Root learned
that the Commission would arrive later than expected, he
decided to delay their return no longer and left a letter
for the Chairman of the Commission. 24

The two weeks required to make the voyage from
Vladivostok to Seattle offered the Mission an opportunity
to complete their notes and to prepare the final draft of
their reports. The trip was without incident. The only
delay occurred on July 23 when heavy fog required the vessel
to drop anchor for approximately eight hours until the fog

22 "McCormick Diary," July 19, 1917; and Robert
Lansing to Elihu Root, July 7, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5425,
St. Dept.


24 "McCormick Diary," July 21, 1917; and Elihu Root
to Dr. Frank Billings, July 21, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/
7487, St. Dept.
On Sunday, July 29, the Buffalo crossed the 180th meridian. After two weeks at sea, the lights of Seattle were spotted at 9:00 p.m. on August 3. An hour later the vessel was at anchor in the port.

The following morning the members of the Mission were given a tour of the city followed by a luncheon with the Seattle Chamber of Commerce. When asked if the Mission would be permitted to accept such an invitation, the State Department had left the decision to Root.

The Mission boarded a special train on the afternoon of August 4 for the last leg of their trip and arrived in Washington on the morning of August 8. They were met at the station by Polk of the State Department and retired to hotels where they rested briefly before presenting their reports that afternoon. Secretary Lansing had a "long conference" with Root and another with the entire Mission that afternoon. Later in the same day, the group met

28 Frank L. Polk to Senator Miles Poindexter, July 26, 1917, Doc. No. 763.72/5966, St. Dept.
30 "Lansing Diary," August 9, 1917.
with President Wilson for approximately two hours and presented their evaluations to him. 31

The written report of the Root Mission, signed by all members except Crane who had remained in Russia, was submitted to Secretary Lansing shortly after their arrival in Washington. Although the document was twenty-nine pages long, a large portion was devoted to their journey and, to a certain extent, duplicated the "Mission Log." One impressive feature of the report — and one thing that impressed Secretary of State Lansing — was its extremely optimistic tone. Root felt that the Mission had been successful. He believed that the group had "contributed materially to strengthening the provisional government," and he concluded that "the situation is certainly much more stable and hopeful than it was when we arrived." 32

Root and his colleagues directed their attention to four basic areas: the problem of transportation, the ability of the Russians to continue their military effort, the political stability of the Provisional Government, and the recommendations of the Mission. The report recognized


the necessity of improved transportation as "the fundamen-
tal material need of Russia for the prosecution of the War."
Root realized that there were not enough vessels to carry
the necessary war material from the United States to Russia.
"The supplies to be actually furnished by the United States
to Russia cannot possibly be more than a small part of the
total amount called for." The report directed Secretary
Lansing's attention to the problem of rail transportation
within Russia, an area to be investigated in more detail
by the Stevens Commission. The report explained, however,
that without exception, all requests from Russian civilian
and military leaders were prefaced with the plea that some-
thing be done to secure equipment for the Russian rail
system. Basing their opinion on their own observations
and on conversations with members of the Stevens Commission,
members of the Root Mission agreed that assistance to the
Russian railway system should be given first priority. 33

As to whether or not the Russian government would
continue the war, the report contained no doubts whatso-
ever: "We are satisfied that the Provisional Government
of Russia intends to continue the war and has no intention
of making a separate peace." 34 Mission members recognized,
however, that a question of political stability existed,


34 Ibid., 15.
and it was their conclusion in this area which proved to be totally inaccurate. The report briefly described the political events of the past two months but concluded that the Provisional Government had been able to stabilize its power. In summarizing their view of the political question, the Report stated:

It is the unanimous opinion of the Mission that the Russian people have the qualities of character which will make it possible to restore discipline, and coherent and intelligently directed action, both in military and civil life . . . We have little doubt that they will be able to establish and maintain successfully free self-government on a great scale. Such a development, however, cannot be accomplished in a day; time is essential; but they are moving now with a rapidity which is quite extraordinary.35

The report did not make specific recommendations for financial assistance to Russia. It did, however, strongly advise "giving substantial aid to Russia in a large way." It gave as justification the following observation:

With such aid there is a strong probability of keeping Russia in the war and the Russian Army in the field . . . Here is little prospect that Russia can be kept in the war and the Russian Army in the field without such aid . . . . The benefit of keeping Russia in the war and its army in the field will be so enormous that the risk involved in rendering the aid required should not be seriously considered.36

In addition to the major report which was submitted

36 Ibid., 26-27.
by the entire committee, three additional reports which dealt with the Army, the Navy, and financial conditions were presented. General Scott prepared a report on the military situation in Russia and submitted it to the Secretary of War. Scott began with the observation that the most serious problem which the Russian Army faced was that of railway transportation. He explained that all Russian military leaders with whom he talked began their discussion with a plea for the immediate shipment of locomotives and railway cars. Scott agreed with the urgency of the request and stated, "Unless the railroads be soon rendered more efficient, Russia's military strength will no longer be of much avail in this war." 37

General Scott explained that upon their arrival in Russia the Mission members were shocked at the military situation. They were amazed by the large crowds of soldiers standing, with no apparent purpose, around train stations. Scott felt that this was a result of the soldiers' desire to test their new-found freedom. He described the situation as "individual liberty run mad, an orgy of do-as-you-please." 38 He also reported his observation that upon his arrival in Russia, more troop trains were traveling away from the Front than toward it. Along the same route six weeks later, however, he witnessed a "considerable

38 Ibid., 9.
change." He observed "fewer men in uniforms crowding the stations and the trains going toward the front were frequent and filled with men returning to their duty."\(^{39}\) This change he attributed to "orders and appeals from the government." Recognizing that the situation was not yet ideal the General believed it "important to note that these orders are being increasingly obeyed."\(^{40}\) Included in his report was his observation that the nearer one came to the military Front, the greater the degree of military discipline one observed, and "the further one went from the workmen and their committees the better conditions became."

The question of desertion from the ranks he recognized as a serious one. Scott placed the estimate at one and one-half million desertees. Nevertheless, he was optimistic and stated that they were "slowly filtering back."\(^{41}\) In his opinion, the answer to the desertion problem rested with the government's ability to enforce its authority, and Scott thought that "the tide \(\text{had}\) now set in that direction and if not checked by some new influence \(\text{would}\) slowly grow stronger."\(^{42}\) To Scott, the

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 10.

\(^{40}\) Ibid.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., 11.

\(^{42}\) Ibid.
most significant indication of the political and military stability was the Russian advance of July 1st. He saw the advance as a test to determine whether the Russian troops would obey their commanders or retreat. He explained that "the most they expected was to prove to Russia and to America that the army would and could fight." If this were indeed true, the July advance served its purpose. Scott returned from the Front confident that the Russian Army was capable of maintaining its position along the Eastern Front.

In concluding his report, Scott emphasized the need to retain Russia as a belligerent:

If she remains in, the war will be all of a year shorter and our victory assured. If she goes out, no one can predict how long it will take to conquer Germany, and there arises a clear possibility that it cannot be done at all . . . I therefore believe it is worth to us a great sum of money to keep Russia even passively in the war . . . for the dangers attending her withdrawal are too great for any haggling to be admitted.  

Admiral Glennon also submitted a report of his observations. Unlike General Scott, Glennon found little that encouraged him. He described the conditions in Sevastopol as "far from satisfactory." Glennon reported that each ship was controlled by committees which included officers but which were dominated by the seamen who

\[^{43}\text{Ibid.}, 15.\]

\[^{44}\text{Ibid.}, 30-31.\]
outnumbered their officers by a ratio of approximately five to one. In theory, these committees dealt with the "internal life of the ship" and had "no control over military matters." Glennon found, however, that "officers dare not give orders to their men" and that "all drills and preparations for battle have ceased except to the degree desired by the men." The result was that "a condition of profound distrust exists between officers and men," with many of the "ablest officers" refusing to accept the responsibility of their positions.45

It was Glennon's opinion that conditions in other Russian ports were not as bad as in Sevastopol. Though he refrained from making judgment on what he had observed, nothing in his report indicated that he had been encouraged by anything he had seen. Even when listing the requests made by the Russian Navy, Glennon made no personal recommendations,46 but his omission of any encouraging remark made his report unique.

Bertron and McCormick reported on the financial situation, which they described as "undoubtedly serious." The total indebtedness of Russia stood at twenty-nine billion rubles, and government expenses for 1917 were estimated at 27,900,000,000 rubles. With a revenue of only four billion

and a Liberty Loan of three billion, the resulting deficit would run to over twenty billion.\textsuperscript{47} They also stated that the value of the ruble had declined to such extent that it was worth less than one half its par value. They mentioned the fact that England was attempting to raise the value of the ruble by purchases in the international money markets. They felt that this was of no lasting consequence and advised the United States government against a similar action.\textsuperscript{48}

The most important part of their report consisted of a list prepared by the Minister of Finance of seventy-eight items requested by the Russians. The items would cost an estimated $1,276,000,000 and would require approximately three and one-half tons of cargo space. In view of the shortage of available cargo vessels, the Minister of Finance had listed the items according to preference. Bertron and McCormick recommended that their government carefully review and grant these requests if it expected Russia "to maintain an effective fighting force. . . . The action our Government takes in this question will be an important factor in maintaining the present Provisional Government."\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{48}Ibid., 3-4.
\textsuperscript{49}Ibid., 5.
The report of the Root Mission was one of extreme optimism. A careful reading of the document leaves the impression that the Provisional Government would maintain a position of control in Russia. Secretary Lansing was amazed at the report and the day after receiving it recorded a lengthy evaluation in his diary:

The Root Mission, excepting Charles R. Crane, have arrived and I had a long interview with them yesterday preceded by one in the morning with Mr. Root alone. I am astounded at their optimism. I cannot see upon what it is founded. When I expressed doubts as to Kerensky's personal force and ability to carry through his plans in view of the strong opposition developing against him, they assured me that everything would come out all right and that Russia would continue the war against the Central Powers with even greater vigor than under the Czar.

I hope they are right and I presume they know more about it than I do, and yet in spite of what they say I am very skeptical about Kerensky. He compromises too much with the radical element of the Revolution.

From the first I have felt that the attempt being made to harmonize the radicals and moderates in Russia would be a failure, but I confess that the confident tone of Mr. Root and colleagues has shaken, though it has not removed, my doubts... In my judgment the demoralized state of affairs will grow worse and worse until some dominant personality arises to end it all.

I may be all wrong about this. I hope I am. Mr. Root and his colleagues may be entirely right. I hope they are. The present Government may develop into a constitutional democratic government; it may become stronger, suppress radicalism, and make society safe from lawlessness. Yet the logic of events in my opinion does not warrant such hopes.

I naturally hesitate to set up my judgment against so experienced and wise a statesman as Elihu Root, especially after he has been on the ground floor and in contact with the forces at work in Russia, but even taking his statements as accurate I cannot agree in the conclusions which he reached.50

50"Lansing Diary," August 9, 1917.
Root did not include in his report the recommendation for a comprehensive propaganda bureau, although the creation of such a bureau was the one thing for which there was unanimous support from the Mission. Without exception, they felt that this was the most constructive thing which could be done to assist Russia and the war effort. When Root submitted the report, he explained that he would not repeat recommendations already made. He later told his biographer: "I was in doubt as to whether to put in my report what was in the dispatches, but I felt that I shouldn't make a record against the president who appointed me." Root was probably reluctant to suggest the bureau again, since repeated dispatches to the State Department had brought no authorization to begin work in that area.

Finally, and at the request of President Wilson, Russell and John R. Mott prepared a supplementary report describing such a bureau. Their report included the major points that had already been suggested and proposed an annual budget of five and one-half million dollars. The President turned the report over to George Creel,

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51 Jessup, Elihu Root, II, 367.


Chairman of the Committee on Public Information. Creel drastically reduced the project in size and suggested a budget of $810,000. He eliminated many of the Mission's recommendations with such remarks as "this is a half-baked suggestion" and "this suggestion is interesting in theory but mighty dangerous in practice." In concluding his evaluation, Creel stated that the project "lies entirely within the province of the Committee on Public Information . . . . I do not think the State Department should have anything to do with it at all." The President agreed with Creel, and the task of establishing a propaganda bureau was delegated to his agency. There was considerable delay in sending a representative of the Creel Committee to Russia. Edgar C. Sisson was finally sent, but he arrived after the Bolsheviks had seized power.

Wilson's decision to place the proposed Russian

54"Russell Diary," August 17, 1917; and George Creel to Woodrow Wilson, August 20, 1917, George Creel Papers, Box 3. (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

55George Creel to Woodrow Wilson, August 20, 1917, George Creel Papers, Box 3.


57George Creel, Rebel at Large: Recollections of Fifty Crowded Years (New York: G. P. Putnam's, 1947), 176.
propaganda agency in the hands of Creel removed it from the jurisdiction of the State Department. The members of the Root Mission had assumed that any such project would be handled by the State Department and were disappointed by Wilson's decision. Apparently, there existed a degree of distrust between the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information and the head of the State Department which made it difficult for the two men to work together harmoniously. In a note dated June 29, George Creel indicated the degree of hostility that existed between the two men:

Mr. Lansing, a dull, small man, bitterly resented my chairmanship of the committee, and made himself so unpleasant at the first meeting that I never called another. As a consequence, he refused to work with the Committee, and did everything that he could, in his mean, cheap way, to hinder and embarrass.53

Following the presentation of their reports and the assignment of their propaganda recommendations to George Creel, the work of the Mission finally ended. Secretary Lansing continued to confer with various members of the Mission,59 but as the days passed most of the members began to feel that their services were no longer desired and, in fact, were resented. Years later, Elihu Root wrote: "Wilson didn't want to accomplish any thing.

58George Creel Papers, Box 1.

It was a grand-stand play. He wanted to show his sympathy for the Russian Revolution. When we delivered his message and made our speeches, he was satisfied; that's all he wanted.\textsuperscript{60}

Before examining the failures of the Mission, it is well to note the extent to which the group accomplished what it was sent to do. A major purpose of the Mission was to extend to the Russian people congratulations upon their recent revolution and to assure the Russian government of American goodwill as well as material support. Ambassador Root and other members of the Mission took every conceivable opportunity, whether before a small group of soldiers gathered at some remote Siberian siding or before a gathering of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, to speak to the Russian people and deliver their President's message. Today, one can easily see that a war-weary Russia would not be receptive to such speeches, which had as their major theme a plea for the continuation of the war. There is no evidence, however, that President Wilson or the State Department found any fault in what the men said, and the speeches of Root and his group sound much like the speeches of President Wilson and other government officials of that period.

\textsuperscript{60}\textit{Elihu Root to Philip C. Jessup, September 16, 1930}, quoted in \textit{Jessup, Elihu Root}, II, 356.
There is little to criticize with respect to the Mission's attempt to determine and report the material needs of the Russian Government. Members of the Mission held long and frequent conferences with Russian civilian and military leaders to determine these needs and duly presented the Russian requests to the American government. Nor can Root or any other member be censured for a lack of enthusiasm or for any reluctance to perform his task to the best of his ability. Rather, the evidence reveals that every member of the Mission appreciated the seriousness of the task.

These minor successes are overwhelmed by the Mission's shortcomings. The most serious failure of the Mission was its evaluation of the stability of the Provisional Government and the ability of that government to keep Russia in the war. It would be unrealistic to expect that Root and his colleagues could have altered in any way the course of the political movements in Russia. It is not unreasonable, however, to have expected a more accurate evaluation of events in Russia. That these men were unable to provide such information was primarily the result of President Wilson's method of handling foreign affairs and his personal choice of Mission members.

The Root Mission provides an excellent example of Wilsonian Diplomacy in action. Many of the weaknesses
attributed to Wilson, the diplomat, are revealed in this study. Two problems confronted the Root Mission, and both were beyond their control. The first difficulty was the official policy of the United States toward the Russian Provisional Government. It was an unrealistic policy with little hope of success. The second factor was Wilson's attitude toward revolutions in general. 61

Historians who have studied President Wilson in his role as diplomat have found several serious flaws in his technique of conducting foreign affairs. One such deficiency was his tendency to rely almost exclusively upon special commissions, thereby bypassing the State Department and revealing distrust of the diplomatic corps. In dealing with the Provisional Government, Wilson utilized three such groups. In addition to the Root Mission, he sent the Stevens Commission to determine the railroad needs of Russia, and a Red Cross Commission. These overlapping commissions taxed a government already faced with the very difficult and time-consuming task of consolidating its control. It also led to misunderstandings between the Root Mission and the Stevens Commission.

Apparently, Wilson relied upon missions to indulge his penchant for the dramatic. Although he ostensibly sent out missions to obtain vital information, he conveniently  

61 See Chapter I above.
ignored and usually failed to act upon their reports and recommendations. This was especially true with respect to the Root Mission's advocacy of a large-scale propaganda bureau. In addition, the President also tended to ignore Mission members after receiving their initial reports.

Possibly his greatest failing was his apparent inability to explain in a satisfactory manner the purpose of the Mission. Root conferred privately with Wilson prior to his departure for Russia, but it is perfectly obvious from the conversations between Root and his colleagues that there was never a thorough explanation of what the group was expected to accomplish.

To these defects in Wilson's conduct of foreign affairs must be added the selection of the members of the Root Mission. Historians have deemed the choice of conservative Republican Elihu Root as chairman of such a group as a most unwise decision which is difficult to explain.62 Both the French and British governments had selected socialists, who were also cabinet members, to greet the new Russian government. While it is irrational to expect Wilson to have selected a socialist, it is perplexing that he ultimately chose a man whose political views were

considerably more conservative than were his own. That Root's ideas differed greatly from those of the Administration is revealed in a letter to President Wilson from Secretary Lansing. Lansing strongly suggested that Root be denied the opportunity of consulting with the Chinese government on the return trip, since his views were not representative of the Administration. Thus arises the question of whether Root should have been chosen to symbolize the Wilson Administration in any capacity.

Probably, Root was selected in order to give a bipartisan character to the Mission. Wilson was not unaware of the frequent suggestion that he create a coalition cabinet for the duration of the war, as the British and French had done. The selection of such a prominent Republican to head the Mission was perhaps a gesture in this direction. Few Americans questioned Root's ability. Many Russians, however, looked upon Wilson's selection of Root as an affront which, incidentally, was pointed out by one American socialist even before the Mission left America. Root's political conservatism no doubt rendered him incapable of comprehending the significance of the Russian Revolution.

The other Mission members were also inappropriate. General Scott was probably chosen in order to vacate the position of Chief of Staff and provide Wilson the opportunity to fill it with a more competent man. In doing
this, however, the President sent to Russia a raconteur who entertained his colleagues with anecdotes about the American West but who was totally incapable of understanding the Russian military situation. Admiral Glennon was the other representative of the military. Unfortunately, his major qualification seems to have been that he was inferior to Scott in rank. He was, however, equal in his inability to perceive the crisis confronting the Russian military.

Cyrus McCormick was no doubt selected because of his many contacts throughout Russia, the result of extensive investments during recent years by International Harvester Company. His personal friendship with the President also played a part. McCormick's business connections in Russia afforded him the seemingly distinct advantage of calling upon International Harvester personnel for advice. With regard to the worth of their opinions, however, the Mission would have been better served had this source of information not been available. In view of McCormick's quite sizable financial investment in Russia, the possibility of a conflict of interests presents itself. An example is provided in the list of items requested by the Russians in the report prepared jointly by McCormick and Bertron. Agricultural equipment, including harvesters, was near the top of the list of seventy-eight
items arranged in order of their priority, enumerated even before weapons and ammunition.

Charles Crane's reputation, apparently undeserved, of being well-informed about Russian institutions and therefore capable of understanding the Russian situation, led to his appointment. Crane, however, was so emotionally committed to the leadership of the First Provisional Government, especially Miliukov, that he was blind to the possibility of Russia's being effectively governed by any other group, and could foresee nothing but chaos if Miliukov's group lost control.

Duncan, the representative of American Labor, was also an unfortunate choice. The aging labor leader spent all of his time trying to persuade his Russian counterparts to withhold or delay labor demands, a singularly absurd approach. Although well in touch with the sentiments of American labor, he failed to recognize the growing radicalism of Russian labor, and, consequently, made no effective attempt to deal with it.

Charles Russell, emissary of American socialism, was also a poor choice. Not only was he out of step with the group he was chosen to represent, but had been ousted from the party by the time the Mission arrived in Russia. There is no evidence to indicate that banker Samuel Bertron or Y. M. C. A. President John Mott were any more or less
capable than were their colleagues. Thus did President Wilson round out a most distinguished though incompetent delegation.

It is woefully apparent that President Wilson and Secretary of State Lansing selected men who were unprepared and consequently unqualified for the task which lay ahead of them. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Mission presented a report which recognized some degree of political instability but concluded that the Provisional Government would be able to maintain political power and continue as an effective belligerent. Yet, three months later, the Bolsheviks seized control in Petrograd and drove from the capital that government in which Root and his colleagues had expressed almost complete confidence.

Years later, Robert Lansing insisted that the Bolshevik Revolution "did not take the Department of State by surprise." He explained, however:

In view of the favorable report of the Root Mission and the convictions expressed by the American Commissioners that the Kerensky Government was sufficiently stable to deal successfully with the situation . . . there was no practical course for this government to take other than with loans, experts, and publicity to assist Premier Kerensky in his endeavors to keep control and bring order out of disorder.

Thus, the optimistic report of the Root Mission failed to indicate to the State Department the true conditions in Russia and gave no warning of the Bolshevik takeover. Yet,

63 Lansing, War Memoirs, 338.
64 Ibid., 338-339.
even after the Mission's report proved invalid, Lansing continued to defend its members as "very able men" who were "as capable of judging the situation and giving advice as any this government could have sent out." This leads to only one conclusion. If the members of the Mission were incapable of making a valid judgment, and they obviously were, the responsibility for their selection, and the method by which they were selected, belong to President Wilson and Secretary of State Lansing. The failure of the Root Mission was also the failure of the Wilson Administration.

One serious problem which the Mission faced while in Russia was the lack of a sufficient number of interpreters. Although the Mission staff included a large number of clerks, none spoke Russian. This was the fault of the State Department and did not result from a shortage of suitable applicants for the positions. State Department files as well as the private papers of Mission members contain hundreds of letters of application from apparently qualified persons. Breckenridge Long of the State Department was in charge of arrangements for the group and handled appointments as well. Unfortunately, the staff was chosen because of political connections, not facility in Russian. It is impossible to state accurately

65"Lansing Diary," December 7, 1917.
how this lack of sufficient translators hampered the work of the Mission although several of its members complained bitterly about this problem. On some occasions, they felt that their speeches had been altered deliberately. More than once, Russell felt that an interpreter whom he had hired in Petrograd had, for political reasons, deliberately misquoted him. Another possible motive might have been that the Russians were reluctant to repeat unpleasant remarks to their American guests upon whom so much depended. That the interpreters were remiss in their duties can be seen in numerous reports from American journalists living in Petrograd.

Perhaps the most serious error made by the Mission was its tendency to limit conferences to representatives of the Provisional Government and to the conservative supporters of that government. During their first few days in Russia, the Mission came in contact with Russian and American army officers and businessmen, all of conservative hue. When they arrived in Petrograd, most of their contacts were still with the conservative elements. Because of his official position and his attitude as to what constituted correct procedure, Root restricted his discussions almost exclusively to officials of the Provisional Government and personnel of the American and Allied embassies. In addition to government officials, McCormick and
Bertron met with a large number of conservative bankers and businessmen who gave strong support to the Provisional Government. For the most part, Mott and Crane met with conservative church leaders, whereas Glennon and Scott conferred with military officers of the same political persuasion. Even Duncan, the representative of American Labor, had no contact with the radical factory committees. Charles Russell was the only Mission member who deliberately sought out and tried to understand the Petrograd Soviet. It is significant that Russell alone detected the very real power which was possessed by that revolutionary body. It is also evident that he comprehended the Provisional Government's weakness. One searches in vain, however, for any evidence that he came close to a true understanding of the "dual power" shared by the Provisional Government and the Soviet. Russell was clearly the only member of the Mission who made any attempt to understand the revolutionary bodies in Russia and came far closer than did any of his colleagues to an understanding of the situation. Unfortunately and inexcusably, Russell failed to emphasize any of this in his written report, and there is no evidence that his observations were reported to the State Department in any way.

It is difficult to understand how the group could have remained in the Russian capital for almost one month and yet have received such a distorted view of the realities
of the situation. Several factors, however, partially explain the situation. The Provisional Government obviously tried to shelter the group from actuality. The lengthy and useless official receptions, which led more than one member to conclude that they were wasting their time, were designed to give the illusion of stability and occupy the members' time. It is significant that American journalists who were living in Petrograd in the summer of 1917 wrote of the difficulty of obtaining enough food and emphasized that the food shortages could present serious problems for the Provisional Government. But the Mission, well-provisioned with food and drink, was evidently unaware that there was a shortage of bread in the Russian capital. The group should have obtained some insight about the situation from Ambassador Francis. Unfortunately, Francis was as unaware of what was going on as was the Root Mission. Their mutual ignorance tended to reinforce the misconceptions which all held. Only after the Bolshevik Revolution did Francis fully comprehend the situation.

Another error committed by all members of the Mission was their tendency to compare Russia with the United States. Duncan, when speaking before the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, attempted to explain how the American labor movement functioned. For example, he suggested that labor could obtain its ends by placing "union" labels in consumer
products, as American labor did. Thus, the Vice-President of the American Federation of Labor was trying to introduce selective buying as a means of strengthening labor at the same time the Bolshevik party was working through the factory committees to seize control of the manufacturing plants.

Probably the greatest error the Mission made in comparing Russia with the United States was their belief that the Russians would be as enthusiastic as the Americans were in pursuing the war. For example, the suggestion to tour several Russian cities was prompted by a recent and successful tour of American cities by representatives of the French and British governments. Having just entered the war, Americans responded enthusiastically to the Allied representatives. Members of the Root Mission expected the same response from the Russians. Apparently, Russell was once more the only one who realized that the Russian people were sick of the war. He was also alone in his realization that the public demonstrations on July 1 supported the Soviets far more enthusiastically than they did the Provisional Government. One can only surmise that Russell's failure to include such pertinent observations in his individual report resulted from a reluctance to contradict the Mission report.

Another factor which perhaps helps explain why the
Mission had such a distorted view of the Russian condition was the very timing of their visit. When the decision to send the Root Mission to Russia was made, the original members of the Provisional Government were in power. On the day the group left the United States, a new cabinet, the First Coalition, was formed. This government remained in power throughout their stay in Petrograd, a period of relative calm, and was replaced by the Second Coalition several days after the Mission left Petrograd. Strangely, this shift in power in no way led the group to question the stability of the Provisional Government but, on the contrary, had the opposite effect. Perhaps it was because they had been told by virtually every observer upon their arrival in Russia that the Cabinet changes, especially the elevation of Kerensky to Minister of War, would enhance the war effort. During the course of their visit, virtually every Mission member was impressed by Kerensky who, they felt, could save Russia. Consequently, as they traveled across Siberia en route to Vladivostok and learned of the creation of a new cabinet following the July Days — a cabinet, incidentally, in which Kerensky was the Prime Minister — they thought this a good sign. The members of the Root Mission interpreted Kerensky's subsequent action against the Bolshevik Party as evidence of his willingness to suppress the radical anti-war forces and felt that this
would bring about a politically stable situation.

Perhaps most difficult to understand is the Mission's optimistic report on the military situation. General Scott based his report almost entirely upon the July 1st offensive. Up to that time, his diary and letters make it obvious that Scott was extremely disappointed in what he had seen of the Russian military. After his brief visit to the Russian Front on the first day of the offensive, however, he altered his viewpoint drastically. After July 1, Scott's diary and letters reflect his optimism. Since this was the first time Scott had witnessed modern warfare, he can perhaps be pardoned for not realizing that he had seen a limited success which would be reversed in a few days. It is impossible, however, to even speculate as to why he insisted six weeks later in his report to the Secretary of War that the Russian army was in good condition. By then, it was apparent to all that the July offensive had been broken after only a few days and that the German armies had regained all the territory temporarily lost.

From the beginning, Mission members labored under the misconception that all that was necessary to strengthen the Provisional Government, and through it the Russian war effort, was an explanation to the Russian people of the necessity of pursuing the war. This solution was always
stressed in the dispatches from Petrograd and in the final report as well as in the diaries and letters of the members. Charles Russell perhaps placed more faith in this technique than did anyone else. This idea eventually evolved into a recommendation that the United States government finance an agency in Russia to publicize and promote a vigorous prosecution of the war. Without exception, all the members felt that if the Russian people were told why they should continue the war, all agitation for an early or separate peace, which they considered to be German inspired, would cease. The establishment of a "propaganda bureau" became an obsession with some of the Mission members. They were so sure that this must be done that they could not understand how anyone could even question it. Consequently, when Lansing responded to their first request for such a bureau with the vague reply that it was being carefully considered, the members were sorely disappointed. When the President turned the suggestion over to George Creel, it seemed to the disappointed members of the Mission that their most constructive suggestion had been cast aside.

One would think that in the many pages of the lengthy reports, in the hundreds of letters, and in the detailed diaries that somewhere, even if by accident, some member would have recorded a prediction that would prove to be true. Such is not the case. Of what value, then,
was the Mission? Very little, if any. The lengthy reports were outdated when they were finally presented and were immediately questioned by the Secretary of State. With the exception of obtaining limited credit for Russia, which the United States would have extended anyway as long as the Russian army was in the field, the Mission achieved nothing. There is no evidence that the Mission influenced American foreign policy in any way. The report of the Root Mission succeeded only in creating a false impression of the stability of the Provisional Government. Thus, when the Bolshevik Revolution overthrew the government, the State Department was in an even poorer position to deal with the realities of Russian politics. Because of the way the State Department was misguided in its attempt to establish an effective policy toward Russia, it would have been preferable had the Root Mission never made the journey.
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