

# Russian Chaos Imperils Our Ambassador

## Situation in Petrograd Grows Far Worse for Diplomats of the Entente

By F. CUNLIFFE-OWEN.

WITHOUT any wish to cause undue alarm concerning the safety of Ambassador Francis and of the other representatives and agents of the United States Government in Russia, it must be confessed that the conditions by which they are confronted are such as to give rise to uneasiness.

For the past four weeks German officers in full uniform have been swarming in the streets of Petrograd, elbowing civilians off the sidewalk, as is their wont when at home, and scoffing and even spitting at gray haired Russian Captains, Majors and Colonels, who are still in their uniforms, but, deprived of the insignia of their former rank, are condemned to the ignominy of public labor, that is to say to street sweeping, mud raking duty, by the Bolshevik leaders who now rule on the banks of the Neva. Whereas the German officers are treated with much consideration, even in the midst of all the lawlessness, ruffianism and well nigh indescribable anarchy which prevail in the Russian capital, the envoys of the Powers of the Entente are subjected to all kinds of contumely.

### Imprisoned Rumanian Minister.

Thus, toward the end of last month M. Diamandy the Minister Plenipotentiary of Rumania, and the members of his legation were arrested and imprisoned in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, being conducted with revolvers held against their backs to their cells. The Minister remained in close confinement for forty-eight hours and was only released, along with his secretaries and attaches, when all his colleagues, headed by the Ambassadors of France, of the United States, of Italy, Japan and even Spain—a neutral Power—called upon Trotzky-Braunstein and threatened to leave Russia in a body unless the members of the Rumanian mission were restored to liberty.

None of the representatives of the foreign Governments are really safe at Petrograd. At any moment they may be thrown into prison, like Minister Diamandy. Although Leber Braunstein, alias Trotzky, proudly styles himself Minister of Foreign Affairs, he has no conception of international law or of diplomatic usages and prerogatives. Indeed Herr Braunstein-Trotzky and his associates at Petrograd, in their failure to observe even the most elementary laws of chivalry, betray their German birth and origin.

### Envoys Slain by Germans.

Germany has always had an unenviable reputation for the gross abuse by her envoys of the hospitality of the countries to which they are accredited, flagrant cases of recent date being those of Count von Bernstorff here in America and of Count Luxburg in Argentina; while it can never be forgotten that the only instance of a massacre of foreign Ambassadors, in modern times, at any rate, occurred in Germany, at Rastatt, a town in Baden, in 1799, when the three plenipotentiaries of the French Republic and several members of their staff were cut to pieces by a party of hussars.

With German officers now openly established at Petrograd as their advisers and with Teuton precedents in the matter of the treatment of foreign envoys before their eyes, how can one expect Braunstein-Trotzky and his fellow Bolsheviks to observe the obligations of international law toward Ambassador Francis and the other diplomatic representatives of the Entente at Petrograd?

Moreover Ambassador Francis has had his life threatened by a group of Petrograd anarchists by way of vengeance for the imprisonment of Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman in the United States for conspiring against the draft law. During the first few months of the revolution printed notices bearing the embassy stamp and seal and stating that the holder was one of its citizens and under its protection was sufficient to secure foreigners in Petrograd against personal harm, robbery, confiscation and commanding. But this has long ceased to be



David R. Francis, United States Ambassador at Petrograd.

the case, and now subjects of the Entente Powers appear to be favorite objects of persecution and despoilment. Indeed, everything is being done by the Bolshevik leaders to show Entente officials and citizens that they have become obnoxious.

That the Bolsheviks are encouraged in this attitude by their Teuton friends and counsellors at Petrograd is self-evident. For the Germans, with their designs on Muscovite trade and commerce to the exclusion of those of the Entente, quite naturally promote, and even instigate, everything that can continue to create bad blood between Russia and the nations of the Entente. Therein, indeed, lies the chief source of peril to Ambassador Francis and to the other allied envoys.

France, Great Britain and the United States are to such an extent in the same boat with regard to Russia that it may be timely to explain just what the relations of the Governments in London and Paris toward the Bolshevik junta have been during the last two months and up to the present time. Speaking in the House of Commons the other day Arthur Balfour, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, emphasized the fact that Great Britain had declined to recognize the Bolshevik administration at Petrograd—if administration it can be called—as being a de jure or even a de facto Government of the Russian people. He added:

"We carry on necessary business in a purely unofficial manner through an agent acting under the direction of the Charge d'Affaires of our embassy at Petrograd. The Bolshevik authorities have appointed M. Litvinoff as their representative in London, and we are about to establish similar purely unofficial and indirect relations with him.

### Arrangement Irregular.

"M. Nabakoff, who was the Charge d'Affaires under the late republican Russian Government of Prince Lvoff and of Kerensky, will presumably remain in London until he is either confirmed or superseded in his post by a Government recognized by us as representing the Russian people. The present arrangement is obviously both irregular and transitory. Though it cannot be fitted into any usual diplomatic form of work, it is, in our opinion, the best that can be devised to meet the necessities of the moment."

Mr. Balfour concluded by declaring that the English Government did not regard M. Nabakoff, the Charge d'Affaires, as having been superseded.

The appointment of M. Litvinoff as Bolshevik Ambassador in London is akin to a joke. Until now he has been a sort of subordinate clerk and caretaker of the Russian war mission, and purchasing

agency offices in the Bank Buildings, Kingsway, and he has already shown his utter unfitness for any diplomatic office by giving out an interview in the London *Evening Standard*, in which he expressed the Bolshevik intention "to enlighten the people" of the nations of the Entente on "the wickedness of the imperialistic aims of their own governments."

To what extent these arrangements of indirect intercourse between the British Government and the Bolshevik Junta will be affected by the events of the past week at Brest-Litovsk and by the Bolshevik orders for the demobilization of the Russian army is a matter for conjecture. The announcement by Trotzky of the abandonment of all further hostilities against the Central Powers can only be regarded in the light of a peace with Germany, even if no actual treaty of peace has been signed at Brest-Litovsk.

### May Withdraw Soon.

This, taken in conjunction with the presence of German officers at Petrograd and the influential and even dominant role which they play there, is quite likely to be construed by the Entente as an indication that the Bolsheviks have definitely thrown in their lot with Germany against us. In that case the presence of the Allies' Ambassadors and envoys on the banks of the Neva becomes superfluous and their early withdrawal under the circumstances is not improbable.

It is not out of consideration for Russia but purely for her own subjects that Great Britain has undertaken to safeguard the interests of the \$80,000,000 worth of Treasury bills issued on behalf of the Czar's Government earlier in the war by the Bank of England, prior to the revolution of a year ago at Petrograd. The British Government, while declining any direct responsibility for these Treasury bills, which were made solely upon the credit of the Russian Imperial Government and of the various Muscovite banks concerned, considers that it has a certain amount of moral responsibility in the affair, through having approved the action of the Bank of England in issuing the bills.

The British Treasury has therefore arranged to take over the rights of the holders of these bills against the drawers and guarantors as collateral in exchange for twelve year 3 per cent. British Exchequer bonds at par. As the present value of these Exchequer bonds is about 82 per cent. the effect of the arrangement is that the British Treasury insures the holders of the Treasury bills against loss for a premium of about 18 per cent.

There are a large number of Russian Treasury bills now held in the United

## German Domination Displayed in Many Ways, but May React on Kaiser

States. It remains to be seen whether the Administration at Washington, not for the benefit of the Russian people, but solely for the protection of American citizens, will follow the example of the British Government in this connection. It is only fair to say that the moral responsibility resting upon the Government at Washington is not as great as that of the British Exchequer toward the holders of Bank of England Russian Treasury bonds in the United Kingdom.

### No Means to Exploit Wealth.

That the success of Germany in Petrograd, at Brest-Litovsk, with the Ukraine bourgeoisie, at Helsingfors and with the Lithuanians at Riga will prove of a permanent nature, no one who knows much about Russia will for one moment believe. Russia is possessed of incalculable mineral wealth, but it is not to any extent developed or exploited, and if it were there would be no ready means of conveying the product to market.

It is the same with the wonderful agricultural resources of the Ukraine in normal times of peace. The crops are there in superabundance. But the means of conveying them to market are few and far between.

Of course, even restricted access to the agricultural resources of the Ukraine and to the oil fields of Rumania, where the elaborate machinery has quite recently been restored to working order, will afford some immediate relief to the famine conditions prevailing in Germany and in Austria-Hungary, but not to the extent which people seem to imagine, while naturally the demobilization of the Bolshevik and Ukraine armies now enables the Germans and Austrian troops hitherto confronting them to be utilized on the western and on the Italian front. Moreover, the troops and people of the Central Powers are certain to be heartened by what the Kaiser has exploited as "a victorious peace with Russia."

### Makes Defeat of Kaiser Harder.

All this contributes to render our task of defeating Emperor William more difficult and the crisis confronting us during the next few months more acute. But it would require months and even years of peace and order and an immense amount of foreign capital for Germany to turn to real account the privileged position which she has momentarily won for herself in the greater portion of European Russia, and in the meanwhile there are many things that may happen to obstruct and even kill off her political and above all her economic designs upon the Land of Muscovy.

For, however much Trotzky and certain of his associates may be in the pay of the Kaiser, the bulk of the Bolsheviks openly avow their aim to convert the masses of the people in Germany and in the Dual Empire to their views, and have agreed to the demobilization decreed by Trotzky solely on the ground that they do not wish to fight men whom they regard as their brethren in persecution by imperialistic militarist governments and by tyrannic capitalists. There is every reason to believe that their ideas are permeating the people of Germany and of the Dual Empire, and are fomenting the revolutionary movement long latent there and now seething. It may boil over at any time, and in that event the Kaiser's boasted "victorious peace with Russia" may prove to him a veritable shirt of Nessus.

### Serving

SERVICE flags are steadily increasing in number. You can see them everywhere, in all parts of the town, flags with one star, two stars, three stars, up to big flags with stars numbering hundreds.

In a window of an office in Broadway appears something different. Against a beautiful new American flag arranged as a background stands a card upon which may be read this:

"The following men from this office are serving in the war."

Follow, then, the names of the men. They number twenty-seven.