

WONDERFUL ACHIEVEMENTS OF RUSS BOLSHIEVSKI

From dozens of sources has come the request that we publish something concerning the accomplishments of the soviet government of Russia during the short period that it has been in power.

We, therefore, in response to these requests, reprint the memorandum submitted to the secretary of state by L. A. Martens, the accredited representative of the soviet government in the United States.

He is here to purchase in the open market \$200,000,000 worth of supplies for Russia.

He is a chemist and a mining engineer, an authority on economics and a graduate of three European universities.

The facts presented tell a story of wonderful achievements made in the face of counter-revolution within and the attack by allied bayonets from the outside. The memorandum is a complete answer to the kept press and its misrepresentations and lies about Russia.

Following we print the complete text of the memorandum as presented to the state department:

The Russian socialist federal soviet republic was established on the 6th of November, 1917, by a spontaneous uprising of the toiling masses of Russia. Its government, the council of the people's commissars, is a government controlled by and responsible to all such members of the population of Russia as are willing to perform useful work, physical or mental. Those who, while not being unable to work, deliberately refuse to exercise their productive abilities, choosing to live on the fruits of the labor of other people, are eliminated from participation in the control of any government.

Under present conditions those who are willing to work for the common good, number at least 90 per cent of the adult population in the area controlled by the soviets. All such people have full political and civic rights.

More People Participate in Government Than Anywhere in World. The basis for citizenship in Russia being industrial and economic rather than political, and the social system being of such a nature that every person engaged in useful social labor is bound to participate in public affairs, the percentage of people directly participating in the management of society in soviet Russia is higher than has been the case anywhere in the world hitherto. The Russian soviet republic affords thereby the widest possible field for a real expression of a conscious popular will. While the soviet government is a government of the working class, the abolition of exploitation of labor creates a productive community in which all able inhabitants are bound

to become useful workers who have full political rights. My government thus becomes the expression of fully 100 per cent of the people. It should also be noted that political rights are granted in Russia to every individual engaged in useful work, though he is not a citizen of Russia, but only temporarily working there.

The Russian socialist federal soviet republic was rapidly acclaimed by the vast majority of the laboring people throughout the former empire of Russia. It has maintained itself in the face of manifold plots and opposition on the part of small groups of the former ruling classes who in many cases enlisted foreign help and who employed the most unscrupulous methods in their fight against the soviet institutions. Yet, nowhere in Russia could such elements of their own accord organize any noticeable resistance to the popular will, as expressed by the soviet government. Only in sparsely populated outlying districts and in such of those districts where our opponents had access to foreign military help, has it been possible for them to maintain any organized opposition and to wrest from the control of soviet Russia any territory. Today, after 16 months of existence, the Russian soviet republic finds itself more securely established than at any previous time.

Retake Vast Territory. During the current year the soviet government has been particularly successful in retaking vast territories wrested from its control during the preceding months. By February, 1919, the soviet troops on the northern front had retaken the city of Shenkursk and adjoining territory. On the eastern front they have lost Perm, but they have regained Berefa, Ufa, Sterlitamak, Bellbay, Orenburg and Ural'sk. The railroad connection with Central Asia is at present in the hands of the soviet government. On the southern front they have taken the railroad stations of Pavlovino, Alexikovo, Polovaya, Kalsk and Begutchar, which have assured them of a control over the railroads of that region, while on the southeastern front the Ukrainian soviet troops threaten the army of Krasnov from Ugansk in the rear. In the Ukraine the soviet troops have acquired Kharkov, Yekaterinoslav, Poltava, Kremenchug, Tchernikov and Obruch. In the Baltic provinces and in Lithuania the soviet power has been extended over a great part of the territory formerly occupied by Germans, with the large cities of Minsk, Vilna, Riga, Mitau, Dvinsk, Windau and others in the control of adherents of the soviet.

These last mentioned successes are largely due to the fact that after the evacuation by the German armies of the territories wrested from Russia

during the war and by the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which the soviet republic was forced to sign under duress, the workers in such territories everywhere are rising to support the ideals and the social organization represented by the soviet republic.

Workers Rally to Government. The resentment against the former ruling classes, who did not hesitate to invite foreign military help against their own people has evinced itself in an ever increasing popular support of the soviet government among such people as at first were either hostile or indifferent to the soviet rule. Men and women of literary or technical training and of intellectual accomplishments are now in great numbers rallying to the support of the soviet government and co-operate with it in all administrative branches. The peasantry of Russia, the great majority of which from the very outset was in support of the workers' revolution has become more consciously attached to our social system, realizing that in the support of the workers' republic lies the only guarantee for their remaining in control of the land which they have wrested from their former oppressors. The economic isolation of Russia which so far has prevented the soviet government from adequately supplying the peasants with implements that they so badly need, is of course, causing hardship among the peasantry, yet the peasants generally do not place the blame for this privation at the door of the soviet government, well realizing that it is due to the deliberate interference in the affairs of the Russian people by hostile groups and that a remedy for this privation is not a weakening but a strengthening of the soviet power. They fully realized—and their experience in such instances where counter-revolutionary forces temporarily succeeded in overthrowing soviet institutions clearly demonstrated the correctness of this realization—that an overthrow of the soviet rule, if possible at all, would lead to the establishment of a tyrannical, reactionary, bloody autocracy.

All Parties Oppose Intervention. The remarkable improvement in the internal situation of soviet Russia which appears from the negotiations which the members of the former constituent assembly have begun with the soviet government. Representatives of the former constituent assembly, at Chernov, Rakitnikov, Svatki, Volski, Burevov, Chernikov, Antonov, all of whom are also members of the central committee of the soviet revolutionary party, recently arrived in Moscow to participate in a conference with the soviet government with the view of giving support to our republic. This conference has led to an understanding whereby these well known social

revolutionists and former bitter opponents have ceased their opposition and declared themselves with great emphasis against the outside intervention in Russia.

An improvement of the soviet government's relations with the elements formerly hostile to it in Russian society is also indicated by the change of the attitude of the Mensheviks, whose conference has likewise protested against the outside intervention.

The army of the Russian socialist federal soviet republic has been successfully organized and numbers today over a million men. A system of universal military training has been inaugurated which steadily supplies the army with necessary supplies in view of creating a force numbering by the end of the current year, 3,000,000 men. The forces of the government are led partly by officers of the former Russian armies who have proved their allegiance to the soviet government and partly by officers developed from the rank and file by the military educational institutions established by our government. The commission of war has been successful in establishing and maintaining a strict discipline within the ranks of the army, a discipline not based on fear of punishment or on docile submission, but on the ardent conviction of the workers from whose ranks the army is recruited that it is their privilege as well as their duty to defend their social achievements against encroachments from any source. This same conviction of the necessity of the defense of our revolutionary achievements has made it possible for us, in spite of all economic obstacles, efficiently to organize the production of military supplies.

Inherited Disruption. The soviet government inherited a legacy of utter financial disruption created by four years of war and a year of revolution. This state of affairs, and also the necessity of coordinating the financial system of Russia with the new industrial and economic system represented by government, necessitated a complete reorganization of the financial institutions on the basis of common property rights. This reorganization, which aims at exchanging the money system for a system representing labor value is still in the state of formation. Regardless thereof, soviet relations with and obligations to other countries are concerned, is prepared to offer modes of financial transactions adapted to the financial system of other countries.

The period preceding the establishment of the soviet government also badly disrupted the machinery for producing and distributing. The soviet government inaugurated a system of public control and owner-

ship of industries. It has actually taken over many important branches of industry, and has established the control of the supreme council of national economy over all industries. Great handicaps have been faced because of the obstructionist methods of our opponents, lack of raw material and machinery, and because of the general confusion unavoidably coincident with the gigantic reorganization of the industrial life. In spite of these handicaps, various branches of industry have been re-established, even with an increase of productive efficiency. Many branches of industry, however, have not so far been able to recuperate, because of lack of raw material and lack of machinery. The needs of such industries offer a wide field for business transactions with Russia by other countries.

Build New Railroads. The state of railroad communications at the outset of the soviet regime was very unsatisfactory. The demands first of the demobilization of the old army and later of military operations against counter-revolutionary attacks taxed the capacity of our railroads and left little opportunity for reconstruction work in this field. The soviet government during the past year nevertheless has managed to build and to complete the building of about 2,000 versts of new railroads. It has also paid great attention to the construction of other means of communication, such as canals, roads, etc., and is at the present time planning work along these lines on a large scale, which will also offer great opportunities for foreign trade.

The people of Russia, kept for hundreds of years away from sources of popular education, have made it one of the main tasks of my government to reorganize the school system with the view of the greatest possible achievements in the field of popular education. In this respect extensive work has been carried out throughout Russia during the past year. Tens of thousands of new primary schools, vocational schools, workers' universities and lecture courses, especially courses offering agricultural instruction, have been established and maintained at great expense on the part of the soviet government and the field of the educational activities has been extended to include the making of the treasures of the arts and sciences as easily accessible to the people as possible.

All these efforts, incomplete as they still are, have nevertheless given the Russian people sufficient evidence of the earnestness of the desire and of the ability of the soviet government to fill the needs of the population and they have greatly contributed to the abatement of opposition. Inasmuch as opposition has ceased in the form of active resistance to the soviet government it has become possible to lighten such extraordinary measures as censorship, martial law, etc.

False Reports Circulated. Much prejudice has been created against the soviet government by the circulation of false reports about the nature of the institutions of and the measures undertaken by soviet Russia. One of the most frequent allegations has been that the rule of

the soviets is one of violence and murder. In this connection I want to call your attention to the following passages in the note sent to the president of the United States on the 24th of December, 1918, by Maxim Litvinoff, on behalf of the soviet government of Russia.

The chief aim of the soviets is to secure for the toiling majority of Russian people economic liberty without which political liberty is of no avail to them. For eight months the soviets endeavored to realize their aims by peaceful methods without resorting to violence, adhering to the abolition of capital punishment which condition had been demanded by their adversaries, the minority of the Russian people took to terrible acts against popular members of the government and invoked the help of foreign troops, that the toiling masses were driven to acts of exasperation and gave vent to their wrath and bitter feelings against their own will to utilize the country's resources, so necessary to the economic reconstruction of Russia, exhausted by four years of war, to the defense of the country, and also cut off the vital sources of foodstuffs and raw material, exposing the population to the most terrible privation bordering on starvation.

I wish to emphasize that the so-called red terror, which is a grossly exaggerated and misinterpreted abroad, was not the cause, but the direct outcome and result of allied intervention. The Russian workers and peasants fail to understand how foreign countries, which never dreamed of interfering with Russian affairs when czarist barbarism and militarism ruled supreme, and which even supported that regime, feel justified in intervening in Russia now when the working people themselves, after decades of strenuous struggling and countless sacrifices, succeeded in taking the power and destiny of their country into their own hands, aiming at nothing but their own happiness and international brotherhood, constituting no menace to other nations.

In another passage of the same note Mr. Litvinoff states as follows: "The best means for the termination of violence in Russia would be to reach a settlement which would include the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Russia and the cessation of direct or indirect assistance to such groups in Russia as still indulge in futile hopes of an armed revolt against the workers' government but who by themselves alone would not think of such a possibility if they could not reckon on assistance from abroad."

Intervention Halted Work or Reconstruction. The great work of social reconstruction inaugurated by the soviet government as the executors of the people's will has been hampered by the necessity of military defense against the opponents of our republic, and by the economic isolation of soviet Russia which has been one of the weapons of their attacks together with deliberate disruption of our means of communications with important food centers, as well as destruction of food stores and which has greatly increased the suffering

of our people. By tremendous efforts and by efficient organization of all economic means at its disposal, my government has been able to stave off the worst features of this situation. The fact that economic disruption together with starvation and lack even the bare necessities of life prevails so poignantly, and all the more in such parts of the former Russian empire as have been for some time in the hands of the opponents of our republic and which have had contact with the outside world, clearly testifies that the soviet rule is much more capable of insuring means of existence to the people than any pretenders to the power in Russia.

In view of all that is stated above I venture to say that the soviet government has been given all such proofs of stability, permanence, popular support and constructive ability as ever have been required from any government in the world as a basis for political intercourse. I am convinced that the people outside of Russia are becoming as convinced as the Russian people themselves of the fullness of efforts to overthrow the soviet government. Such efforts lead only to unnecessary bloodshed and if successful in any part of Russia, lead to temporary establishment of a bloody, monarchial autocracy, which cannot maintain itself and even the temporary existence of which will lead to bloodshed and misery.

Desire to Establish Commercial Relations. Fully realizing that the economic prosperity of the world at large, including soviet Russia, depends on uninterrupted interchange of products between various countries, the soviet government of Russia desires to establish commercial relations with other countries, and especially with the United States. The soviet government is prepared at once to buy from the United States vast amounts of finished products, on terms of payment fully satisfactory to the parties concerned. My government also desires to reach an agreement in respect to exports from Russia of raw materials needed by other countries and of which considerable surplus quantities exist in Russia. In order to re-establish the economic integrity of Russia and to insure uninterrupted commercial relations, the Russian workers and peasants, as Mr. Litvinoff stated in the above quoted note, "Are prepared to go any length of concessions as far as the real interests of other countries are concerned, of course with the understanding that no agreements entered into should impair the sovereignty of the Russian people, as expressed by the Russian socialist federal soviet republic."

On the part of the Russian socialist federal soviet republic there thus exists no obstacles to the establishment of proper relations with other countries, especially with the United States. The soviet government of Russia is willing to open its doors to citizens of other countries for peaceful pursuit of opportunity, and it invites any security and investigation of its conditions, which I feel sure will prove that peace and prosperity in Russia—and elsewhere, in as far as the prosperity of Russia affects other countries—may be attained.

(Continued on Page Eight.)

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