

ABLE TO UNDERSTAND SLAVS

Blunders in Diplomacy in Past Responsible for Russia's Downfall.

CHANCE OFFERED REJECTED

Soviet, All Important and Basis Upon Which Stable Government Might Have Been Built, Disregarded by Entente.

(The following letter from the correspondent forwarded for the New York World and the Tribune is an interesting view on the causes of Russia's defection from the Entente in the present crisis. Written before the collapse of the Bolshevik government, it was published in the latter part of 1917. The letter, unaccompanied by a return address, was sent to America by a returning traveler.)

BY ARNO DOSCH-FLEURONT.

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PETROGRAD, Jan. 4.—Of the allied governments, including our own, do not like what has happened in Russia since the successful Bolshevik October revolution. They are not, of course, they do not—they have only themselves to thank for it.

For the Bolshevik revolution would not have taken place, a separate armistice would not have been signed with Germany, with the possibility of a separate peace. If it had not been for a whole series of mistakes on the part of the allied governments in relation to Russia, I do not say these mistakes were not quickly rectified, but really good diplomacy would have avoided them.

Signs of certain trouble have been for months as plain as the moon in the sky. Ever since the Bolsheviks came to power in May 1 the chief questions on which the Russian situation was finally wrecked have been sticking up like sore thumbs. Millukoff had to go because he refused to make new treaties with the allies, but insisted on sticking to the old.

Kerensky Staves Off Peace.

Result: First—The Bolshevik finally printed all the secret treaties and correspondence they could find and made a great scandal of it.

Second—The Bolsheviks were accompanied by the fall of Minister of War Guchkoff. Guchkoff had to go because he insisted on trying to make the army go on fighting the old fight. The army has finished with that affair by signing a separate armistice.

Immediate peace and the end of secret diplomacy were the Russian slogans all summer. The only reason they have not long since resulted in a separate peace is the Beldity in the allied camp. There were two successive ministers which centered around the figure of Kerensky. They stayed off the inevitable as long as they could with the support of the people dwindling at every change.

Ministries and Masses Apart.

At the end they got so far out of touch with the masses of the Russian population that the only Russian soldier who had with him when he fled from the Winter palace was in the hands of the women's battalion and the boys of the military school. For the moment the Soviet (the council of soldiers and workmen's delegates) withdrew its support and the government fell to pieces. The Soviet had everything so firmly in its own hands in Petrograd that Kerensky could hardly get enough gasoline for the automobile in which he fled.

It was the obvious commonplace of the Russian situation that the government could stand only by the support of the masses behind it. The barometer was the Soviet.

Russia's allies could not afford to take their eyes off it for a moment. But, instead, they kept their eyes on the government. Otherwise they would have done some rapid footwork, particularly in the last week before the Bolsheviks drove Kerensky out of town.

Conference Was Necessary.

To have misjudged the situation earlier in the summer was, perhaps, natural enough. None of us could tell anything but how to keep the Russian army in some kind of fighting form, and those Russians who had the same interest at heart we regarded as our support. But that was no excuse for overlooking the fact that they were a small part of the population, and when they ceased to be an influential part allied diplomacy had no time to lose. Apparently it had no idea what it ought to be doing or it would not have made so many mistakes.

If the allies had had any conception of what the people were thinking in Russia they would have done one thing at all cost. They would have called the conference of the aims of the war. And, if by not doing it, they handed the Bolsheviks ammunition to use against Kerensky, thereby causing his downfall, they have, as I say, only themselves to thank.

The calling of that conference was absolutely necessary. It was obviously not agreeable to call it, but it had to be done. The fact the allied governments did not call it showed either they were badly informed or stubborn, either of which is inexcusable in the face of a fact.

It probably will be a surprise for the rest of the world to learn that the Bolshevik revolution got under way when Bonar Law got up in the House of Commons, in October, and said he did not know anything about a conference to be held on the aims of the war. He was answering a question of some radical member of the House, and as his remarks were printed here he replied that there was soon to be a general allied conference at Paris on the means for carrying on the war to a successful conclusion, but he was aware that this conference was to take up the aims of the war.

To begin with, Bonar Law was apparently very badly informed on Russian public opinion or he would never have made such a statement in public. He could not have told the Russians more plainly to stop talking about secret treaties and get back to the trenches, and that was about all the Russians needed to explode. They exploded, too, and one of the most curious things about it is that Mr. Bonar Law probably does not realize to this day that he had anything to do with the Bolshevik revolution.

Granted that the Russians chose an unfortunate time for talking about secret treaties—doubt the good faith of it, if you like—there was one unexcusable fact, the Russians had been talking about hardly anything else for six months or more. So it was perfectly apparent that the matter had to be taken up in one way or another.

Soviet Losses Patience.

In fact, the Paris conference was originally agreed upon for August, and whatever mental reservations there may have been about it in the minds of other people, in the minds of the leaders of the Soviet that conference was going to spend a good share of its time on the question of the aims of the war. But that conference was being put off, and put off, until the

Soviet had pretty well lost patience. And then, at that unhappy moment, Mr. Bonar Law made his few remarks. To get this clear let us consider the whole question of secret treaties as regarded in Russia since the revolution. For that was the mainspring of the Bolshevik revolution and was so important to its success that Trotsky had to deliver and print those treaties immediately following the revolution or the strength of the new government would have been much lessened.

For some time, however, wondered what would have happened if Trotsky had had to search through the thousands of papers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to find them. Fortunately for him, he did not have to search.

Neratoff Plays Strange Part.

Mr. Neratoff, the bureaucratic head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, came and showed him where they were. Mr. Neratoff, by the way, was a hold-over from the empire. Why did he help Trotsky find them? Certainly had no revolutionary reasons for wanting to see them printed.

Those who are making grimaces over the publishing of these documents might do well to give a little thought to the part in their publication played by Neratoff.

It is aside from the main point that the important consideration is that the revolution was only a month old when the Soviet spoke up in demand for "democracy." It came forth with its programme of "peace without annexations or contributions and the right of nations to determine their own government and allegiance for themselves."

Ever since that has been one of the two chief points in revolutionary programmes. The other is "land to the tiller." The land question was the older, but the peace programme has been the instrument with which they upset governments. Within a few days of its announcement, as we saw, Millukoff replied he was going to stand by the treaties as written, they ran him out.

All during the summer it provided the material out of which was built up the sentiment against the "imperialistic allies." And when the Soviet came into its full growth in the reaction following the Korniloff affair, you hardly heard anything else in all Russia.

Any time during this six months' period all talk about the "imperialistic allies" could have been ended by simply calling off all those old treaties. It would not even have been necessary to print them, though that, too, might as well have been done, as the actual publication made the allies appear much less imperialistic than the vague hints that went before. In fact, the publication was something of a let-down, as the masses had an idea England and Austria would.

New Treaties Were Possible.

All this misunderstanding could have been avoided if the allied governments had been able to orient themselves fast enough to the Russian situation. The actuating motive of most of them, the acquisition of Constantinople by Russia, was obviously distasteful to Russia itself. They could simply have done away with, or published to satisfy curiosity and new treaties with revolutionary Russia could have been signed.

If this had been done I do not think Russia would at this moment be considering the terms of a separate peace with Germany.

We all have been brought to this sorry pass because we did not even try to understand the workings of the Russian mind. There was a grand opportunity in diplomacy to handle, and there did not appear to be any one to handle it. For this we are now paying, and if in telling of our better judgment we believe it because it is the most important angle for us. What interests us chiefly at this moment is that the Bolsheviks have increased the war difficulties for us.

Russian Army Misjudged.

The fundamental mistake about the Russian revolution, the mistake which all citizens of allied countries in Russia must understand among the number, consisted in making, was that the Russian army could be induced to fight. We believed it in spite of our better judgment. We believed it because it was desperately important for us that Russia should fight. But we ought to have known better.

We were in the position of the man who bets on the home team when he knows it can only win on a fluke.

There was some excuse for thinking so, it is true. Plenty of Russians persisted in thinking so, too. Kerensky's efforts to put fire into the soldiers' tired hearts was an extraordinary performance.

Attack a Forensic Feast.

The attack he induced them to make in Galicia was a forensic feat, and the initial success gained before the spirit went out of the thing is hardly less extraordinary. Looking back now on my memories of that southwest army and the way it rallied to a fight for which it had no stomach, I cannot now feel that the debacle was anything but the natural consequence of an artificially stimulated assault.

Kerensky was a good friend to the allies—too good. So were the other men who supported him. Tereshenko, who was in the closest touch with the allies, deceived them at the same time he deceived himself.

Tereshenko evidently did not know his own countrymen, and is lying on his cot now in the fortress of Peter and Paul trying to make out what happened. He cannot understand what he did to be imprisoned, and probably never will, for he committed the fatal mistake of misunderstanding his own people. For us he was the worst of good friends. He sang the lullabies

when he should have been wide awake and doing.

But I hold that for Kerensky, Tereshenko and other Russians to make the mistake was more excusable than for us to make it. They were in the internal fight, to which we were only anxious onlookers. When we did not wake up and get very busy a few days later at the downfall of the conservative leaders—Tchaidze, Tsereteli, etc., in the central committee of the all-Russian Soviet, we simply showed we did not know what was going on.

There was just one thing to do once the Bolsheviks with their immediate peace programme captured the Petrograd Soviet in September. Call an immediate conference on the aims of the war without delay. It was not only not done but the situation was much aggravated by the discussions in that wobbly institution, the council of the republic, on whether Skobeleff, the representative of the soviet should be allowed to go to Paris at all.

Tereshenko made it worse by making a stereotyped pro-ally speech—not that anybody objected to his pro-ally sentiments, but by his speech he showed he was still following the policy of Millukoff and intended to stick to all treaties as written. The Bonar Law doused all hope of reconstructing treaties as demanded by the soviet and that touched off the whole thing.

Peace Offer Forecast.

Looking back on my cable files I see that on October 30, three weeks before the revolution, I sent a cable to America indicating that there would be a revolution and an immediate offer of peace to Germany. A week later I sent the same information more definitely stated in an interview with Trotsky. In fact, he carried out later everything he told me in that interview.

Before that interview was put on the cable, I learned later from the censor, it was shown to Tereshenko, who decided to let it go. I do not know why he passed a cable foretelling his own downfall, perhaps out of a sense of fairness, perhaps because he had helped to stave off the Bolshevik revolution so long he was tired of it, and was willing to have a showdown. Undoubtedly he thought the provisional government would win, though he had no reason for thinking so.

The whole story of Tereshenko's delusion—and the delusion of the allies in comparison between the unsuccessful Bolshevik revolution of July and the later successful Bolshevik revolution. The July revolution, which had the same purposes and same leaders as the later revolution, failed because the soviet was against it. In those days the soviet was in the hands of the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks bolted once from the all-Russian soviet held shortly before in June, but they did not have the support of the masses at that time and had to go back. The masses were still following more moderate leaders and were giving them a substantial majority in the soviet. So when the uprising of July commenced they squelched it.

Leninists Power Waxed.

The important point is that it was the soviet which put down the Bolshevik revolution of July. It passed resolutions supporting the provisional government and ordered troops to come here from the front.

But during the summer and early fall the demand for immediate peace, the publishing of treaties, and a radical Socialist platform became so strong that the Bolsheviks grew steadily in power until at the end of September it gained a majority in the Petrograd soviet and proceeded at once to make sweeping changes.

It brought Lenin out of hiding, where he had been all summer, and elected him president. Any one who knew anything at all about the Russian revolution knew what that meant.

The comparison was too striking to be overlooked. The Bolsheviks had the masses with them this time and they were going the limit.

So far as the United States is concerned, I find that many Americans in Petrograd lay the blame for our lack of understanding on the Root mission. It

was here at the time of the first all-Russian soviet and was still in Russia at the time of the July revolution, so there was no excuse for it not understanding what was going on.

I might say, however, it did not know, or would not know what was going on. My conference with the members of the mission at the time convinced me they had not grasped that the real government of Russia was the soviet. They pook-pooked the idea and evidently regarded me as a radical person who did not understand the finer points of politics.

Charles Edward Russell, the only member of the political side of the mission who seemed to understand the mass movement of the Russian population, I remember, was regarded in the mission as a well-meaning crank. Mr. Root himself, despite his long political career, misjudged the political forces completely and was under the delusion that the moderate Socialist leaders and the cadets could hold the balance of politics.

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Reno, Wash., Red Cross Auxiliary Entertainment Is Success.

KALAMA, Wash., March 2.—(Special.)—The Red Cross Auxiliary of the Klamath Red Cross Chapter is giving a very good account of itself, and quite in contrast to the number of its members, which is not much more than a dozen.

Recently they gave a basket social in the district schoolhouse at Reno, and in spite of the stormy weather the entire country-side gathered from far and near, every woman laden with a basket full of good things to eat such as seem only to flourish in country surroundings. After a programme by the school children, under the management of Miss Agnes Schauble, the teacher, the baskets were auctioned off to the men present, and the very tidy sum of \$42 was realized for the benefit of the Red Cross.

GIRL WOULD DO HER BIT

Mildred Bates, of Roseburg, Would Drive Army Ambulance.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 2.—Miss Mildred Bates, of Roseburg, Or., wants to drive an ambulance at the front. She wants to join the Army. She wants to fight. She wants to do most anything that will help win the war.

"Will you please send me information concerning lady ambulance drivers?" she wrote to Lieutenant-Colonel John H. Gardner, officer in command of the San Francisco recruiting district.

"Do you take them for training in San Francisco?" If so, will you please send me a questionnaire? I am nothing but a girl, but I have two brothers

OPPOSITION NOT GENERAL

Circular Letter Opposing Location of Highway Is Deplorable.

HOOD RIVER, Or., March 2.—(Special.)—Expression of regret is general among Hood River people as a result of the recent circular letter issued by J. H. Koberg, local truck gardener, who disapproves the action of the State Highway Commission in locating the Columbia River Highway between here and Mosier over what is known as the middle route. It is said that non-residents are likely to get the impression that Hood River County is opposing the commission's selection.

Mr. Koberg's circular letter is attributed to selfish motives.

Walls Walla Boys May Train

WHITMAN COLLEGE, Walla Walla, Wash., March 2.—(Special.)—The Walla Walla Commercial Club has requested the college authorities' permission for a certain number of young men of military age to take the military training afforded in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps of the college. The board of trustees of the club took this action

Aberdeen Elks Buy Thrift Stamps

ABERDEEN, Wash., March 2.—(Special.)—Members of the Aberdeen Lodge of Elks purchased \$4767 worth of thrift stamps in February and \$3633 in Jan-

fighting for Uncle Sam and I am no better than they.

Stenography and nursing don't appeal to me. I want to fight."

after the advisability of such a course

had been pointed out by the military committee. It is believed that men who are on the draft list will find the work most valuable inasmuch as the training is thorough and would allow them more rapid promotion when once they entered the National service.

Many women are employed about the

airship factories of France. They are hoisted in the boatwain's chairs and work on the big fabric envelopes.

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Allen Austrian Found Guilty

CATHLAMET, Wash., March 2.—(Special.)—Antone Picnic, an Austrian, was tried before Justice Joseph Girard in the Justice Court this week and found guilty of expressing sentiments against the United States.

He has been a resident of this country

for 23 years and filed a declaration of intention 18 years ago that he might fish on the Columbia. Picnic will be turned over to the Federal authorities.

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