

## CHAPTER ONE

Either to understand or appreciate the tragic blunder of Allied intervention in Red Russia and Dark Siberia or the subsequent war waged by them against the Bolshevik government from 1918 to 1920, it is imperatively necessary to know and appreciate the history of Russia and the condition of its people from the abdication of Czar Nicholas to the treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

The Russian Army was first in the field, first to mobilize its mighty forces against Germany and the Central Powers. The Russian Army, despite betrayal, graft, and incompetency, performed marvels of valor. Four times her fighting hosts invaded Germany and Austria. Russia was the only Allied force that ever placed an armed heel on German territory until the war was over and an unopposed Army of Occupation crossed the undefended Rhine. Russia in the first year of the war saved France and England. The gray host of Germany poured through and over prostrate Belgium. The English and French Armies reeled back and back before the irresistible German attack. The French Army retreated south of Paris. The English Army, the remnant of the first 100,000, was its companion in rout and defeat.

Paris was within the grasp of Germany, but the destruction of the French Army was the main objective of the German Army. Once that Army was destroyed, Paris fell into

the hands of Germany and the war was over.

Germany's great aggressive had reached its culminating height. It looked as if the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 was to be repeated. The gloom of defeat and despair enshrouded London and Paris.

Then came the Russian Bear to save Paris and the world. Striking with mighty power, it defeated the Austrian Army at Lemberg, and driving back the holding German forces in North Prussia, stormed at the gates of Koenigsberg. The Orenburg-Don, and Ussuri Cossacks rode through Prussian villages with dripping sabers and lances red to the hand grips.

The War Lord of Germany, the Imperial William, peremptorily ordered two Army Corps and a Cavalry Division from Von Kluck's right wing to Northern Prussia to drive back the Russian Army that decimated his people.

It was the War Lord's supreme blunder!

Von Kluck's right wing lay almost against Paris. Von Kluck, knowing the idiocy of this order, twice refused to obey. The third time it was repeated, he most unwillingly complied.

Joffre closed the breach at the Marne and out of Paris came with three French Divisions and the Paris mob to fall on Von Kluck's weakened flank. Von Kluck's Army was thrown into confusion, the entire German offensive was brought to a standstill and the French Army, rallying from its retreat, took new hope and drove the German Army back to Flanders Field.

Russia held fifteen hundred miles of frontier against

the combined attacks of Austria and Germany. From the frozen Baltic and North Sea through the wild Carpathians and on to the Black Sea her battle lines faced Germany and Austria. On the Sea of Azov in Caucasia and the Caspian her armies fronted the Power of Turkey as Russia faced her ancient enemy, the Turk and the Mohammedan world.

She was to gain many victories in the Allied Cause; but at last to know overwhelming defeat and disaster--her men to die that the dead might arm the living; unnamed thousands to be torn by German Artillery as they waited for arms that never came and ammunition that never arrived. The Mazurin Lakes, Tannenberg, Lodz, Brest-Litovsk were tragedies so overwhelming as to have broken the heart of a weaker people.

Hindenburg, a Giant of War, with mighty hammer strokes, smashing and slaying a half-fed, half-equipped Russian Army. Russia lost six million men, killed and wounded, in the World War: more men than England and France raised through the conflict. Surely Russia paid in blood and tears, in death and horror, a supreme price that she might protect a threatened Serbia, a violated Belgium.

Russian graft, treason in high places, the incompetency of Russian officialdom, coupled with a degenerate nobility and a corrupt court, destroyed a Russian Army that three months before the outbreak of War the Chief of the French General Staff had pronounced "the strongest Army in the World."

"The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind

exceedingly fine."

For three hundred years, the Romanoff dynasty (heaven appointed, anointed and raised up) had lashed the backs of the people. Kept them in appalling ignorance; exiled them by the thousands to Dark Siberia for daring to think; brutalized them by serfdom, and taught them by every known act of contempt and scorn that they were lower than beasts of burden, unclean and swinish animals.

There was a shortage of wood and wheat--fuel and food--in Petrograd. These were the strands that broke the Imperial Romanoffs.

Armed soldiers and sailors paraded through the city streets crying treason and treachery, demanding bread to still their hunger and fuel to warm their freezing bodies. The city rubble of war-filled Petrograd poured into the streets. Every discontented, disloyal, insurgent element took up the morale-destroying cry: **Treason--Treachery!**

The Governor of the city called on the Cossacks to put down the uprising and to spare neither whip nor saber. The people demanded bread: they should be given the nagaika. The flame of revolution should be quenched in blood.

For once the Cossacks refused to obey. Instead, they fraternized with the soldiers and sailors.

The mob was master of Petrograd.

The cry went up from the mob: "The people shall rule!

Down with the Czar!!"

Socialists, Nihilists and Communists were joined by other groups of political agitators. Hastily a committee was formed to wait upon the Czar and present the demands of his mob-controlled capitol.

Czar Nicholas and the Royal family, on the Imperial train, were at a wayside station within sight of Petrograd. The Czar had been fully informed of the situation in the city. Telegraph and radio carried to him a perfect picture of soldiers, sailors and Cossacks in revolt.

He was almost deserted, save for his family. Most of his guard had abandoned him.

He received the committee, listening quietly as the conditions within the city and the demands of the mob were made plain to him. Docily, wearily, and without protest, as one who lays down an insupportable burden, he abdicated as Czar of all the Russias to become but plain Gaspardin Romanoff.

March 5th, 1917, saw the end of the Romanoff Dynasty that had ruled Russia for three hundred years.

The Czar abdicated on his own behalf and on that of his son, thus making his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, his successor. The Grand Duke immediately abdicated his power in favor of the Provisional government and one of the oldest reigning families in Europe was overthrown practically without bloodshed.

Not a sword was drawn in their behalf--not a breast was bared to save.

Where were the Grand Dukes, Dukes, Counts, Barons and Generals? Where was his Imperial Guard? Where was the glittering and medal-embazoned Court and Courtiers? Where the hosts of sycophants and parasites who had fattened on his bounty and grown rich and insolent through his favor?

Charles the First had his Cavaliers who laughed in the face of death as they rode against the "Iron Squadron" of Cromwell. Charles Stewart went to death in the gray dawn at Whitehall. The black-robed executioner carried out the will of a victorious Cromwell. The King was dead; but half the English nobility had died fighting in his defense.

The Swiss Guard and hundreds of French Nobles died on the grand stairway of Versailles before the Paris mob could come to tumbling Louis XVI.

Not so the Russian nobility. True to history and tradition, despite high sounding phrases of loyalty and empty boasting of honor unto death, they left their Czar to his fate and their order to destruction, while they went into hiding or scattered in flight. True to form and history, they waited for someone, other than themselves, to do something, hoping for some easy wonder that would restore them to place and power.

More than a dozen Divisions and Army Corps were within two days marching time of Petrograd. Indecision, the curse of the Slav, was upon them. They talked, debated and argued, but failed to reach an iron decision. Failing

to decide they could not act. The Revolution was an accomplished fact. The Czar was a prisoner in the Tsarkoie Selo Palace.

Prince Lvov, an aristocrat by birth, but a liberal in politics and President of the United Zemstvos, or Local Representative Assemblies, was chosen to head the Provisional Government. Associated with him was Milyukov, Chingarvev, Tevechtchevko, Nekrassov, and Guchkov as minister of war.

Weak in the beginning, this government grew weaker by its every action. Hardly were its birth pangs over before it removed from command as Generalissimo of the Armies the Grand Duke Nicholas, Russia's greatest general. Nicholas was loved and admired by officers and men alike. He was the one and only leader who could have restored order and discipline through the fast disintegrating Russian Army. General Aleksyev, whom the Provisional Government named as his successor, appealed to neither officers nor men.

Kerenski relieved Guchkov as Minister of War and later became Premier. Kerenski was but little less than a voice, a combination victrola and loud speaker, broadcasting platitudes and absurdities. His famous manifesto or Prikaz addressed to the Army was a death warrant to military discipline, or military effectiveness.

This Manifesto abolished:

1. The penalty of death for disobedience of essential military discipline.

2. Soldierly courtesy and the salute. Officers were to be called tavarishi (comrades) and all

social distinctions between officers and soldiers were abolished.

This manifesto provided for a Committee of soldiers to administer discipline and to discuss and pass on the conduct of all military affairs.

"This was democracy run riot, individual liberty gone stark mad." The home team could appeal at will from the umpire to the bleachers, the umpire was mobbed while the bleachers howled. All discipline in the Army vanished. It became but a mob demanding one day to be led against the German Army, the next day refusing to support or cooperate with divisions on their right or left.

Within a few weeks after Kerenski issued his famous prikaz, two million soldiers deserted the Russian Armies. These men, lost to discipline and honor, wandered through village and town spreading disorder and insurrection throughout the Russian Empire.

Still there was fighting power left in the Russian Army. In July this Army, "broken to every mischance," took the offensive and won the astounding victories of Kovel and Ierberg. In fact, practically the only semblance of order and direction lay with the Army. The Provisional Government, the remnants of the Zemstvos, the Duma and the Provisional Assembly were but thunderous debating societies. The populace went on a speaking oratorical debauch. Meetings were the order of the day. Every public building resounded to



the fervid oratory as the speakers "saved the country," "the Revolution," "the people, the masses and Holy Russia."

The Tauride Palace, the Town Hall, every barrack, theatre and cinema was turned into an open forum for endless debate. Those who had been forced to be silent for centuries preempted the corners, the crossroads and every available balcony as they strove with might and main to make up vocally for lost time. Petrograd was drunk with oratory and delirious with free speech.

The struggle between the Soviet and the Provisional Government went on. The Soviet of sailors, soldiers and workers was openly disputing for power with the Government. The Baltic fleet murdered its officers.

Kornilov, Generalissimo of the Army, revolted, denouncing Kerenski, then Premier, for "infamous treason." Kerenski proclaimed Kornilov "a rebel and a traitor."

Krymov, one of Kornilov's Generals, with an Army Corps, marched from Dno on Petrograd. The Provisional Government was all but helpless.

Krymov was Slav to his finger-tips; he delayed, he procrastinated and he sought much advice. When victory was within his grasp he agreed to visit Kerenski in the capitol and negotiate a settlement of affairs. A heated and stormy interview ensued. Krymov left Kerenski and going to the residence of a friend committed suicide.

Kornilov was convicted of rebellion and imprisoned. Kerenski, the lawyer and loud-speaking Premier,

became Generalissimo of the Army. Officers of all ranks resigned or deserted their commands. The Red Guards stirred mightily within the city, the power behind a toppling government they were determined to overthrow.

On November 7th, 1917, the Bolsheviks came into the open and stormed at the Provisional Government. Kerenski, without the slightest show of opposition, betrayed in his turn by all around him, "fled, disguised as a sailor, deserting his colleagues, the Army and Russia."

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Bolshevik comes from the Russian word "bolshinstvo," or the majority. The word came into common use in Russia in 1903, when Nicolai Lenine split the Social Democratic party in two and assumed leadership of the majority.

That the Bolsheviks represented the majority or any considerable party of the majority of the Russian people is now well known. It is a fact, however, that at that time (1903), they represented but a small fraction of the great mass of the Russian population. They did, however, represent the only strong, determined group in this chaotic situation, who had a definite plan of action. Coupled with this, they had courage and leadership that feared not.

Kerenski and Bronstein, alias Lenine and Trotsky, had waited and prayed for years for a situation of this character to arise in Russia. It was the fulfillment of their dreams and the answer to their prayers. They were fully prepared to take over the reins of a government they had so skillfully undermined.

Merciless surgeons in their theories of government, neither the sight of blood, the writhing of the patient, nor desmemberment of limb or joint disturbed them. If a cancer was to be extracted, extract it at once. Malformations, carbuncles and parasites were to be removed from the body politic as speedily as possible. The knife was handy and cheap; anesthetics were scarce and costly. The operation was all that mattered.

The City of Petrograd received orders instead of oratory; directions instead of conversation. Obedience was demanded, exacted and forced upon the public. Argument ceased, order displaced disorder. The death penalty was restored in the Army--the salute was made compulsory; iron discipline and instant obedience were the order of the day.

The disintegration of the Army ceased. The Petrograd mob and the Army, accustomed through the centuries to obedience, fell into line, knowing they had found their masters.

The nobility and high Army officers who had patronized the weak and vacillating Kerenski government, or openly flouted its commands, were faced with a situation which demanded their instant obedience or armed resistance.

General Kornilov escaped from the Bykhov prison and fleeing to the Don River raised the famous Don Cossacks in revolt. Thousands of Imperial officers flocked to his

standard. Kornilov and his Cossacks marched from the Don to the Kuban where a Red Army destroyed his forces and Kornilov went to his death. The first insurrection the Reds put down, but this could not stop the Imperialists.

The Crimea, the Ukraine, Caucasia and the Don flamed with insurrection. Denikin, Wrangel, Pokrovski, Romanovsky, Alekayev, Kasanovitch, Krasnov and a host of Imperial Generals were at the head of these forces. The nobles and the Imperial Officers of the Czar's Army had been forced to make a decision: They chose Rebellion.

The Bolshevik Government, fully prepared, accepted the challenge.

The French Revolution had its Reign of Terror, a maddened mob burning the Bastille; trunbrills filled with aristocrats jolting over the cobbled streets of Paris, wending their way to the guillotine. Under its red and sharpened edge fell the heads of France's ancient nobility. The bloody basket beneath the guillotine was filled to overflowing, and into that basket fell the Bourbon head of Louis XVI and the fair Hapsburg head of Marie Antoinette.

History was to repeat itself.

The Red Terror smote Russia. From Petrograd to the Volga grimly, ruthlessly and efficiently the Bolsheviki sent their enemies to death. The walls of every cathedral and public building were red with the blood of Nobles, Imperialists and Russian high officialdom. Bayonet, saber and the firing squad took the place of the guillotine.

For three centuries Russian nobility had sown the wind; they reaped a whirlwind. Thousands paid with their lives the insolence of the past. Other thousands, fleeing by night and hiding by day, joined the Imperial armies in the Ukraine or Caucasia. Thousands escaped via the Black Sea to Constantinople and the near East, while other thousands, escaping through the Baltic ports, crowded the chancellories of the World.

The grim shadow of Civil War fell over Russia from Finland to the Black Sea, while Germany's iron hosts were tearing her armies to pieces on fifteen hundred miles of battle front. Russia's march to crucifixion was beginning.

Hated at home by the ever-growing power of the Imperialists, the Soviet Government was even more deeply hated by Germany. A weak helpless Kerenski was one thing; a Bolsheviki or Soviet Government was another.

Why England and France have repeatedly affirmed that there was an alliance between Germany and Soviet Russia to destroy western civilization is beyond comprehension, as it certainly is beyond all known and proven facts. Imperial Berlin hated Soviet Moscow far more than it hated its arch enemy, London.

Every military leader and statesman in Germany beheld with grave and serious alarm the Bolshevik Revolution of November, 1917. Such a statesman as the German Chancellor,

Von Bethmann, was obsessed with fear as he contemplated its effect upon the Socialists of Germany. Ludendorff bewailed the fact that Germany had not destroyed it in the very beginning, pointing out its corroding influence on the German Army and how entire Divisions were rendered useless due to insidious Soviet propaganda.

"This propaganda," he says, "struck deeper than the destruction of army morale. It was like mistletoe smothering an oak or rats gnawing a cable; it ate into the heart of the German people; undermined their determination for ultimate victory, and had more to do, than military defeat, with the downfall of the German Government."

In January, 1918, the German Army struck at the hated and feared Soviet Government. The Soviet Army, deprived of thousands of its ablest officers who were seeking the same objective as the German Army, the overthrow of the Soviet Government, could offer but a feeble resistance. The Soviet Army was driven back on every front. The rout of the entire army was complete and Soviet Russia lay at the mercy of Imperial Germany.

Late in January, Germany proposed to Soviet Russia the terrible treaty of Brest-Litovsk; a treaty so harsh, so limitative, that it stunned the Russian people.

The Iron Heel of Germany ground them into the dust while the Monarchists, taking advantage of an Army already stricken to death by Germany, hurled their forces into the

saturnalia of blood and horror. Baron Mannerheim, from Finland, and Youdenitch, from Riga, added to the slaughter on the Eastern seaboard; while Denikia and Baron Wrangel carried fire and sword from the Sea of Azov to Kiev, in the Ukraine.

Russia was in extremis. In the agony of almost supreme dissolution she cried aloud to her allies: "Save me, or I perish." "Hast thou forgotten--hast thou forgotten." "Our thousands starve; is there no bread for remembrance, no arms for defense?"

Russia cried in vain; she was forsaken because of defeat.

Cold English diplomats, accustomed from earliest time, to using Russia when England was threatened and then disowning her aid, abandoned her again. These far-seeing statesmen were thankful they would never be forced to carry out their secret treaties and understandings with Russia. They dreamed of dismembering the Russian Empire rather than saving it. A defeated and dismembered Russian Empire could never claim Constantinople; the Mediterranean sea-lanes should remain English. The haunting fear of a Russian invasion of India would pass when Russia was destroyed. The piteous cry of perishing Russia touched neither the heart nor the mind of England.

The France that Russia had saved was equally cold and deaf to the pleading cries of their former savior. Her statesmen were dreaming dreams and seeing visions.

Russian Monarchists, Nobles and Courtiers crowded

her chancellories, overran the ministry of War. The Czardom should be restored, Russia's debt of untold billions of rubles to France should and would be paid by a Czar of their selecting.

France would restore a Czar to Russia; the Monarchists should be returned to power and through this happy combination of circumstances France would rule the Empire. The fact that Russia was perishing under the iron heel of Germany affected her not at all.

Deserted in her hour of extremity, coldly and mercilessly abandoned to her fate by England and France, Russia, in her agony, appealed to the United States. She received in answer to her appeal fair words and wordy promises: promises all too soon to be broken.

On January 8, 1918, President Wilson, in his "Fourteen Point" address to Congress, expressed deep sympathy with Russia and announced as one of the cardinal principles for which the Allies fought, Point VI:

"The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy, and assures her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and more than a welcome, assistance of all kinds that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests."

Fair promises. But promises only, and Russia was starving.



The Soviet, represented by Lenin and Trotsky, gave a note to Colonel Raymond Robbins, of the American Red Cross, stating to the President of the United States that "they were unalterably opposed to the treaty Germany was attempting to force upon them and that they would never sign such a treaty if the United States would give food and arms to the Russians."

Neither the food nor the arms were forthcoming. Instead, on March 11th, 1918, the President sent a message of friendship to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, containing this pledge:

"Although the government of the United States is unhappily not now in a position to render the direct and effective aid it would wish to render, I beg to assure the people of Russia, through the Congress, that it will avail itself of every opportunity to secure for Russia once more complete sovereignty and independence in her own affairs and full restoration in her great role in the life of Europe and the modern world. The whole heart of the people of the United States is with the people of Russia in the attempt to free themselves from autocratic government and become masters of their own lives."

The Russian people, the Soviet Government and Lenin and Trotsky took great hope from the promises of President Wilson. Lenin denounced the demands of Germany as "The rape of Russia," thundered with vitriolic sentences against the German Imperialists and voiced his imperishable hatred of the German government.

On February 11, 1918, Lenin withdrew from the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, swearing he would never sign such a terrible treaty. Germany responded to his threat and his denunciations by immediately invading the Ukraine and occupying Kiev. At the same time, her other forces advanced into

Russia and held a line from the Gulf of Finland on the Baltic to the Black Sea.

Flesh and blood--even Russian flesh and blood-- could stand no more. It was physically impossible for Russia to resist the frightful demands of Germany. In her helplessness, openly abandoned by her Allies, Russia could do nothing but submit, and so under duress, she signed the fateful treaty of Brest-Litovsk on March 3d, 1918.

This was Germany's crowning triumph, the destruction of the nation that had denied her victory in the first year of the War; the elimination of Russia and hated Bolshevism in a single master stroke. The satisfaction she demanded was, as she thought, duly commensurate with the injury she had received from Russia:

"Russian Poland, Kurland, Lithuania and Esthonia came under German control, giving Germany an important Baltic littoral. Turkey, the Ally of Germany, was to receive back all territory in Asia Minor occupied since the War and in addition the districts of Kars, Erivan and Batum. Germany and Turkey controlled Caucasia, the boundaries of which were to be restored as they existed before the Russian-Turke War of 1877."

Vast stores of war material fell into the hands of Germany as well as thirteen thousand miles of railroads. An enormous amount of rolling stock, as well as three fourths

of Russia's coal and iron fields, belonged to Germany.

Germany's war against Russia was over. No longer could the Bear threaten her Eastern front. Germany transferred from the East one hundred and forty-seven veteran divisions and threw them in the March Drive against France and Italy in what they called the "Storm for Peace."

Germany's war with Russia was finished. She left the further destruction of the country to the Monarchists and the Imperialists.

Russia was to drink for three years of the bitter, bitter cup of civil warfare: a warfare so sanguine and terrible that it horrified mankind.

Germany no longer had to face Russia on fifteen hundred miles of battle front--The Russian Bear was being torn to pieces by the Monarchists. To Austria the collapse of Russia came as a salvation and relieved of the terrible Russian pressure, she turned her armies against Italy. With driving, sledging power Germany struck France, England and Italy. Again the gray hosts of Germany were within sight of Paris; the English Army barely escaped destruction and the Italian front was all but crushed.

American troops, at this fatal juncture, saved the Allied World.