

# **BOLSHEVIK BOGEY IN BRITAIN**

**BY EMRYS HUGHES**

Editor of FORWARD

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# CONTENTS

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Chapter.	Page.
1.—When the Last War Ended ... ..	5
2.—How We Helped the White Armies ... ..	8
3.—Bogies and Forgeries ... ..	11
4.—When Labour Stopped War ... ..	15
5.—Tory Wreckers ... ..	18
6.—Zinoviev Letter ... ..	22
7.—Winston's War of Words ... ..	26
8.—The Bull Dog and the Jackal ... ..	30
9.—Chamberlain v. Litvinov ... ..	33
10.—The Arcos Raid ... ..	37
11.—Russia and Disarmament ... ..	41
12.—Shelving Disarmament ... ..	44
13.—Loans for Russia via Germany ... ..	47
14.—Metro-Vickers' Engineers ... ..	50
15.—Beaverbrook and Russia ... ..	54
16.—Hitler's British Admirers ... ..	57
17.—Chamberlain and Russia ... ..	61
18.—How War Came ... ..	63
19.—Russia and Poland ... ..	67
20.—The War We Just Escaped. ... ..	70
21.—What Hitler Achieved ... ..	74
22.—What of the Future ? ... ..	78

# FOREWORD

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This brief account of the relations between Britain and Russia between the wars, appeared earlier in the year in a series of articles in "Forward," and this book is the result of the demand that they should be re-published in more permanent form.

There is no more vitally important question to be faced than what is to be our future relationship with the U.S.S.R., and it is necessary to know something of the historical background.

The argument that is stressed in this book is that the attitude of British Governments towards Russia between 1918 and 1939 was one of the main contributory causes to the international situation which culminated in World War No. 2.

To-day we are all admirers of our gallant Russian Allies with whom our Government has signed a twenty years treaty and with whom we have sworn eternal friendship.

But is this mood going to last ?

When the war is over, will attempts be again made to stir up hatred of Russia, and will the old Bolshevik Bogey re-appear?

There are already ominous signs that relationships between ourselves and Russia may again become strained and that the war time friendship may in the near future be subjected to severe tests.

The British people realise to-day that between the wars they were separated from the Russians by a wall of lies.

Therefore it is just as well that they should be reminded of the tremendous anti-Russian propaganda that followed the last war, and that they should be reminded how criminally stupid our politicians and press behaved when the Russians were trying to build up their country in the face of a hostile world.

The British public easily forgets, and it is just as well that the facts about our intervention in Russia, the Zinoviev Letter, and the Arcos Raid should be known in case our press is flooded with forgeries and atrocity stories about Russia once again.

This task has involved a good deal of searching of newspaper files in which I have been greatly assisted by Mr. J. R. Henderson of "Forward." I also wish to thank Mr. W. P. Coates of the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee and Mr. W. R. Watt, the Ayr County Librarian, for their help and suggestions.

EMRYS HUGHES

"Forward" Office, Glasgow.  
8th September, 1943.



## CHAPTER ONE.

**WHEN THE LAST WAR ENDED.**

**I**F the seeds of the Second World War were sown at the Peace Conference of Versailles, we cannot blame the Bolsheviks, for they were not there.

The Allies extended no invitation to the Bolshevik Government, and a great deal of the time at Versailles was spent in discussing how the Soviets should be overthrown. Yet there would have been no Allied military victory and no Versailles Conference had not the Russian armies suffered enormous casualties (Russia lost more men than any other country in the war), and if the Bolshevik peace propaganda had not effectively undermined the will of the German soldiers to fight.

But when the Allied victors met round the Peace Table there was nobody to put the point of view of the Bolsheviks, whom no Allied statesman believed would hold power, defeat their enemies, become the Government of the U.S.S.R., which was to play such a decisive role in the Second World War.

The power of German militarism had been destroyed, but the view was strongly held that even German militarism was to be preferred to Bolshevism, with its call for the overthrow of capitalist governments, the end of imperialism, and the world revolution to establish international socialism.

Lloyd George (16-1-19) declared that "the Bolshevik movement is as dangerous to civilisation as German militarism," but he was not prepared to agree to General Foch's proposal for a big Allied Expedition to crush Bolshevism by force. He realised that this would be a gigantic task. The Canadian troops would not stay in Europe to fight in Russia, and he feared mutiny among the British troops. President Wilson supported Lloyd George, but on the other hand Lloyd George had to face the opposition of Winston Churchill, who, in the British Cabinet at home, was urging war on the Bolshevik Government.

**LLOYD GEORGE v. CHURCHILL.**

"The most formidable and irrepressible protagonist of an anti-Bolshevik war," writes Lloyd George in his "Truth About the Peace Treaties," was Mr. Winston Churchill. "He had no doubt a genuine distaste for Communism. . . . His ducal blood revolted against the wholesale elimination of Grand Dukes in Russia."

While Lloyd George was in Paris opposing French plans for an attack on the Bolshevik Government, Churchill was

trying to persuade the Cabinet in London to agree to military intervention. Lloyd George writes:—"There were powerful and exceedingly pertinacious influences in the Cabinet working for military intervention in Russia, and, as I was not on the spot in London to exercise direct influence and control over the situation, for a while I was out-maneuvred, and Mr. Bonar Law, who presided over the Ministers in my absence, was over-ridden. Mr. Winston Churchill, in particular, threw the whole of his dynamic energy and genius into organising an armed intervention against the Russian Bolshevik power."

When Lloyd George returned for a time to London, Mr. Churchill "very adroitly seized the opportunity created by the absence of President Wilson and myself to go over to Paris and urge his plans with regard to Russia upon the consideration of the French, the American, and the British delegations."

Lloyd George wanted to invite representatives of the Russian Government to Paris to discuss the situation. "Personally," he explains, "I would have dealt with the Soviets as the de facto Government of Russia. So would President Wilson. But we both agreed that we could not carry to that extent our colleagues at the Congress."

So the Soviet Government had no say at all in the Peace Treaty which drew up the new frontiers of Europe, fixed the boundaries of Russia, established Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, and dictated the terms to Germany, which did so much to bring Hitler and the conditions and the international situation which again led to war.

Had the Allied Governments at Versailles recognised the Soviet Government and negotiated with it as the government of a nation whose co-operation in Europe was essential if world peace were to be secured, the whole tragic history of international relations would have been changed, and the Second World War averted.

### LITVINOV NOT WANTED.

The Soviet Government held out the hand of friendship, which was rejected. On January 21st, 1919, President Wilson reported that the American representative of U.S.A. had had confidential conversations with M. Litvinov in Copenhagen.

Litvinov had stated that the Soviet Government was anxious for permanent peace and was even "prepared to compromise on all points, including protection to existing foreign enterprises, the granting of new concessions in Russia, and the Russian foreign debt." Said the U.S.A. representative:—"The Soviet's conciliatory attitude is unquestionable. Litvinov showed me an open wireless message which he had just received from Tchitcherine, the Soviet Foreign Minister, affirming the willingness of the Government to be conciliatory



with reference to the question of the foreign debt. Litvinov and his associates realise fully that Russia will need, for a long time, expert assistance and advice, particularly in financial and technical matters, and that she cannot get on without manufactured imports, including, especially, foreign machinery."

But Litvinov was not allowed anywhere near Versailles.

If the Soviets were conciliatory, the Allied Governments were not. They laboured under the delusion that the Bolsheviks could easily be destroyed. In Britain the anti-Bolshevik crusade was led by Winston Churchill, who was abysmally ignorant of what was actually happening in Russia, but went up and down the country screaming hysterically his hymn of hate.

### THE HATE CAMPAIGN.

Speaking in London at a luncheon of the Aldwych Club (11-1-19) he declared:—"Of all tyrannies in history the Bolshevik tyranny is the worst, the most destructive, the most degrading. It is sheer humbug to pretend that it is not far worse than German militarism. The miseries of the Russian people under the Bolsheviks far surpass anything they suffered even under the Tzar. The atrocities of Lenin and Trotsky are incomparably more hideous, on a larger scale and more numerous than any for which the Kaiser is responsible. The Germans at any rate have stuck to their allies. They misled them, they exploited them, but they did not desert or betray them. It may have been honour among thieves, but that is better than dishonour among murderers."

At the Mansion House (19-2-19) Churchill urged that arms, munitions, equipment and technical assistance should be given to the forces in Russia who were engaged in fighting "the foul baboonery of Bolshevism."

"Since the Armistice my policy would have been 'Peace with the German people, war on the Bolshevik tyranny'," wrote Churchill in a memorandum to Lloyd George in March, 1920. "Willingly or unavoidably, you have followed something very near the reverse. . . . But we are now face to face with the results. They are terrible. We may well be within measurable distance of universal collapse and anarchy throughout Europe and Asia. Russia has gone into ruin. What is left of her is in the power of these deadly snakes."

This bitter hatred of Russia was to characterise the policy of British Governments, with brief intervals when Labour was in office, for over twenty years. It was one of the reasons why German Fascism believed that Britain and Russia would never again fight as Allies and encouraged the German High Command to believe that they could risk war, because never again would they have to fight on two fronts.

## CHAPTER TWO

## HOW WE HELPED THE WHITE ARMIES.

**T**O-DAY, the British people are enthusiastic about the Red Army, and Tory Cabinet Ministers and M.P.s make fiery and eloquent speeches about the courage and prowess of our gallant allies.

But in the days when the Russian Revolution was fighting for its existence, when the Red Army came into being, the British Government did everything in its power to render assistance to the counter-revolutionary leaders who were hoping to overthrow the Soviet Government with assistance from outside.

A British expeditionary force was sent to Archangel, the explanation being given that it was necessary to prevent the ports of the North being used by German submarines and to open a new front in Russia against the Germans in view of the fact that the Soviet Government was no longer prepared to continue the war.

In his book, "The Murmansk Venture," Major-General Sir C. Maynard, one of the generals in charge of the expedition, reveals how bitterly anti-Bolshevik the military leaders of that army were. He and other soldiers "well qualified as most to form an estimate came to the conclusion that an army of 100,000, provided there were joint naval action in the Baltic and Black Sea, would have sufficed, within six months or less, to secure the hurried abdication of Lenin and his Government."

Had they been allowed to overthrow the Soviet Government in six months then, the General proceeds to argue, "the poisonous tentacles of Communism would not have fastened their grip on five continents, bringing insurrection and riots, strikes and disorders, disloyalty and atheism."

## BRASS HATS AND BOLSHEVISM

"Bolshevism," wrote General Maynard, "save to ill-balanced minds, stands revealed as the most malign of all influences at work in the present-day world. . . . Is there then no cause for regret that the opportunity for crushing it once and for all should not have been grasped, at a time when its store of resources was small, its tenure insecure and the co-operation of strong loyalist forces assured?"

That was how the brass hats viewed the problem of Bolshevism in 1919.

In vain did Bruce Lockhart, who had been sent as British diplomatic agent to Moscow, warn the British Government that Bolshevism was not something that could be destroyed by military intervention in six months.

But, although General Maynard was enthusiastic for turning the Archangel expedition into a campaign to finish off Bolshevism in six months, the soldiers were not. They wanted to go home to be demobilised and some of them were actually sympathetic with the Russian Revolution. So the great campaign



to save Russia from the North had to be abandoned and the Archangel expeditionary force brought home.

Winston Churchill shared the view that the Soviet Government would be easily overthrown, and was prepared to send assistance to the counter-revolutionary forces. Dealing with his speech on the debate on Army Estimates the "Times" (29-5-19) reported:—

"In his speech in debate on the Army Estimates to-day Mr. Churchill presented a cheerful view of the situation in Russia. The military weakness of Bolshevism had become very apparent. Wherever they were faced with determination they had been driven back. . . . It was hoped that a juncture would soon be formed between Koltchak's and the Archangel forces, and that before the summer was out the situation would be placed on a Russian basis."

Although the Government feared to send British armies to fight a large-scale war in Russia, it sent all the assistance it could to Admiral Koltchak, General Denikin, General Yudenich and General Wrangel who were leading the counter-revolutionary forces in different parts of Russia.

They were supplied with British arms, equipment, stores and uniforms.

Mr. Churchill boasted in his "World Crisis" that we provided General Denikin alone "with the means of arming and equipping nearly a quarter of a million men."

One after another these counter-revolutionary armies collapsed. The people did not want the counter-revolutionary generals and their reactionary regimes. But, as Mr. Churchill remarks, "the National Russians did not perish for want of arms."

No, they were supplied by the British Government.

### ATTACK ON LENINGRAD

When General Yudenich marched on Leningrad in October 1919 the British Fleet was in the Gulf of Finland rendering assistance. Three Russian torpedo boats were sunk by mines and 550 Russian seamen were drowned.

In announcing the loss in the Order of the Day (24th October, 1919) Trotsky wrote:—

"Red warriors! On all the fronts you meet the hostile plots of the English. The counter-revolutionary troops shoot you with English guns. In the depots of Shenkursk and Onega, on the Southern and Western fronts you find supplies of English manufacture. The prisoners you have captured are dressed in uniforms made in England. The women and children of Archangel and Astrakhan are maimed and killed by English airmen with the aid of English explosives. English ships bomb our shores. . . . But even to-day, when we are engaged in a bitter fight with Yudenich, the hireling of England, I demand that you never forget that there are two Englands. Beside the England of profits, of butchery,

of violence and bloodthirstiness, there is the England of labour, of spiritual power, of high ideals, of international solidarity. It is the base and dishonest England of the Stock Exchange manipulators that is fighting us. The England of labour and the people are with us."

The total cost of the help given to counter-revolutionaries was, at the time, estimated in a British White Paper at £100,000,000, though Mr. Churchill in his book, argues that this is an absurd exaggeration. He writes: "The actual expense **apart from munitions** (our bold type) was not a tithe as great."

Obviously; no war would cost so much if munitions were not included, for human life is comparatively cheap.

As for the cost of the munitions, Mr. Churchill assures us "though they had been most costly to produce, they were only an unmarketable surplus of the Great War to which no money value can be assigned. Had they been kept in our hands till they mouldered they would only have involved additional charges for storage, care, and maintenance."

What an amazing defence! The guns would have become rusty in this country so we were justified in sending them to Russia to be used against the Russian workers and peasants!

### HOW RUSSIA SUFFERED

In his book, "Memoirs of a British Agent," Bruce Lockhart gives us another view. In the early days of the Revolution he notes "the comparative tolerance of the Bolsheviks because the cruelties which followed later were the result of the intensification of the civil war. For the intensification of that bloody struggle Allied intervention, with the false hopes it raised, was largely responsible. I do not say that a policy of abstention from interference in the internal affairs of Russia would have altered the course of the Bolshevik Revolution. I do suggest that our intervention intensified the terror and increased the bloodshed."

The Russians have repeatedly pointed out that far more than £100,000,000 worth of damage was done in Russia as a result of the wars of intervention. When the Allies met the representatives of the U.S.S.R. at Genoa, M. Litvinoff estimated the damage done in Russia at over £4,000,000,000.

In the 1924 negotiations in London, M. Rakovsky argued that against British creditors claims on Russia should be set the fact that Russia estimated her claim against Britain for the wars of intervention at approximately £2,000,000,000. "One million three hundred and fifty thousand human lives alone," he said, "were lost in the wars of intervention. Three thousand five hundred bridges were destroyed. Whole provinces were laid waste."

British help to the counter-revolutionary governments prolonged and intensified the war, but it did not succeed in overthrowing the Soviet Government. It led to bitter hatred and distrust of Britain in Russia and, in the years that followed, intense suspicion of British Governments and their policies.



## CHAPTER THREE.

**BOGIES AND FORGERIES.**

**B** RITAIN cannot to-day be terrified by the Bogey of Bolshevism. Speaking at the Albert Hall at a meeting held to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the foundation of the Red Army the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden, spoke scornfully about Dr. Goebbels' propaganda, meant to foster suspicion and to encourage dissension between the Allies. "All the old paraphernalia is out again. A part in this puppet show is played by the Bogey of Bolshevism."

Mr. Eden did not figure prominently in British politics in the years that immediately followed the last war, and, if he did fear the Bogey of Bolshevism himself then, it has not been recorded.

But certainly the leaders of the Tory Party did.

The Bogey of Bolshevism was produced on every Tory platform in Britain long before Hitler was heard of and long before Dr. Goebbels had produced his first public lie.

**BOLSHEVISM AND INTERNATIONAL JEWS**

One wonders what leading lights of the Tory Party, who have been denouncing Bolshevism for a quarter of a century, thought of Mr. Eden's remarks. Did they remember their own speeches in the years that followed the Russian Revolution?

One wonders whether Lord Croft, now Under-Secretary for War and spokesman for the War Office in the House of Lords, remembers the anti-Bolshevik meeting he addressed at the Cannon Street Hotel in May 1919.

Here is a report ("Times." 16-5-19):—

"A largely attended meeting was held at the Cannon Street Hotel yesterday to protest against Bolshevism. Lord Ampthill who presided, said Bolshevism was being propagated in this country and money was being spent to a very large extent. Bolshevism was being propagated in this country by well-known Labour leaders, journalists, J.P.s, and even Privy Councillors. Some of the speakers and writers in this country would act like the Bolshevik leaders if they got the chance. Mr. Henderson said 'We agree with the Bolsheviks in essence. Mr. Lloyd George had invited Bolshevik leaders to attend a Peace Conference, and this placed an indelible stain on our country. Bolshevism was being carried out by international Jews. (Cheers).

Professor Miliukov the former Russian Foreign Minister, said Bolshevism was now vanishing before Kolchak's army in Siberia, and he had received information that whole companies of Bolsheviks were deserting, while the remainder refused to fight

Brigadier-General H. Page-Croft said Bolshevism was of German origin. We ought to encourage volunteering in this country. Why not he asked, support Kolchak with an army as well as with munitions? If we did not act we should have a Germanic Empire stretching not only across Central Europe, but the East as well. The battle against Bolshevism was a battle for Christianity and he asked the meeting to subscribe £50,000."

The Brigadier-General thought that Christianity in Russia could then be saved for £50,000.

Note the cheers that followed Lord Amptill's assertion that Bolshevism was the work of international Jews! This was precisely the propaganda that the Nazis used twenty years later, but it was being talked by British Conservatives twenty years before.

Whether Lord Croft got the £50,000 for his anti-Bolshevik campaign is not disclosed, but it certainly did not collapse from lack of funds. British captains of industry were as ready to put up the money for anti-Bolshevik propaganda as the bankers and the industrialists of Germany were prepared to finance the anti-Bolshevik propaganda of Hitler.

Even the Nazi leaders have hardly excelled Mr. Churchill's early denunciations: "Crocodiles with master minds" was how he described the Bolshevik leaders in his "World Crisis."

An appreciative audience at a luncheon at the Aldwych Club (10-4-19) applauded Mr. Churchill's description of Bolshevism as "that foul combination of criminality and animalism."

### A CHURCHILL ORATION

When Mr. Churchill went to deliver an oration on Bolshevism at Sunderland, however, his audience does not seem to have been so unanimous.

Here is an extract from the "Times" report of his speech (3-1-20):—

"... There is another class which, in my judgment, it is no use our trying to conciliate. I mean those Bolsheviks, fanatics who are the avowed enemies of the existing civilisation of the world (A voice—'It's a lie'), who, if they had their way, would destroy the democratic parliaments on which the liberties of free peoples depend, and would also shatter the economic and scientific apparatus by which alone the great millions of modern populations can be maintained alive. So, far from conciliating these people and trying to make them believe that we are going in the same direction as they are, only not quite so fast and not quite so far, we ought to take every opportunity of going for them (laughter and cheers) of discrediting them, of exposing them to the nation, of showing how enormous and unbridgeable is the gulf which separates them from us . . .



We defend freedom of conscience and religious equality. They seek to exterminate every form of religious belief that has given comfort and inspiration to the soul of man. . . . They seek to establish a class of government—and a class of government by no means the best instructed—to deal with the difficult problems of our community: they seek to establish a class of government of particular sections of organised manual labour. Against all conspiracies to establish class government we unfold the stately conception of the British Commonwealth. . . . And are we really in these islands, where we have been able to build up a system of free government step by step for over a thousand years—are we really to take lessons in constitutionalism from the crazy fanatics of Central Europe? A nice mess they have made of their own affairs—first allowing themselves to be trampled down and held down by autocratic governments, then bursting out like a gang of mutinous slaves, wrecking everything upon which their own livelihood depended. . . .

And this is progress, this is liberty, this is Utopia! This is what my friend in the gallery would call an interesting experiment in social regeneration (laughter). What a monstrous absurdity and perversion of the truth it is to represent the Communistic theory as a form of progress, when at every step and at every stage it is simply marching back in to the dark ages."

One does not know whether the unknown interruptor in the gallery, who ventured to challenge the veracity of Mr. Churchill at that meeting, attended any of the recent demonstrations to hail the Red Army, but if he did he will probably remember with some satisfaction his previous encounter with the Prime Minister who no longer believes that Russia is marching back into the dark ages under the leadership of "that mighty warrior, Premier Stalin"

### **NATIONALISING THE CHILDREN !**

For many years the people of Britain were not allowed to know what was going on in Russia, which was hidden from us by a dense fog of lies.

Nothing was too stupid to publish about Russia. Here is the sort of news that the "Times," (regarded as our most reliable newspaper), used to publish in 1919.

(It should be recalled that for many years the "Times" did not have a special correspondent in Moscow. He operated from Riga. Here is his story (25-8-1919) of how the Bolsheviks had started to nationalise the children:—

#### **" Communistic Nurseries—A Bolshevik Experiment.**

"From a report in the Petrograd 'Isvestia,' it appears that Bolsheviks are already carrying out an experiment in the Socialisation of Children. That journal states that children from the age of three are being taken from their parents by force and placed in State institutions, where

they are to be educated on Bolshevik lines. To protect the children from the pernicious influence of parents with bourgeois sympathies visits are forbidden

At Tula recently, 7,000 children under ten years of age are said to have been removed from their homes to be used as material for the experiment. Many parents who protested against having to part with their little ones were arrested. One of the first results of the measure has been that a large number of the children have died owing to lack of food and care.

The Soviet Press states that the task of educating the children has been put in the hands of 150 experienced teachers, and it is being suggested that soldiers of the Red Army who are unfit for active duty shall be used as guardians in the children's colonies."

### THE FORGED "PRAVDA"

Not only was anti-Bolshevik propaganda cabled from Riga, it was actually exported to the Baltic States from this country and from there disseminated all over the world.

Copies of the Russian paper "Pravda" were printed in London with the connivance of the British Secret Service.

Towards the end of 1920 a London printer was given the job of setting up in type an issue of the Russian Bolshevik paper "Pravda." Headlines, type, everything was a perfect reproduction of the genuine article; but the bogus issue carried a lot of anti-Bolshevik propaganda, admissions of Soviet failure, cruelty, etc. But the whole business had been rendered useless because the London printer, knowing that a printer can be prosecuted for not publishing his imprint in the paper, had printed his own name and address at the foot of the last column on the back page, as is the custom in this country.

So all the copies were taken to the Special Intelligence Department at Scotland Yard, where the name and address of the English printer was removed.

This was admitted by the Home Secretary (Mr. E. Shortt) in reply to questions in Parliament (March 8th and March 21st, 1921).

But this was not all. Sir Basil Thomson, R.C.B., who was then Director of Intelligence, kindly arranged that the Admiralty should transmit the parcels to Riga in British ships. The idea was that quotations from the forged "Pravda" would then be cabled to all parts of the world as proof positive of the diabolical deeds of the Bolshevik Government.

That was the way propaganda against the Soviet Government was organised in those days, and that is how millions of people in Britain and America were led to believe that Lenin and his colleagues were devils incarnate.



## CHAPTER FOUR.

**WHEN LABOUR STOPPED WAR.**

**I**N 1919 Russia was suffering terribly from the aftermath of war, civil war, disease and famine. This was aggravated, and the misery of the Russian people intensified, by the Allied Blockade organised by the governments of Britain and France then supreme masters of Europe.

"The blockade," writes Louis Fischer in his book "The Soviets and World Affairs," "had become completely effective in January, 1919, when the Scandinavian countries, yielding to Allied pressure, withdrew their diplomatic missions from Moscow and expelled Litvinoff and Vorovsky. Thereafter, for almost a year, Russia could neither buy nor sell abroad. She needed food, clothing, anaesthetics and medicines to cope with typhus and other epidemics; she was ready to pay for them with gold and goods, but the Allies insisted on the blockade. As late at October, 1919, the Paris Peace Conference requested the German Government to join the blockade and, at the same time, addressed notes to twelve neutral countries reminding them of their responsibility to maintain Russia's isolation with undiminished vigilance. Only three months later, on 16th January, 1920, the Peace Conference then nearing its natural death, lifted the blockade and announced that it would grant facilities to Russian co-operatives to import goods in exchange for grain and other commodities."

The British Government, however, refused to allow Litvinov to come to London as one of the Russian representatives, a bitter campaign against Litvinov having been conducted by the "Daily Mail." Moscow, however, insisted on the presence of Litvinov among their delegation and the problem was solved by the Allies sending their representatives to meet the Russians half way at Copenhagen.

In May, 1920, Krassin, the head of the delegation, was invited to come to London to meet Lloyd George. But, while the British Government was engaged in these negotiations with the Soviet Government, Poland was also looking to Britain and France for help in her adventure to secure a large slice of the Ukraine with a population of 30,000,000.

**GUNS FOR POLAND**

On 17th May, 1920, Mr. Bonar Law admitted, in reply to a question by Mr. G. N. Barnes, that the British Government "had been supplying the Polish Army with at least a portion of its equipment."

This was corroborated later by the Warsaw correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" (6-6-20) who saw supplies which had been sent from Britain.

He wrote:—

"British guns, heavy and light, are arriving. One sees columns of them passing through the streets bedecked with flowers and branches, and munition trains from Danzig are being unloaded in the stations. . . . One sees also flower-decked columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, all English, equipped with brand new English cannon, Lewis and machine-guns."

When the Red Army drove the Poles back over their frontiers and threatened to march on Warsaw, the British Government did all in its power to help the Poles, and was preparing for open war on Russia.

### LABOUR'S ACTION

This was, however, prevented by British Labour. London dockers had refused to load the "Jolly George" with some munitions for Poland, and this was followed up by the setting up of Councils of Action all over the country and the threat of a General Strike if the Government declared war on Russia.

On 9th August, 1920, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Secretary of the Labour Party, sent the following telegram to all the local Labour Parties:—

"Extremely menacing: possibility extension Polish-Russian War. Strongly urge local authorities immediately organise citizen demonstrations against intervention and supply of men and munitions to Poland; demand peace negotiations; immediate raising blockade, resumption trade relations. Send resolutions Premier and Press; deputise local M.P.s."

On 10th August, 1920, a delegation of the T.U.C. went to 10 Downing Street and Bevin bluntly told Lloyd George: "They had no hesitation in laying their cards on the table and, if war was carried on directly in support of Poland, or indirectly, there would be a match set to explosive material, the result of which none of them could foresee."

### WAR AVERTED

On 13th August, a delegate conference, called jointly by the T.U.C. and the Labour Party, met in London and unanimously endorsed the decision to take action to stop the war by "any and every form of withdrawal of Labour." Mr. Bevin addressed the conference and declared: "This question you are called upon to decide to-day—the willingness to take any action to win world peace—transcends any claim in connection with wages or hours of labour."

So the Government had to think again. Much as it hated Russia it realised that a war to back up Poland would not be popular in the country and would be met with a General Strike.



The "Times" believed that war on Russia was imminent. In its leading article it declared "It is a terrible truth that once more we stand upon the edge of a crisis fraught with possibilities only less tragic than those lowered over us in the first week of August six years ago."

The British Government was prepared to go to war with Russia, but the workers were not. So there was no war.

### CHURCHILL BACKS POLAND

Mr. Churchill was one of those who regarded Poland as a barrier against Bolshevism.

In the "Evening News" (28-7-20) he referred to Russia as:

"... A poisoned Russia, an infected Russia a plague-bearing Russia; a Russia of armed hordes smiting not only with bayonet and with cannon, but accompanied and preceded by the swarms of typhus-bearing vermin which slay the bodies of men, and political doctrines which destroy the health and even the soul of nations. . .

If the Bolsheviks do not for the moment overwhelm with armies, they can undermine with propaganda. The peasants are roused against the landlords, the workmen against their employers, the railways and public services are induced to strike, the soldiers are incited to mutiny and kill their officers, the mobs are raised against the middle classes to murder them, to plunder their houses, to steal their belongings, to debauch their wives and carry off their children; an elaborate network of secret societies entangles honest political action; the Press is bought wherever possible. . . .

The ruin and collapse of Poland, either from external violence or internal subversion, and the incorporation of Poland as a whole in the Russian Bolshevik system, would sweep away the barrier on which so much depends and would bring Russia and Germany into direct and immediate contact."

On the other hand, the Soviet Government appealed to the peoples of the Allied countries to prevent their governments sending help to Poland, and denounced "the dark forces in Europe, the Clemenceaus, the Churchills, the Northcliffes zealously preparing for a fresh attack on Soviet Russia." It concluded: "The only impediment to the establishment of peace and the cessation of the countless disasters from which the toiling masses of Russia and her neighbouring countries are, together with the whole of Europe, suffering, is the reactionary imperialist policy of the Entente Governments.

"Toilers of the Entente countries! It is up to you to put an end to this policy of your governments."

The appeal was not made in vain.

## CHAPTER FIVE.

## TORY WRECKERS.

**T**HE British Government did not grant official diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Government until the beginning of 1924.

While Russian Trade Delegations were allowed to come to London to arrange trade contracts with British firms, contracts which provided jobs for British workers and profits for British capitalists, the Soviet Government was regarded as diplomatically untouchable until the First Labour Government under Ramsay Macdonald took office.

Had the First Labour Government been allowed to carry out the policy it initiated in 1924, the whole of the subsequent history of British-Russian relations would have been changed and the long years of estrangement and bitterness between the two countries which made the Nazis think that they would never come together, would have been avoided.

But the Tories and most of the Liberals hated the very name of Russia and a howl of fury went up when the Government announced the recognition of the Soviets, and continued incessantly during the time that negotiations were in progress for the drawing up of the terms of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty.

Everyday there came a barrage of attacks from the millionaire press, especially from the "Daily Mail," and from every Tory platform came hysterical speeches denouncing the Bolsheviks and all their works. It was clear that our Tory reactionaries were determined to wreck the negotiations and to use the Bolshevik Bogey for all they were worth to bring about the downfall of the Labour Government.

## THE 1924 TREATY

In these days when hundreds of millions are granted without question to help our "gallant Russian allies," it is interesting to recall how the first Labour Government's timid and cautious proposals to bring about a resumption of the trade relations between ourselves and Russia were attacked, misrepresented, and ultimately sabotaged by British Big Business and High Finance with the assistance of the Liberal and Tory Parties in the House of Commons and the lying and unscrupulous campaigns of the millionaire press.

The Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1924 was a statesmanlike attempt to wipe out the memory of our past blunders in Russia and to start afresh. Under its provisions the Russian Government agreed to come to a settlement with the British bondholders who had invested money in Russia, while the British Government was to guarantee a loan which would be used to



finance contracts which would provide work for Britain's industries and take British workers off the dole.

The British Government was only committed to the guaranteed loan after the Russians had come to an agreement with the bondholders.

### THE BRITISH BONDHOLDERS

British bondholders were solely concerned about getting their pound of flesh. The Board of Trade estimated that the bondholders' claims amounted to about £40,000,000, although the bondholders claimed between £50,000,000 and £60,000,000.

On the other hand, the Russians made counter-claims for damage done in Russia by Allied intervention in the Civil War. The Russian Delegation estimated this at approximately £2,000,000,000, and declared that it cost 1,350,000 Russian lives, to say nothing of the enormous damage done by the destruction of towns, railways, bridges, and the devastation of whole provinces.

The Treaty would have ended this controversy and our relations with Russia would have been based on a new and mutual understanding.

But our Tories would have none of it; they were prepared to sacrifice everything—prospects of good relationships, peace, trade prospects (even the bondholders who had never had an offer of a settlement since)—in order to wreck any attempt at agreement and to carry on their campaign of misrepresentation, both of the Treaty and of the Labour Government which supported it.

Every day the press came out with a new lie, and from every Tory platform came the cry that hard-earned British money was going to be handed out to the Bolsheviks to destroy the British Empire, the Christian Religion, and what not.

Mr. Baldwin, the Tory leader, expounded the theory that if Russia had any trade to do, it should be done with Germany!

Speaking at Newcastle (3-10-24) Mr. Baldwin said:—

"Whether we like it or not, the natural exploiter of Russian trade is Germany. They have always done the largest trade in Russia because geographically they are the most favourably situated, and they study the Russian language and understand Russian methods of business. In my view, the best thing for world trade, of which we should get our share, would be the development of Russian trade, as and when it becomes possible, by Germany."

### MR. CHURCHILL "SICK"

Mr. Churchill described the Treaty as "Lending Money to Tyranny." Indeed, the Treaty actually made Mr. Churchill "sick."

In a speech in the Epping Division ("Times," 20-9-24) he said:—

"... Another issue which has been raised by the Socialist Government was a proposal to give forty millions of our money in the form of a guaranteed loan to the Soviet Government of Russia. Why should we do that? They stole £120,000,000 of British property in Russia, and we were at present whistling for our money. This was the time when the Soviet Government came, with their hats on their heads, and asked for more. That was about the limit; but even more remarkable was the fact that the British Government proposed to lend them the money.

If we had money to spare we could much better spend it in promoting prosperity at home in developing the Empire. But it was not only a question of money—it was a question of honour. Russia was a tyranny, the vilest tyranny that ever existed. The great mass of the Russian people were gripped by a gang of cosmopolitan adventurers, who had settled down on the country like vultures and were tearing it to pieces.

In Russia it had been made a criminal offence to teach religion to any child under 15 years of age, and these were the people the Labour Party said we were to give forty millions to enable them to go on with the good work.

It made him sick.

The two great democratic Republics of France and the United States were not doing this, but we were asked to lend this money in order to curry favour with the blood-dyed tyrants of Moscow."

### WHERE WAS THE KING?

Speaking at the Scottish Conservative Club in Edinburgh (27-9-24), Mr. Churchill stirred up some other prejudices:—

"... The Russians must be left to solve their problems. We could leave it to the good sense of our business men to trade with them when opportunity offered, but we should not go out of our way to give special aid and succour to a régime which was criminal in its origin and aims, and which sought the destruction of civilised institutions all over the world. (Cheers).

There had never been any treaty like this one before. Where was the name of the King? He suggested that it was not out of regard for the feelings of the Sovereign, although many of his relations had been massacred by the Bolshevik Government, that the Treaty did not bear the King's signature, but to soothe the feelings of the Russian dictators we were sacrificing and ignoring our great and venerable Constitution in order to conform to the fads and whims of Moscow."



Speaking at a meeting in Epping market place ("Times," 21-10-24) Mr. Churchill, referring to the proposed loan to Russia, "emphasised the fact that if this country committed itself to a loan to Russia it would assume a responsibility for the crimes of the Soviet Government. It would have made itself accessory and an accomplice with the foul deeds, and it would have taken on its shoulders a load of shame and degradation the honour of this country would never support."

### BLAMING THE JEWS

All the leading Tory politicians vied with each other in denouncing Russia and the Labour Government.

Lord Curzon, who had been Foreign Secretary in the previous Government, impudently struck an anti-Semitic note, even though his second wife came from a wealthy Jewish-American family.

Speaking at Leicester (27-10-24) his Lordship declared:—

"I regard the Russian Government as one of the worst and cruellest that has ever had in its hands the destiny of a nation. They are murdering and burying alive thousands of the wretched people of Georgia. This Government has destroyed the life of Russia, has extirpated religion from its midst, and has produced infinite misery among the Russian populace.

Don't imagine that the Russian Government is a body of Russians who represent, at any rate, some section of their country. That is not the case. They are a small gang, only a few hundreds in number, few of them Russian by birth, and most of them Jews in origin, who are preying like vultures on the bodies of that unhappy people. They represent no element of national life or strength among the people."

And so the feverish and hysterical oratory swelled to its crescendo to the magnificent finale of the Zinoviev Letter.

It is interesting to note that while our Tories were denouncing the Russian Treaty, the Bank of England raised a loan for Germany.

According to the "Morning Post" (18-10-24) it was over-subscribed and applications for £160,000,000 were received from British investors. They were guaranteed £7 12s. 6d. per cent. "without allowing for the profit on repayment twenty-five years hence."

## CHAPTER SIX.

## ZINOVIEV LETTER.

**T**HE Zinoviev Letter came as a climax to the hysterical anti-Russian election campaign. The Tories covered the hoardings with flaming posters showing the fearsome bearded Bolsheviks armed with knives and bombs being given the hard earned money of the British taxpayer.

The Press produced fresh atrocity stories every day, and the hysterics of the Tory platform orators rose to a grand crescendo as polling day drew near.

Then came the publication of the Zinoviev Letter, copies of which had arrived mysteriously both in the Foreign Office and in the office of the "Daily Mail."

The Zinoviev Letter was alleged to be a letter that had been sent by Zinoviev on behalf of the Third International giving instructions to the British Communist Party outlining what its policy was to be in Britain.

## THE LETTER.

It was headed "Very Secret," and was indeed a fearsome document ideally calculated to make British blood creep.

"It is indispensable to stir up the masses of the British proletariat," said the letter. "to bring into movement the army of unemployed proletarians whose position can only be improved after a loan has been granted to the U.S.S.R. for the restoration of her economics and when business collaboration between the British and Russian proletariats had been put in order."

The letter went on to say that "a settlement of the relations between the two countries will assist in the revolutionising of the international and British proletariat not less than a successful rising in any of the working class districts of England." There was an exhortation to carry on propaganda in the British Army, "particularly among those quartered in the large centres of the country and also among factories working on munitions and at military store depots. We request that the most particular attention be paid to these latter."

There were references to the need for the formation of a British Red Army. "Form a directive operative head of the military section" was the alleged instruction. "Do not put this off to a future moment, which may be pregnant with events and catch you unprepared." The letter ended:—

"Desiring you all success, both in organisation and your struggle. With Communist Greetings,  
President of the Praesidium of the I.K.K.I..

ZINOVIEV.

Member of the Praesidium,

Secretary,

McMANUS.  
KUUSINEN."



On October 24th, the Foreign Office addressed a note to M. Rakovsky, the Charge d'Affairs of the Soviet Union in London calling his attention to the letter and protesting on behalf of the British Government. It was signed "in the absence of the Secretary of State" by Mr. J. D. Gregory, one of the Under-Secretaries at the Foreign Office who had played a prominent part in the Treaty negotiations.

The absence of the Secretary of State, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who was Foreign Secretary as well as Prime Minister, was due to the fact that he was in the country taking part in the General Election campaign. But Mr. MacDonald had initialled the letter from the Foreign Office when it had been submitted to him, and so had given it his approval.

When he was questioned about it his explanations only made the matter worse.

This was a first rate political bombshell and exactly what the Tories needed in their campaign

### **RUSSIAN PROTEST.**

M. Rakovsky promptly replied that the Zinoviev Letter was a forgery.

"I declare," he wrote "in the most categorical terms that the manifesto is a gross forgery and an audacious attempt to prevent the development of friendly relations between the two countries." He continued:—

"If, instead of departing from the established practice, the Foreign Office had in the first place approached me for an explanation, it would not have been difficult to convince them that they had been victims of deception on the part of the enemies of the Soviet Union. Not only the contents, but the heading and the signature of the document definitely prove that it is the work of malicious individuals who are inadequately familiar with the constitution of the Communist International. In circulars of the Communist International (which may be seen in the Press, for its activities are not concealed) it is never described as the 'Third Communist International'—for the simple reason that there has never been a first or a second Communist International. The signature is a similarly clumsy forgery. M. Zinoviev is made to sign himself as the 'President of the Praesidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,' whereas actually he is and always signs himself officially as 'President of the Executive Committee.' The whole of the contents of the document are moreover, from the Communist point of view, a tissue of absurdities, intended simply to arouse British public opinion against the Soviet Union, and to frustrate the efforts being made by both countries to establish durable and friendly relations"

### **CHURCHILL ON "FILTHY BUTCHERS."**

Needless to say M. Rakovsky's denials were ignored by our Tories. The fact that the document had been denounced as a forgery made no difference to them. They were in the

middle of a hectic election campaign and any stick was good enough to beat the Bolsheviks. Forgery or not, it was just the thing to win the election and destroy the Labour Government.

Mr. Churchill hailed the publication of the Letter as proof positive that he was right in his attitude towards Russia. Referring to the Zinoviev Letter in a speech at Loughton ('Times,' 27-10-24), he said:—

"We have always been jealous of foreign interference in our affairs. We have always been resentful of those foreigners who do not know our conditions, and have not got the means of judging what is good for this island, and who are not entitled to express opinions on the art of government in this old Democracy. But while Mr. MacDonald has been tampering and tinkering with the Russian Bolsheviks, while he, driven on by his extremists, has been endeavouring to demonstrate a sense of comradeship and unity with these foul, filthy butchers of Moscow, they have not been idle. They write from their Praesidium, or centre of control, in order that germ cells shall be established in our regiments and on our ships, that propaganda shall be developed in our streets and villages. They write to order that preparations shall be made for bloody revolt to be started and for civil war, flames, and carnage to disturb and defile our streets. They write to order these things in this country at the very moment when they are here discussing with the British Government a treaty for a loan, asking for more of our money. I say such a situation has never occurred in the history of this country (loud cheers)."

Lord Curzon (25-10-24) speaking at Leicester, declared "a more wicked, a more pernicious, a more detestable and contemptible document has never appeared in print."

### **BIRKENHEAD ON "MURDERERS."**

Lord Birkenhead speaking at Brentford (27-10-24) said he had reason to suppose that the letter "was dispatched by private messenger to a member of the English Communist Party, and it was reasonable to assume that it would be received in this country by September 21st or 22nd. Our local Bolsheviks were beginning to run away from the document and to say that it was a forgery. It was not a forgery" (Query: How could Lord Birkenhead know?).

"The disturbance at meetings which was now going on all over the country was a new feature of British elections, and it was a Russian feature. It was simply carrying out, for a financial consideration, instructions from Zinoviev. It was proposed that we should lend forty million pounds to this greatest collective gang of murderers that had never been hanged. He did not think the people of this country would allow it to be made an annexe of Moscow."

These speeches were re-echoed by lesser lights in every constituency in the country. Never had there been such an



election scare. From Lands End to John o' Groats Tory orators held forth on the bloodthirstiness of Zinoviev and the Russian murderers. If the British people did not go to the poll to vote against the Labour candidates their money would be handed over to Zinoviev and blood would flow in the streets.

So when election day came, millions of scared British voters recorded their votes for the Tories, and a reactionary Tory Government was returned to power to destroy all the good work that the Labour Government had begun.

Mr. Churchill received his reward; he became Chancellor of the Exchequer in the new Tory government.

### A PROVED FORGERY.

The Zinoviev Letter had served its purpose, and the Tories refused to investigate its origin and rejected an official Soviet offer to submit the question to arbitration.

In a speech at Manchester (26-10-24), McManus, the Communist leader, who was alleged to have signed the letter, challenged the Government to prosecute him.

If the letter was genuine, obviously McManus was guilty of treason and liable to severe penalties. But the Government took no action. The Zinoviev Letter had done its work.

The Russians believed that the Zinoviev Letter was forged by Russian Whites in Poland who were connected with the Polish Secret Service and were placed by it at the disposal of the British.

No original has ever been seen, and the Foreign Office and the "Daily Mail" only received copies.

A deputation of trade union leaders visited Moscow and were given facilities to examine the minutes and the correspondence files of the Third International and satisfied themselves that there was no reference to the alleged letter.

Four years later (4-3-28) Mr. Thomas Marlowe, the editor of the "Daily Mail" wrote a letter to "The Observer" explaining that he had at the time received two copies of the letter. In one of the copies McManus was made to sign the letter, in another he was the recipient.

About the same time Mr. J. D. Gregory, who had handled the matter at the Foreign Office, was dismissed as a result of his implication in the Francs Case when revelations were made about speculations in the fluctuation of French currency.

On March 19th, 1928, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald declared that the Letter "was a deliberately planned and devised concoction of deceit, fitted artfully for the purpose of deceiving the public and to influence the election. That it played a major part in the verdict no one will deny. That it was a fraudulent one, few will dare to deny."

As the "Sunday Express" cynically remarked: "It may be a forgery, but it was a mighty convenient forgery."

The history of the Zinoviev Letter shows conclusively that the Tories were prepared to stop at nothing to prevent Britain and Russia coming to a friendly agreement

## CHAPTER EIGHT.

## WINSTON'S WAR OF WORDS.

**T**HE Tory Government which owed its triumph to the Zinoviev Letter forgery scrapped the Anglo-Soviet Treaty which had been proposed by the Labour Government. The long and difficult negotiations which had promised to result in an agreement which would have opened the way for more friendly relationships between Britain and Russia, which would have resulted in a big flow of orders and work for British unemployed and which even opened out prospects for compensation for British bondholders, were discontinued.

The new Government had been elected by exploiting the Bolshevik Bogey, and refused to enter into further discussions or to appoint an ambassador to Moscow.

The Russians on their part were prepared to be conciliatory and, speaking in March, 1925, M. Chicherin, the Foreign Secretary of the U.S.S.R., announced that he was ready for further negotiations with Britain.

In the new Tory Government were prominent politicians like Mr. Churchill, Lord Birkenhead, and Sir William Joynson-Hicks, who could hardly open their mouths without indulging in vituperation against the rulers of Russia.

Sir Wm. Joynson-Hicks, speaking on 9th March, 1925, declared that: "Bolshevism had laid Russia in ruins and declared endless war on the rest of the world," although the truth was that it was the rest of the world (at least, the big capitalist powers) who had waged war on Russia and had contributed to the ruin.

A British Chancellor of the Exchequer is a minister whose speeches are taken note of abroad and are regarded as expressing the considered policy of the British Government. But, Mr. Churchill, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, continued to rave against Russia as he had done when he was out of office.

## "COSMOPOLITAN CONSPIRATORS"

Speaking on 28th November, 1925, at Tunbridge Wells, Mr. Churchill made a bitter attack on the British Socialist Movement because of "its foreign-mindedness." Even their dreary gospel," he said, "came from Germany and Russia. The British Socialists were well-known to be the dullest in the world. They had never contributed anything even to the building up of the Socialist philosophy. They had merely gulped down what Karl Marx and Lenin had handed over to them. His greatest accusation against the Socialist Party, however, was the evil they had done in corrupting the character of the British nation."



And, of course, behind all this was Moscow. He concluded :

" Behind all this sinister and unwholesome movement, largely, he believed, innocent in intention, though deeply detrimental in its character and consequences to the country, stood the dark power of Moscow.

There we had what we had never had before, a band of cosmopolitan conspirators gathered from the underworld of the great cities of Europe and America in the despotic possession of the resources of what was once the mighty and famous Empire of Russia. These men were ceaseless in their endeavours to spread revolution through every land. There was no country more the object of their malignity than this island home of ours, than this ancient race and Government which had so long known how to preserve democratic freedom with order and responsibility in all classes. (Cheers)

Was it not time that the law should be put in motion against the men secured by Russia to try to cause mutiny and sedition in the British Army and in the Navy ? (Cheers). Was it not time that new concerted efforts should be made by all men of good-will, by all those forces which, standing together, brought us through the perils of the war—that a new effort should be made by them to defend Britain and her Empire and to preserve for a future generation our love of freedom and our ancient fame ? " (Cheers).

Lord Birkenhead was not to be outdone. Although his rhetoric was not quite so purple as Mr. Churchill's, it was equally abusive and insulting. The Government of Russia, he said (20-6-25) was "a junta of assassins and plunderers."

It is doubtful whether at any other time in our history British Cabinet Ministers had so virulently attacked the government of a foreign country which had its diplomatic representatives in London and with which it was not in a state of war.

### MONEY FOR MINERS

The Russians took the view that the British Government was working for a break and they watched with suspicion and anxiety the Locarno Conference with Germany from which they were banned and which they regarded as a conspiracy against them.

On 25th April, 1926, M. Litvinov made a speech at the Central Executive Committee in Moscow declaring his Government's willingness to renew negotiations with Britain "with a view to finding a way out of the present deadlock," but the British Foreign Office, under Austen Chamberlain, remained coldly aloof, while in the country Cabinet Ministers pursued their propaganda campaign against the Bolsheviks with undiminished virulence and recklessness.

With the General Strike and the miners lock-out, relations between Britain and Russia again became exceedingly strained.

Large sums were raised in Russia to help the British miners and between 22nd May and 17th June the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions forwarded to the miners sums amounting to £380,128. Before these sums could be transferred in foreign currency the Russian Trade Union Council had to get permission from the Soviet Government, and, when this was granted, the British Foreign Office protested in a note to M. Rosengolz who had succeeded M. Rakovsky as Russian Minister in London.

Rosengolz replied that the Russian Government could not prohibit the trade unions from sending money abroad in aid of trade unions of another country.

### **"THESE MISCREANTS"**

On 19th June, 1926, Mr. Churchill, who had been prominently associated with the measures to crush the General Strike, and had edited the "British Gazette," delivered a characteristic speech at the Alexandra Palace.

He declared:—

"These miscreants, who had ruined their own country, were powerless in their efforts to ruin our country. In their plan of world revolution they found us an obstacle. If the Russian Bolsheviks could only pull down Britain, ruin its prosperity, plunge it into anarchy, obliterate the British Empire as a force in the world, the road would be clear for a general butchery, followed by a universal tyranny of which they would be the heads, and out of which they would get the profit. They would not succeed in their aim. (Cheers).

They thought the same sort of stuff with which they bamboozled their own moujiks would suit Britain. They were always expecting to wake up and find that we were cutting each other's throats for their benefit. They had their dupes, they had their feather-headed hirelings and allies in this country, but they would be disappointed. His Majesty's Government understood exactly their aims and their methods. The Socialist Party in the House of Commons was now labouring to prove that the Russian Government had nothing to do with the sending of money to foment the General Strike. But what were the facts? The Russian Government, the Third International, and the Russian Trade Unions were all of them only off-shoots of the Russian Communist Party. The inner committee of the Communist Party was the sole central governing, controlling body in Russia. It was the real Cabinet of Russia. They worked all the marionettes. They animated and directed every part of the diabolical machinery which was in action all



over the world. When they knew the hand that fired the pistol, what did it matter which finger pulled the trigger?

The Government were under no illusions. He had heard the question asked several times, and it was a perfectly fair question: Why do you let them stay here? Why do you not throw them out? (Cheers).

I am sure, Mr. Churchill proceeded, it would give me a great deal of satisfaction if they were thrown out. Personally, I hope I shall live to see the day when either there will be a civilised Government in Russia or that we shall have ended the present pretence of friendly relations with men who are seeking our overthrow. . . .

Does not all this show what a folly Mr. Lloyd George committed when he brought these Russian intriguers into our midst? It was one of those fatal downward steps in his career. I did my best to persuade him from it.

But, continued Mr. Churchill, we must not allow our policies to be swayed unduly by our feelings. . . . We have decided, under careful survey, without allusion to the whole position, that the present time is not the time when we should take the step of rupturing the negotiations and relations."

The Government did not think that public opinion was ready for a break. Even the "Daily Express" thought that Mr. Churchill had gone too far and remarked on 21st June, 1926, that his language "was such as would draw a protest from any other foreign government in the world."

### "RED" BLUE BOOK

In an attempt to inflame popular feeling against Russia the Government, three days after Mr. Churchill's speech, produced a "Red" Blue Book based on documents which had been seized in a police raid on the Communist Party's offices nine months before.

The discoveries made by the police were trivial and the "Red" Blue Book was scathingly denounced in the House of Commons by Lloyd George. "Trade which runs into millions" exclaimed Lloyd George—"£34,000,000 last year and it will be more when we take what we want in the way of timber and other essential commodities from Russia—trade which is growing year by year is to be thrown away for this miserable abortion of a book."

The Tory Cabinet was itself split on the question as to whether or not relations should be broken off, and the rupture was postponed.

## CHAPTER SEVEN.

**THE BULL DOG AND THE JACKAL.**

IN striking contrast to their bitter hostility to Soviet Russia was our Tory politicians' enthusiasm for Mussolini in Italy. While the Bolsheviks were denounced as murderers, Mussolini and his Fascists were hailed as gallant heroes. One of Winston Churchill's grievances against the Bolsheviks was that they had seized power by armed force. So had Mussolini. The Italian Fascists had destroyed political democracy in Italy, established a terrorist regime, crushed the trade unions, and castor oiled, bludgeoned and murdered their political opponents.

But they were fine fellows and our Tories eagerly held out the hand of fellowship to them. Like the author of "Mein Kampf" they were admirers "of that great man beyond the Alps."

Mr. Churchill's hatred and contempt of the Italian "jackal" and hyena date only from the time that Italy entered the war on Germany's side. Even as late as 26th September, 1935, Mr. Churchill spoke "as a proved friend of Italy" and referred to the Italian Fascist as "so great a man and so wise a ruler as Mussolini."

In 1927, however, Mr. Churchill regarded this Italian murderer with approval and admiration. He paid him a fraternal visit at Rome in January, 1927, and Mussolini welcomed him with enthusiasm, not only because he was the British Chancellor of the Exchequer but also because he was regarded in Europe as Bolshevik Russia's World Enemy Number 1.

**CHARMED BY MUSSOLINI**

Mr. Churchill's recent biographers like Mr. Philip Guedalla and Mr. Lewis Broad have discreetly passed over Mr. Churchill's pilgrimage to Rome to worship at the shrine of Mussolini. But an account of it is to be found in the columns of the "Times" (21-1-27) under the heading:—

**MR. CHURCHILL ON FASCISM:  
ANTIDOTE TO SOVIET POISON.**

It read:—

"Before leaving for London to-day, Mr. Churchill received representatives of the Italian and foreign press. Mr. Churchill informed his audience that he had prepared what he, an ex-journalist, considered the questions and answers most likely to help them in their work, and that a typed copy of this would be given to whomsoever desired one. The following are extracts in his own words from the impressions made upon him by a week's visit to Italy:—

You will naturally ask me about the interviews I have had with Italian statesmen and, in particular, with Signor Mussolini and Count Volpi. Those interviews were purely private and of a general character. It is a good thing in modern Europe for public men in different countries to meet on a friendly and social basis and form personal



impressions of one another. It is one of the ways in which international suspicion may be diminished, and frank and confident relations maintained.

I could not help being charmed, like so many other people have been by Signor Mussolini's gentle and simple bearing and by his calm detached poise in spite of so many burdens and dangers.

Secondly, anyone could see that he thought of nothing but the lasting good, as he understood it, of the Italian people, and that no lesser interest was of the slightest consequence to him.

I am sure that I am violating no confidence when I say that a large part of my conversations with Signor Mussolini and with Count Volpi turned upon the economic position of the Italian wage earner. . . I was very glad to hear and to have it proved to me by facts and figures that there is a definite improvement month by month over the preceding year. . . I have heard a great deal about your new law of corporations, which, I am told, directly associates twenty millions of active citizens with the State, and obliges the State to undertake very direct responsibilities in regard to these and their dependents. Such a movement is of the deepest interest, and its results will be watched in every country. In the face of such a system, ardently accepted, it is quite absurd to suggest that the Italian Government does not rest upon popular bases or that it is not upheld by the active and practical assent of the great masses.

### **"WOULD HAVE BEEN WITH YOU"**

If I had been an Italian I am sure that I should have been wholeheartedly with you from start to finish in your triumphant struggle against the bestial appetites and passions of Leninism. But in England we have not had to fight this danger in the same deadly form. We have our way of doing things. But that we shall succeed in grappling with Communism and choking the life out of it—of that I am absolutely sure.

I will, however, say a word on an international aspect of Fascismo. Externally, your movement has rendered a service to the whole world. The great fear which has always beset every democratic leader or working-class leader has been that of being undermined or overbid by someone more extreme than he. It seems that continued progression to the Left, a sort of inevitable landslide into the abyss was the characteristic of all revolutions. Italy has shown that there is a way of fighting the subversive forces which can rally the mass of the people, properly led, to value and wish to defend the honour and stability of civilised society. She has provided the necessary antidote to the Russian poison. Hereafter, no great nation will be unprovided with an ultimate means of protection

against cancerous growths, and every responsible labour leader in every country ought to feel his feet more firmly planted in resisting levelling and reckless doctrines. The great mass of people love their country and are proud of its flag and history. They do not regard these as incompatible with a progressive advance towards social justice and economic betterment.

In conclusion, Mr. Churchill referred to the policy of the British Government in Europe, which is 'that Great Britain, France, Italy, and Germany should work together for the revival of Europe and to heal the wounds of the war.'

Soviet Russia was not wanted to help in the revival of Europe and to "heal the wounds of the war," although the Allies had only been able to win that war with the help of the Russians who lost more men than any of the Allied nations, and who were still suffering from the wounds inflicted with Allied aid during the Civil War.

### FASCIST CONGRATULATIONS

So the Italian jackal and the British bulldog lay down together and snarled in unison at the wounded Russian bear.

This was, of course, before the treacherous Italian had stabbed France in the back. He had only used his stiletto to murder Italian Democracy and Italian Trade Unionism.

Naturally Mussolini who was still looked upon with suspicion by liberal minded people in democratic Europe, was delighted with the assurance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Great Britain that had he been an Italian he would have been wholeheartedly with him "from start to finish."

If Mr Churchill's breath "reeked of tobacco and alcohol" in a way that filled Mussolini with disgust in these later days, he did not comment on it. On the contrary, the "Times" (22-1-27) reported:—

"Mr. Churchill's parting message has elicited enthusiastic comments from all the Fascist newspapers, which speak of it as one of the most important judgments ever delivered on Fascismo by a foreign statesman, and they express confidence that it will have the most favourable effect on world opinion of Fascismo.

Mr. Churchill is congratulated especially on having understood the real spirit of the Fascist movement — an understanding in which, the newspapers declare, so many other observers of Fascismo have failed."

Mr. Churchill had obviously neither "understood the real spirit of the Fascist movement," neither had he formed a correct judgment of its leader and figure-head

He did not foresee that he would one day denounce the "gentle and simple Mussolini" with the "calm and detached poise" as "the crafty, cold-blooded black-hearted Italian who sought to gain an Empire on the cheap by stabbing fallen France in the back."



## CHAPTER NINE.

**CHAMBERLAIN v. LITVINOV.**

**W**HERE there is a will to stage a quarrel, it is not difficult to find an excuse. The attacks on Soviet Russia by Mr. Churchill and others were followed up by an official Note sent by Sir Austen Chamberlain, the Foreign Secretary, to the Russian Minister, Mr. Rosengolz, on 23rd February, 1927.

The protest was based on the charge that the Soviet Government was persistently carrying on anti-British propaganda.

Despite repeated Soviet pledges to refrain from propaganda, it said, the Bolshevik leaders continued to defame, attack and offend the British Empire.

A speech, it alleged, had been made by the Commissar of War, Vorishilov, who, according to the Soviet press, had referred to the "secret negotiations of English Imperialism egging on the small States, its faithful hirelings, against the Soviet Union." M. Bukharin had spoken hopefully of the Communist movement in China and in India and had approved of the British miners' strike, which was a lock-out, and the Foreign Secretary was especially indignant about a cartoon of himself which had appeared in "Izvestia."

Mr. Chamberlain then proceeded to threaten "that a continuance of such acts as are here complained of must sooner or later result in the abrogation of the Trade Agreement and even the severance of ordinary diplomatic relations."

In a forceful and unanswerable reply M. Litvinov, then Soviet Assistant Commissar of Foreign Affairs, outlined the Russian point of view.

In the reply M. Litvinov said:—

"The note begins by stating the quite unquestionable fact of the existing unsatisfactory relations between Soviet Russia and Great Britain. The unsatisfactory character of these relations Sir Austen Chamberlain attempts to explain in his Note, as he so often did in public speeches in Parliament and outside, by alleged infringements on the part of the Soviet Government of obligations undertaken regarding Great Britain in the domain of propaganda.

The note cites textually the agreement signed by the Soviet Government on 4th June, 1923, to the effect that the Soviet Government undertakes not to support with funds or in any other form, persons or bodies or agencies or institutions whose aim is to spread discontent or foment rebellion in any part of the British Empire, and to impress upon its officers and officials the full and continuous observance of these conditions.

## A FAKED DOCUMENT

During the three and a half years which have elapsed since the signing of the said agreement, the British Government has repeatedly addressed to the Soviet Government directly and through public statements reproaches of alleged infringements of the said agreement. Rejecting these charges, the Soviet Government has always demanded that they should be based on some definite instances. In violation of the obligation undertaken in the same year, 1923, on behalf of the British Government by Lord Curzon, the then Foreign Secretary, promised immediately to bring to the cognizance of the Soviet Government supposed instances of infringement of obligations, not allowing such cases to accumulate without making charges (Lord Curzon's telegram of 29th May, No. 127), the British Government has heretofore preferred to make general wholesale reproaches to the Soviet Government, never giving details, except in one case, when, during the General Election in Great Britain in 1924, there was made an unsuccessful attempt to corroborate an accusation by reference to the well-known and so-called 'Zinoviev Letter, of the then President of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

. . . . The only definite charge was based on a faked document, the so-called 'Zinoviev Letter.' At the same time, none of the persons who misinformed the British Government was punished, although that forged letter at one time created a threat to peace and strained to the utmost the relations of the two States, and left its mark on the whole subsequent development of Anglo-Soviet relations.

With reference to the agreement of 4th June, 1923, Sir Austen Chamberlain does not adduce a single instance of the infringement by the Soviet Government of this agreement—namely, there was not a single instance of 'spreading discontent or fomenting rebellion in any part of the British Empire.'

The British Government's note only enumerates a series of public utterances by Soviet leaders in Russia and newspaper articles in the Soviet Press. I must, therefore, mention the fact that between the Soviet Government and Great Britain there exist no agreements limiting the freedom of speech or of the Press within the frontiers of the two countries. . . . To bring published or verbal utterances made within Soviet Russia within the scope of the agreement of 1923 or the agreement of 1921 is an arbitrary extension of the limits of these agreements.

I could produce numerous examples of the wide use and, unfortunately, most immoderate abuse of the right to engage in propaganda within Great Britain against the Soviet Government by members of the British Government.

I will strictly limit myself to but a few examples.



In his speech at Watford on 20th June, Lord Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, referred to the Soviet Government as 'a gang of assassins and robbers.'—(Morning Post, 22nd June, 1925)

### Mr. CHURCHILL'S SPEECHES

At a Conservative meeting at Tunbridge Wells, Mr. Churchill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, attacking the British Socialists, declared: 'Behind all this sinister movement stood the dark power of Moscow.'

At Bolton Mr. Churchill spoke of the Soviet Government as 'dark conspirators in the Kremlin in Moscow.'—(Daily Telegraph, 22nd June, 1926).

Similar attacks can be found in the utterances of Mr. Amery, the Colonial Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary for Air, Sir Laming Worthington Evans, Secretary for War, and others, not to mention their supporters in the Conservative Party, such as Mr. A. T. Cook, who, at the Conservative Conference at Scarborough on 7th October, 1926, called the Soviet Government, a gang of international murderers.'—(Morning Post, 8th October, 1926), Commander Locker-Lampson, Sir William Davidson, and others.

Still sharper attacks against the Soviet Union abound in the Press of the ruling Conservative Party every day, abusing Soviet institutions, the Soviet Government and its representatives in London, and spreading incredible and fantastic lies about the Soviet Union.

It must at the same time be observed that the British representatives in Moscow are enjoying the same diplomatic privileges as the representatives of other countries, and have never been subjected to insults or abuse on the part of the Soviet Press, as were the representatives of the Soviet Government in London on the part of the British Conservative Press. . . . Particular dissatisfaction has apparently been caused the British Government by the opinions expressed by Soviet leaders concerning the anti-Soviet course of British policy in third countries. But with no less justification and foundation could be characterised as delusions the constant references made by the politicians and members of the British Government to the alleged omnipresence and omnipotence of so-called 'Soviet agents,' who are represented as being responsible for all or any difficulties in the British Empire in all parts of the world.

The Soviet Government deplores the unsatisfactory condition of relations between Russia and Great Britain indicated in the British Government's note. It believes, however, that to explain these regrettable circumstances by mutual accusations and an unfriendly tone in the Press of the two countries would be to take cause for effect and vice versa.

## BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S POLICY

. . . . In its relations with the Soviet Union the British Government consciously infringes the usual international customs and even elementary decency. It periodically thrusts in the face of the Soviet Government indefinite and unfounded accusations, refusing even to discuss them; it avoids settling mutual claims and complaints either diplomatically or through special conferences, committees, or delegations; declining the usual diplomatic ways of settling conflicts, it permits itself to talk to the Soviet Government in the tone of threats and ultimatums; and lastly, it ignores the constitution of the Union of Soviet Republics, making insistent attempts in its Notes to substitute party or even international institutions for the formal Government of the Union.

The same abnormality of relations is also expressed by the fact that the British Government in its Note permitted itself an unheard-of and unprecedented tone towards M. Chicherin, the Soviet People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs. The position which the British Government has established with regard to the Soviet State encourages the hostile campaign which finds expression in the coarsely abusive statements in the British Parliament on the part of members of Parliament and even members of the Government, and in the British Press

It must be added that the constant attempts by the British Government to minimise and even annul the importance of the fact of the restoration of diplomatic relations together with the authoritative information possessed by the Soviet Government regarding the continued attempts by individual members of the British Government to come to an understanding with ex-Tsarist diplomats and counter-revolutionary representatives working in favour of another insurrection will not allow public opinion in the Soviet Union to forget the rôle played by Great Britain in the first insurrection.

## THREATS AGAINST RUSSIA

At the conclusion of his Note, Sir Austen Chamberlain deemed it timely and fit to advance the threat of a complete rupture in commercial and diplomatic relations in the event of the Soviet Government not complying with the new demands which do not arise from the existing Anglo-Soviet agreements and the mutual formal obligations. Threats against the Soviet Government will have no intimidating effect upon anyone in the Soviet Union.

. . . . If the present British Government believes that the rupture of Anglo-Soviet trade and all other relations is called for by the needs of the British people and will serve the British Empire and cause general peace, then,



of course, it will act in a suitable manner, assuming full responsibility for the consequences.

. . . . In accordance with the decision for peace of the toiling masses of the Soviet Union, which are in entire conformity with the same aspirations of the popular masses of Great Britain, the Soviet Government will in future also pursue its peace-loving policy, which excludes all aggressiveness towards other countries. It will welcome the British Government sincerely if it will go to meet it on this path."

The British Tory Government did not, however, welcome this offer by the Government of the U.S.S.R. to discuss the possibilities of establishing more friendly relations between the two countries. Instead it did its utmost to inflame public opinion in this country against Russia.

## CHAPTER TEN.

### THE ARCOS RAID.

**I**T is one of the conventions of international relationships that the representatives of foreign countries should be treated with the utmost respect and courtesy. They enjoy diplomatic immunity, their letters are not censored, nor their embassies broken into by the police, and, even after war has been declared, they are given their passports and allowed to return without molestation to their own countries.

We have now had two wars with Germany, but right up to the declaration of war the German Ambassador and his staff have had no cause to complain that they have been treated with lack of consideration or civility. Although it can be taken for granted that the German Embassy was the centre of espionage in Britain, it was never raided nor were the German diplomats subjected to any insults or indignities.

Our Tory Government, however, brushed aside all the diplomatic conventions and courtesies in its anxiety to bring about a rupture with Russia.

### THE RAID

On 12th May, 1927, at 4.20 in the afternoon the premises of Arcos, the Russian trade organisation in Moorgate, London, were raided by a strong force of police and special detectives from Scotland Yard. All the employees, Russian and British, were detained until late in the evening and personally searched. The safes were broken into with pneumatic drills and all desks and drawers and files were opened and all documents and papers seized and examined. The chief officials of Arcos and

the Trade Delegation were not in the building at the time, and no list of the documents found or taken away was made in their presence.

Among the women subjected to personal search were Mme. Rosengolz, the wife of the Soviet Chargé-d'Affaires and Mme. Shannen, the wife of the Financial Attaché of the Soviet Delegation, both of them possessing diplomatic passports which entitled them to immunity.

The police remained in control of the building for four days. It was clear that the Government had determined on breaking off relations with Russia and that this action, which it never would have dreamt of taking against the diplomatic representatives of any other country, was the preliminary.

The next day, the Soviet Minister presented an official protest to the British Government. It declared that the raid was illegal and that under the Anglo-Russian Trade Agreement of 16th March, 1921, the Russian Trade Delegation was entitled to immunity and diplomatic privileges. Article V. of that agreement clearly stated that the official trade agents "shall personally enjoy immunity from arrest and search" and under international law this applies to the representative of a foreign Government, to his papers, offices, and home. But the Government ignored all this and declared that it was absolutely necessary to take this extraordinary and unprecedented action in order to get hold of a supremely important document which had been stolen from the War Office.

This document, however, was not discovered, and, instead, the Government produced another White Paper dealing with Communist activities in Great Britain, of the kind which had been produced ad lib by the British capitalist press in previous years.

### A TRAGIC MELODRAMA

There was nothing so sensational as the Zinoviev Letter, and nothing which provided the basis for a prosecution of any of the British or Russian employees of Arcos.

In fact, the letters which were produced out of the tons of documents seized had to be supplemented by others not found in the raid, but discovered elsewhere in a manner which Sir Austen Chamberlain refused to reveal.

Ramsay Macdonald declared that "the raid was pathetic—a tragic, comic melodrama and the official approval of such a thing shows merely weakness."

Mr. Clynes, speaking for the Labour Party, referred to the White Paper as a "bright diverting comic publication," and Lloyd George spoke out strongly, stating that the Government "had not pointed out a single advantage that would be gained to this country by a rupture of relations with Russia."



## THE CLOCK PUT BACK

Even the "Daily Express" protested "The break with Russia," it said, "benefits nobody. It is one of those events in history that put the clock back for the nations concerned."

This, no doubt, was the point of view of the business interests who were anxious to trade with Russia. For the firms which had contracts with the Soviet Government found that, whatever its attitude have been about the pre-war and pre-revolutionary debts, it could be relied upon to fulfil any obligations that it itself had contracted. Indeed, the reputation of the Soviet Government had become such that the Midland Bank was contemplating financial arrangements giving credit up to the sum of £10,000,000 which was to be spent in this country by Soviet trading organisations on machinery and industrial plant.

Our Tory reactionaries were anxious to forestall this, and they succeeded. The fact that there was a British army of unemployed amounting to over a million did not weigh with them as much as their desire to secure a break with Russia and to make things more difficult internationally for the Bolshevik Government. They knew that if Britain broke of relationships with the Soviets other countries would be less ready to continue friendly relations.

## SPIES AND DOCUMENTS

If the purpose of the Arcos Raid had been to discover whether the Russians had been guilty of espionage, they would have been justified in raiding every embassy in London. For, as Lloyd George declared in the debate, every country was doing it and so were we. "If the War Office and the Admiralty and the Air Force are not obtaining by every means information about what is being done in other countries they are neglecting the security of this country."

Lord Ponsonby, who had been Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, underlined what Lloyd George had said: "I have during my career," he declared, "seen a document which was taken from the archives of a foreign country."

The British Government has, however, only carried out one raid of this kind on a foreign embassy. There was no Arcos Raid on the German Embassy, even when their agents were convicted in British courts. These methods were only used against the Russians.

On 26th May, 1927, Sir Austen Chamberlain informed the Soviet Government that diplomatic relations were severed, although the trading organisations might remain to conduct legitimate business operations.

This was a concession to British trading interests who were angry at the Government's stupidity.

The immediate result was that the Midland Bank abandoned its proposal to finance the £10,000,000 credit, and trade between the two countries declined. More British unemployed were thrown on the dole, and the Russians went short of the goods and machinery that they needed.

As Lloyd George pointed out, this country gained nothing only a heritage of more distrust, suspicion, and ill-will.

### **"UNFIT FOR CIVILISED INTERCOURSE"**

Our anti-Russian Die-Hards were, however, exultant. Speaking at Haslemere (8-8-27) Mr. Churchill described the last session of Parliament as remarkable for the—

"long delayed but no less timely expulsion from our shores of the rough Bolshevik conspirators, who tried to reduce our peaceful and intelligent country to the same level of misery and prostration into which they had plunged the once mighty Russian Empire. We were now free to turn our undivided attention to our own mischievous brood of domestic Communists and subversists. The Russians would not come back until, by a long period of respectable behaviour, they had restored confidence in minds which on this subject had at last developed a healthy and vigorous suspicion."

Speaking at Honiton (23-7-27) he said:—

"We did not require, and we did not intend, to have foreign interference in the affairs of this country. (Cheers). Least of all would we tolerate interference by the agents of degraded Russian barbarism. (Cheers). We had proclaimed them treacherous incorrigible, and unfit for civilised intercourse. The land was cleansed from their presence, and we could now turn our undivided attention to our own brood of Communists." (Laughter and cheers).

So diplomatic relations with Russia were broken off and the Russian representatives expelled from London. "The boot," Mr. Churchill said elegantly, "had been applied to the evil-doers."

Diplomatic relations with Russia were not resumed as long as the Tory Government remained in office.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN.

## RUSSIA AND DISARMAMENT.

THE action of the British Government in breaking off diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. in May, 1927, led the Russians to believe that another attack on them was imminent. The wars of intervention were fresh in their memory, and the Soviets watched with anxiety developments both in Poland and Japan.

Poland enjoyed the protection of both Britain and France under the Treaty of Versailles, and there were always elements in Poland looking for an opportunity of picking a quarrel with Russia and hoping that it was yet possible to overthrow the Bolshevik Government by armed force.

These elements were encouraged by the action of the British Tory Government in breaking off relations with Russia.

On June 7th, 1927, the Soviet Minister to Poland was assassinated in Warsaw by a Russian belonging to an anti-Bolshevik organisation against whose activities the Russians had previously protested.

The Russians thought that this was a prelude to a new war in which Poland would be backed by the Allies.

## STALIN'S WARNING

Writing in "Izvestia" on July 28th, 1927, Stalin referred to the danger of immediate war.

"England has always preferred wars fought with the hands of others," wrote Stalin, "and now and then she has actually found fools to pick her chestnuts from the fire."

"We refer," he continued, "not to some indefinite vague danger of a new war, but to the real and actual threat of a new war against the Soviet Union in particular."

"The Soviet Embassy in Peking had been raided," Stalin declared, "at the instigation of the British Government, and this, together with the raid on Arcos, was part of the international plot, while the assassination of Voikov was intended to be another Sarajevo and to draw the Soviet Union into a war with Poland.

"The entire international situation," Stalin concluded; "all the facts in the field of the British Government's 'operations' against the Soviet Union; the fact that it organises a financial blockade of the Soviet Union; that it conducts secret conferences with the Powers on a policy against the Soviet Union; that it subsidises the emigré governments of the Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, etc., for the purpose of raising revolts in those States of the Soviet Union; that it finances groups of spies and terrorists to blow up bridges, set fire to factories, and terrorise Soviet Legations abroad—all this undoubtedly proves that the British Tory Government has definitely and concertedly undertaken to organise a war against the Soviet Union."

Stalin obviously regarded the British Government as Enemy No. 1, and when one remembers the inflammatory speeches made by prominent members of the British Government at the time, it is difficult to argue that Stalin had no grounds for his suspicions. Had the British Government not done everything in its power to overthrow the Soviets ten years before?

Actual war, however, did not break out between Poland and Russia, but the bitterness and the suspicion continued. And there is no evidence to show that at this time Britain and France made any effort to compose the differences between the Russians and the Poles.

On the contrary, they encouraged the Poles in their anti-Russian policies because they regarded Poland as a bulwark against Bolshevism and as an ally in the east against Germany.

The last thing, however, that Soviet Russia wanted was to be involved in another war.

In his article in "Izvestia" Stalin wrote:—"The Soviet Government must pursue, firmly and unwaveringly, its policy of peace and of peaceful relations, notwithstanding all the provocative moves of our enemies, notwithstanding all the pin-pricks at our prestige. The provocateurs in the camp of the enemy taunt us and will taunt us that our policy of peace is the child of our weakness, of the weakness of our army. We cannot and must not play into their hands. We must go our way, defending the cause of peace, demonstrating our will to peace, revealing the criminal designs of our enemies, and branding them as protagonists of war."

In November a Russian Delegation went to Geneva to attend the League of Nations Reparatory Commission on Disarmament.

### RUSSIA'S 14 POINTS

To the great annoyance of the delegates from other countries Litvinov brought forward a detailed scheme for immediate disarmament.

Litvinov followed the example of President Wilson, and his plan consisted of Fourteen Points.

- (1) The dissolution of all land, sea, and air forces, and the non-admittance of their existence in any concealed form whatsoever.
- (2) The destruction of all weapons, military supplies, means of chemical warfare, and all other forms of armament and means of destruction in the possession of troops, or military or general stores.
- (3) The scrapping of all warships and military air vessels.
- (4) The discontinuance of the calling up of citizens for military training, either in armies or public bodies.
- (5) Legislation for the abolition of military service, either compulsory, voluntary, or recruited.



- (6) Legislation prohibiting the calling up of trained reserves.
- (7) The destruction of fortresses and naval and air bases.
- (8) The scrapping of military plants, factories, and war industry plants in general industrial works.
- (9) The discontinuance of assigning funds for military purposes both in State budgets and those of public bodies.
- (10) The abolition of military, naval, and air Ministries, the dissolution of general staffs and all kinds of military administrations, departments and institutions
- (11) Legislative prohibition of military propaganda, military training of the population, and military education both by State and public bodies
- (12) Legislative prohibition of the patenting of all kinds of armaments and means of destruction, with a view to the removal of the incentive to the invention of same.
- (13) Legislation making the infringement of any of the above stipulations a grave crime against the State.
- (14) The withdrawal of corresponding alteration of all legislative Acts, both of national and international scope, infringing the above stipulations.

In presenting his plan, Litvinov dealt exhaustively with the whole international situation and with the failure of the great Powers to disarm or to bring forward serious proposals for the discussion of disarmament.

### BRITISH OPPOSITION

The whole plan was to be carried out within one year after its adoption. Not only did Litvinov propose to abolish all armaments but to make propaganda for armaments "a grave crime against the State."

People who started agitations for more battleships, more bombers, an increase in army and navy estimates, or officers' training corps would be liable to prosecution as traitors.

The very suggestion that a Disarmament Conference should really seriously consider disarmament was too much for the Conference, and Litvinov explained that he realised that his proposals might be considered too drastic

He therefore put forward an alternative modified proposal: "If the Capitalist States reject the immediate actual abolition of standing armies," he said, "the U.S.S.R. would propose that complete disarmament be carried out in gradual stages during a period of four years."

The Disarmament Conference was stupified. The only support Russia received was from Turkey and Germany. The Turks were inclined to be friendly with the U.S.S.R., which was her neighbour, and the Germans had been disarmed under the Treaty of Versailles.

The British Government would have nothing to do with the Russian proposals.

## CHAPTER TWELVE.

## SHELVING DISARMAMENT.

**M**AXIM LITVINOV is now one of the best known diplomats in the world. He is the Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs in the U.S.S.R. now, and British statesmen treat the man whom we once kept under lock and key in Brixton Gaol with the greatest courtesy and respect.

In Russian international diplomacy Litvinov ranks only as second to Stalin himself, and he is recognised as one of the greatest international personalities of our time.

Litvinov has seen a good deal of diplomacy in his day, and when British statesmen express their unbounded admiration of the U.S.S.R. and the Red Army, he has his own thoughts and memories about the part which the British Government played in the tragic history of events which culminated in World War Number 2.

Litvinov, no doubt, realises too, how much this affection for Russia is worth. It was not always thus and it may not last. Certainly the British Government and its representatives at Geneva, during the discussions about disarmament which took place in 1928, did not regard M. Litvinov, or the nation he represented, with the slightest enthusiasm. On the contrary, they regarded him as an outsider, an interloper who had gate-crashed into respectable society at Geneva and was proposing that something should actually be done about the subject under discussion, i.e., disarmament.

The representative of Great Britain on this occasion was the late Lord Cushendun, a die-hard reactionary if ever there was one, who as Mr. Ronald McNeill, the Ulster M.P., had once created a sensation by throwing a book across the floor of the House of Commons at Mr. Asquith, or was it Mr. Churchill?

## CLASH AT GENEVA

The choice of Lord Cushendun as its representative at a Disarmament Conference, was an indication of the enthusiasm and sincerity with which our Tory Government regarded it. It is not on record that Lord Cushendun disturbed the serenity of the Disarmament Conference by throwing anything at M. Litvinov, but it is hardly necessary to record that he was entirely opposed to the Russian proposals for Total Disarmament and regarded them very much as a personal insult.

The clash between the Tory Die-Hard and the Russian Bolshevik was the outstanding event of the Conference.

"Lord Cushendun," declared the Geneva correspondent of "The Times" (20th March, 1928), "at this afternoon's sitting



of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission submitted the Soviet scheme for the immediate and complete abolition of all armed forces, to a long and devastating criticism which greatly pleased his audience. A fine peroration was greeted with applause unusual in these discussions."

That was hardly to be wondered at because the great majority of the delegates present were anxious not to come down from the clouds of pious and hypocritical pretence to discuss practical proposals for disarmament at all. The Commission was well packed with the Allied Nations and their smaller satellites who did not want any measure of disarmament and were delighted that the representative of a great Power had come out openly to denounce the Russian plan.

No doubt the delegates from Italy and Japan joined in the applause. The German delegation, however, was on the side of Russia. Germany had been disarmed under the Treaty of Versailles, whose signatories had solemnly pledged themselves to disarm too. Germany had seen her battleships sunk, her armies disbanded, her guns and her aeroplanes scrapped by the nation who had won the war to end war.

### BRITAIN'S POLICY

Britain and France had disarmed Germany; why was the Russian plan, that other nations should disarm down to the German level, so Utopian and unpractical?

"The most effective part of Lord Cushendun's speech," continued the "Times" correspondent, "was where he questioned the motives of the Soviet Delegation in Geneva in suddenly making these sweeping suggestions. For several years the League had been doing the work of peace, and all that time it had received no assistance and support from Soviet Russia. Apparently the Soviet Government believed and hoped that these capitalist politicians would wreck the Soviet plan. He himself would disappoint them. He was in favour of a careful and detailed examination of it, which might take some time—he suggested six months. He differed from his Italian colleague in that respect, he said, for General Marinis had spoken in favour of outright rejection."

The only difference between the British Government and the Italian Government was that the latter was in favour of killing the Russian Disarmament Plan on the spot, whereas Lord Cushendun wanted to chloroform it slowly and unexpectacularly so as not to unduly shock British public opinion.

Lord Cushendun went on to make a typical British Imperialist speech about the responsibility of "the British Empire for maintaining law and order among backward tribes."

Moreover, "if complete disarmament were possible, what enormous advantages would be conferred on the industrial countries which could rearm themselves most quickly."

The British Government was not thinking of the British Empire, but of Abyssinia or the Argentine!

Then, under the Russian Plan, revolvers were allowed, and, as the police in Russia were armed, Russia would enjoy an advantage!

All this, however, did not prevent Lord Cushendun from making a beautiful peroration. "It had long been the dream of mankind," he concluded, "that swords should be beaten into ploughshares, and he claimed that the present generation was making the first organised attempt to turn that dream into reality. Progress could come only by evolution, and evolution was slow."

That final statement could certainly be understood by the Russians. A year later M. Rykov, then the Soviet Premier, pointed out that the publications of the League on disarmament covered 14,000 pages but had not eliminated a single soldier or gun or cruiser or cartridge

The evolution towards total disarmament was certainly slow, and, in the light of subsequent events, it cannot be claimed that it was sure

### QUESTION OF REVOLVERS

Litvinov made a lengthy reply to Lord Cushendun, answering his criticisms of the Soviet Disarmament Plan point by point. Dealing with the argument that the Russian police were armed with revolvers, he quoted extracts from the British press which reported that both in India and Belfast during the previous weeks disturbances had been dealt with by armed police. That hardly justified retaining battleships and bombing planes.

But, added Litvinov, "if examining our Draft Convention the honorable representative for Great Britain would like to propose still more drastic reduction of armaments for protection and for the police, the Soviet Delegation will do its utmost to meet him on this point." Litvinov was quite prepared to consider the question of abolishing the revolvers objected to by Lord Cushendun if that would result in some agreement about disarmament.

"Indeed," added Litvinov, "if the representative of Great Britain proposes total prohibition of the carrying of arms by private citizens, including even sporting rifles, the Soviet Government will not quarrel with him on this point"

The Russian Disarmament Plan, and even an alternate modified version of it, was overwhelmingly rejected. In the light of subsequent history it is ironical to read the speeches condemning the Litvinov plan made during the discussion by the representatives of Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, and Greece. Dr. Benes was one of Russia's prominent critics. Czecho-Slovakia's security depended on her future being guaranteed by France and Britain, and Czecho-Slovakia must have the armaments to defend herself!



## LITTLE NATIONS

Well, we know now what security the French guarantee brought to Czecho-Slovakia.

The Government of Poland, too, rejected the Russian proposals. In order to defend her independence Poland must have a strong army. Poland was also guaranteed, and we know how that helped Poland.

The spokesmen of Belgium and Greece, too, did not see how their security could be guaranteed without armaments.

All these countries thought they were safe for all time because Britain and France dominated Europe, and they laboured under the delusion that the Europe of Versailles could last forever, and that Germany would remain permanently disarmed.

The fact that Britain and France would not agree to any general measure of disarmament was one of the great arguments used by Hitler and the Nazis and helped them in their campaign for power. Had the Allies shown their sincerity by accepting the Litvinov Plan as the basis for European disarmament, the whole history of Europe might have been different and World War No. 2 averted.

Hitler is by no means the only man in Europe responsible for the situation which culminated again in the ghastly tragedy of war. Our British Tories played into the hands of Hitler by their hostility towards Russia at a time when Russia warned the world that if disarmament were not made a reality Europe was heading straight for the next war.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

### LOANS FOR RUSSIA VIA GERMANY.

**T**HE breaking off of diplomatic relations with Russia which the "Daily Mail" enthusiastically described as "kicking out the Reds" had a disastrous effect on British trade. Britain had embarked upon a terrible period of unemployment. Coal mining and engineering and the heavy industries generally languished from lack of orders. The workers walked the streets and half starved on the dole.

There need have been no mass unemployment in Britain between the wars if there had been in this country a Government which had been prepared to regard Russia as a great potential market for British goods. But our Tories did not then look upon Russia as a potential ally. They did not foresee that the time would come when vast shipments of arms and raw materials would be convoyed to Russia by the British Navy, and that a Government of which Mr. Churchill was Prime

Minister would enthusiastically send to the Bolsheviks supplies to carry on a war with Germany.

Even from strategical reasons alone the attitude of our Tory imperialists was the last word in short-sighted stupidity. While they tried their best to isolate Russia they proceeded to give credits to Germany and to help the Ruhr industrialists, who in time financed Hitler, to build up a potential war industry. What is more, our British financiers and capitalists lent money to the Germans which they, in turn, lent to Russia.

### LOANS VIA GERMANY

Under the Dawes Plan of 1924 British banks lent Germany money on which they charged interest at the rate of £7 12s. 2d. per cent. Towards the end of June 1926 a syndicate of German banks agreed to finance a credit scheme to develop trade with Russia to the value of £15,000,000.

The British Tories had succeeded in turning out the Labour Government which had proposed giving credits to Russia, but the German Government guaranteed this scheme to the extent of 60 per cent. The Germans lent the money to the Russians at a rate of 9.4 per cent, making a profit of £1 12s. per cent on the transaction.

One of the German conditions was that the money was to "be expended on engineering products calculated to bring replacement orders automatically for years to come." ("The Times," 1-7-26).

But after the British Government had raided Arcos, and sent to the police to break open its safes with pneumatic drills, and expelled the representatives of the Russians, British industrialists were less ready to take the risks of trade with Russia, and Russian orders went elsewhere.

Between 1924 and 1928 the value of exports and re-exports to Russia decreased from £11,072,529 to £4,545,100, while German exports and re-exports increased during the same period from £4,545,100 to £20,168,600.

### AN AMAZING STORY

The amazing story of how it worked out was told afterwards in the "Financial News" (5-11-34) by a Conservative M.P., Mr. Robert Boothby, who, as M.P. for East Aberdeenshire, realised how the increase in the herring trade with Russia meant increased prosperity for Scots fishermen.

Mr. Boothby recalled how while the British Government had isolated and boycotted Russia it had encouraged our financiers to pour money into Germany. He pointed out that at the time of the Arcos Raid:—

"The passion for lending money to Germany which swept the City of London began to move towards its disastrous climax. Millions of British pounds were poured into the Reich, most of which we will never see again."



In this prophecy Mr. Boothby was certainly right.

"A goodly proportion of the money," Mr. Boothby continued, "was used to finance the Russian trade, upon which we so resolutely turned our back. By the end of 1932, credits outstanding by Germany to the U.S.S.R. amounted to over 1,000,000,000 Reichsmarks. The money was used for the purchase of goods—principally of heavy machinery in Germany while our factories in the North stood idle."

According to Mr. Boothby "by the end of 1933 the Soviet Government had paid back 250,000,000 Reichsmarks (approximately £43,000,000), of which 187,000,000 Reichsmarks (£18,700,000) had been paid in gold."

By 1936 Russia paid back to Germany the whole of its loan of £100,000,000. British financiers, however, are still waiting for the money they lent to Germany.

Mr. Boothby concludes: "These figures constitute a formidable indictment of British financial policy over a critical period of years, and provide food for serious thought about the future." This was written after the Hitler Government had come into power in Germany.

### CHURCHILL STATEMENT

The Nazis held the view that the British Tory Government would never fight side by side with Soviet Russia. They came to this conclusion after a study of British policy towards Soviet Russia in the decade that followed the Russian Revolution and the wars of intervention. Even after Hitler came into power British politicians, including Mr. Churchill, spoke appreciatively of what Hitler had done for Germany.

"The story of Hitler's struggle," Mr. Churchill wrote in his book "Great Contemporaries," "cannot be read without admiration for the courage, the perseverance, and the vital force which enabled him to challenge, defy, conciliate and overcome all the authorities or resistances which barred his path."

There is no record that Mr. Churchill paid tributes to Stalin in these days. "The mighty warrior Stalin" did not even appear as one of the Great Contemporaries.

Mr. Churchill has also testified that "although the Allies extracted about one thousand million pounds worth of assets from the Germans, the United States, and to a lesser extent Great Britain, lent Germany at the time over two thousand millions."

"The Allies poured their wealth into Germany to build her up and revive her life and industry" wrote Mr. Churchill.

That was in striking contrast to the policy adopted towards Russia. Is it any wonder that the Nazis were prepared to gamble that Britain would not fight with Russia against them?

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN.

**METRO-VICKERS' ENGINEERS.**

**T**HE Tory Government that got into power as the result of the Zinoviev Letter and anti-Bolshevik scare did not resume diplomatic relations with Russia, and it was only when the second Labour Government was returned after the General Election of 1929 and Mr. Arthur Henderson became Foreign Secretary that Britain again recognised Russia, and a British ambassador appointed to Moscow and a Russian ambassador appointed to London.

Under the Labour Government friendly relations with Russia were resumed amidst a heavy barrage from the Tory M.P.s and the Tory Press. As a result of more credit facilities to the Soviet Trading Organisations, trade steadily increased. As a result of negotiations between Mr. Tom Johnston (who, as Lord Privy Seal, was facing the enormous task of finding solutions for unemployment in Britain) and Mr. Saul Bron, the Soviet trade representative, orders for machinery for Russia considerably increased.

In 1929 the Soviet Trading Organisations in Britain purchased machinery and equipment to the value of £2,361,275; in 1930 to the value of £3,618,947; and in 1932 to the value of £8,898,338. This increase was directly due to the arrangement under which the Russians were given 30 months credit. It was obvious that Britain had everything to gain by developing the Russian market.

**HOW WE LOST TRADE**

The National Government which came into office in 1931, and was dominated by the Tories, proceeded to restrict Russian credits and the 30 months credit arrangement was reduced to a 12 months credit, with the result that Russian orders declined by 50 per cent. As a result of pressure on the Government by British trade interests, the credit was increased in September 1932 to eighteen months, but during the interval large orders had gone to German firms.

In the "Manchester Guardian" (9-2-33) Mr. James Cathil, the manager of the Oil-Well Engineering Company of Stockport, was negotiating with the Soviet for a big order for oil-well plant. Our National Government would not extend the credit period beyond eighteen months. A German firm, aided by the German Government, offered fifty-eight months credit and got the order.

That was a typical example of how British industry and British unemployed suffered as a result of Tory prejudice and shortsightedness towards Russia. The more intelligent capitalist world, realising the stupidity of it, protested, and Sir Arthur



Steel-Maitland, who had been Minister of Labour in the previous Tory Government, returned from a visit to Russia in October 1932 and declared that "the volume of trade with Russia could be easily trebled. It might well be multiplied manifold."

But the National Government hated Russia too much to listen to such appeals, even when they came from the more enlightened Tories. It had set out to make a ring round the British Empire at the Ottawa Imperial Conference, and preferred to listen to Lord Beaverbrook, who was then wildly waving the Union Jack.

### ARRESTS IN MOSCOW

In March 1933 relations between Britain and Russia underwent another crisis as the result of the arrests and trial in Moscow of the Metro-Vickers engineers. These engineers were arrested on charges of espionage and sabotage. As soon as the men were arrested and before the trial took place, Mr. Baldwin declared that the Government was "convinced that there can be no justification for the charge on which the arrests were made." He told the House of Commons that the British Ambassador at Moscow had been instructed "to represent in strong terms the grave view which they take of these proceedings against British subjects of high standing, engaged in normal commercial pursuits to the benefit of both countries, and the unfortunate consequences to Anglo-Soviet relations which may follow unless it is rectified."

The British Government was, of course, entitled to do everything in its power to protect British subjects in Russia, but its spokesmen immediately took up a hectoring attitude and demanded the release of the engineers without a trial. Had relations between the two Governments been friendly, there is little doubt that the five engineers would have been sent back to Britain, as they ultimately were, without the incident inflaming public feeling in both countries.

Our Tory Press, however, worked up feeling to fever-pitch, and on 20th March, 1933, Mr. Eden, then Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, announced in the House of Commons that, as a result of the arrests, the negotiations for a new Anglo-Soviet Commercial Agreement had been suspended.

### HASTY ACTION

Those who realised the harm that the truculent attitude of the British Government would do to relations between the two countries protested strongly. The "News Chronicle" (21-3-33) said in a leading article:—

"The suspension of the commercial negotiations, announced by Mr. Eden yesterday, may do some harm in Russia; it will undeniably also do harm to this country's trade; and must provoke an acute ill-feeling between the

two countries which may have the gravest consequences, and which must at least complicate the efforts for a stable European settlement.

We see nothing in the facts so far as they are known to justify so enormous a hazard. We have the gravest doubts whether Mr. Baldwin or Mr. Eden really know what the real charges against these men are or what evidence can be brought in support of them. It is the duty of the British Government to watch carefully what is happening in Moscow. But it is no less its duty not to allow itself to be swept by prejudice into hasty action which it may have heavy cause to repent."

This was obvious commonsense, and would have been the attitude of the British Government to any government but that of Russia. Mr. Eden's attitude was that the British Government demanded the release of the accused just because they were British subjects, on the assumption that it was impossible for British subjects to do wrong.

The Russian Government took the view that it was entitled to place on trial accused persons charged with alleged offences committed in the U.S.S.R., and the British Government's demand for their release without trial was rejected.

### COULD BRITONS SPY ?

The Russians refused to accept the view that arrested persons could not possibly be guilty of such crimes as espionage and sabotage because the British Government indignantly denied that Britishers could do such things. They remembered how Britain had interfered in Russia before, and how British secret service agents had operated in Moscow during the critical days that followed the Revolution.

In his book, "Memoirs of a British Agent," Sir Bruce Lockhart has told of the activities of British spies, and how they tapped the telephone wires between the various Government offices. The London "Times" might think the charges against British subjects "fantastic"; the Russians had at least some reason for believing that in the past the British Government had employed spies in Russia and could not be expected to accept the view that the men were innocent just because Fleet Street and Downing Street said so.

When the trial took place, the British public was dumbfounded to hear that two of the accused, Thornton and MacDonald, had admitted their guilt in statements written in their own handwriting. The trial began in Moscow on 12th April, 1933, and lasted a week. Representatives of the British Press (with the exception of the correspondent of the "Daily Express" who was excluded) attended the trial, and, in addition to the reports of the trial, the anti-Russian press supplied a day-to-day running commentary, much of which was so grotesque that it is doubtful whether it was ever written in Moscow.



The British Embassy in Moscow, acting under instructions from the Foreign Office, busied itself behind the scenes, and attempted to influence journalists who were anxious to give an objective report of what was happening. Mr. A. J. Cummings has told, in his book on the Moscow Trials, how he was visited between two and three in the morning by one of the British Embassy staff who wished to remonstrate with him about his cables to the "News Chronicle."

### EMBARGO ON RUSSIAN TRADE

At the trial, Thornton repudiated the statement he had made in which he had given the names of various British subjects who were alleged to be engaged in espionage. As the trial developed it became clear that it was not only a trial of the engineers, but a long-range polemical duel between the British and Russian Governments, and in his concluding statement the prosecuting counsel Vyshinsky replied in detail to the note written by Sir Robert Vansittart, and to speeches made by Tory M.P.s in the House of Commons.

The sentences imposed, compared with the average sentences imposed by the Moscow Supreme Court, were light. Thornton was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, and Macdonald to two years' imprisonment, while the others were ordered to leave the Soviet Union within three days.

The British Government retaliated with an embargo on Russian trade which lasted until 1st July, 1933, when Thornton and Macdonald were sent home too.

British workers suffered during the embargo by being thrown on the dole. The "Daily Worker" explained that "the mass protest of the British workers" played a big part in getting the embargo raised, but it is more likely that the protests of the industrialists and the bankers interested in Russian trade had been effective, and, with the release of the last of the engineers, the British Government could claim a moral victory.

But the incident further embittered the relations between the two countries. The British Government had handled the matter clumsily, and the Russians, who would have saved themselves a lot of trouble if they had just deported the engineers whom they believed to be guilty of spying and sabotage, became more convinced than ever that the British Tories contemplated war on the U.S.S.R.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

**BEAVERBROOK AND RUSSIA.**

**L**ORD BEAVERBROOK is now a fervent admirer of the U.S.S.R. and of Marshal Stalin, and his newspapers are, these days, full of compliments to "our gallant Russian Allies." Indeed, the "Daily Express" is so full of praise for Russia, that the "Daily Worker" has become almost superfluous.

But for over twenty years the same Beaverbrook press published a stream of anti-Bolshevik propaganda which helped to keep alive anti-Russian feeling in Great Britain, and to give the British public a completely fantastic picture of what actually was happening in the U.S.S.R.

Louis Fischer, the well-known American journalist, who lived in Moscow for eighteen years, has told in his book "Men and Politics" how a special correspondent from the "Daily Express" arrived in Moscow in order to do some exciting articles about events in Russia. This special correspondent had been called into the editorial office for his instructions, and was told that the "Daily Express" did not want serious articles about the Five Year Plan, or about industrial development in Russia, but whether the Russian women wore drawers! This was thoroughly consistent with the Beaverbrook press attitude towards Russia. It wanted sensational anti-Bolshevik scare stories, not serious news.

The great grievance of the British capitalist press against Russia was that Russia had repudiated her foreign debts. But whenever Russia did attempt to send into this country the goods which alone could pay for the machinery, herrings, and other exports from this country, the "Daily Express" raised a howl to stop Russian dumping and to keep the products of Russian slave labour out.

**RUSSIA'S EXPORTS**

Before the Revolution Russia had exported to Britain large quantities of timber, oil, and agricultural produce, and it was only by shipping such goods to this country that Russia could do any trade at all. The Beaverbrook press did all in its power to create an agitation against Russian ships being allowed to bring Russian goods to British markets.

This was quite in line with the Empire Free Trade policy of which Lord Beaverbrook was the most clamorous champion. For years Lord Beaverbrook campaigned and crusaded for building a tariff wall round the Empire, to keep out the foreigner, and particularly the bloodthirsty Russians.

Nowadays the Beaverbrook papers are never tired of telling us of Stalin's wonderful foresight in building up a new indus-



trial system in Russia, and of the big armament factories in the Urals which provide the Red Army with munitions and equipment in order to fight the war. Yet in the days when the Russians were attempting to build up their industries and to exchange their agricultural produce for the machinery that they needed, Lord Beaverbrook was their most consistent opponent, and his papers did not scruple to publish any fantastic nonsense likely to injure Russian trade.

In December, 1931, for example, the Beaverbrook press conducted a campaign for the purpose of preventing Russian butter coming into this country. The Russians were not anxious to export their butter, for they needed it themselves, but they adopted this policy because they said they were prepared to go short of butter while they were building up their industry under the Five Year Plan.

### CAMPAIGN AGAINST RUSSIAN BUTTER

Butter imports from Russia were no new thing, because butter had been sent to this country in the days before the Revolution. Russia being mainly an agricultural country, agricultural produce had always figured among its main exports. But the Beaverbrook press declared that no Russian butter should be allowed here, and published scare stories that the butter was dirty and contained insects.

On 24th November, 1931, the "Daily Express" (in the course of its anti-Russian butter campaign) published a photograph which, it said, was a cargo of butter being unloaded at London docks.

The caption read:—

**"THE HEART OF THE EMPIRE—AND IN IT  
A GREAT CARGO OF UNWANTED RUSSIAN  
BUTTER. WHAT IS THE SENSE OF IT?"**

Mr. W. P. Coates, of the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee, however, remembered having seen this photograph before. It had appeared in the "Daily Express" itself on 30th October, 1931, under the caption:—

### **"TREASURE CHESTS—**

**A truckload of gold at Victoria Station yesterday. It was part of a large consignment on its way to France from the United States."**

For the purpose of anti-Russian propaganda, the "Daily Express" had transmuted gold into butter.

"Forward" promptly challenged the "Express" to explain. It said:—

"Now observe the use to which they place their photographs. They are endeavouring to stop the sales of Russian butter in this country. They call it 'cheap,' 'nasty,' 'wretched,' 'dumped,' and a 'Soviet Butter Scandal.'

But does not the scandal lie at the door of the 'Daily Express' when it uses a photograph of a French-American transhipment of boxes and casks of gold and declares it to be a consignment of Russian butter?

It is not only careless, but it is impudent. It is indicative of the reckless disregard for veracity with which this crazy campaign against Soviet Russia is being conducted in certain political circles in this country."

The "Daily Express" did not accept the challenge, nor explain. The photograph had served its purpose, and the "Express" readers had short memories.

Have we now seen the last of the "Daily Express" campaigns against Russia, and in future is Russia going to be regarded as an eternal ally? It is true that Lord Beaverbrook has expressed his affection for Russia in extravagant language in the House of Lords, and, since his visit to Stalin, has been advocating a Second Front and help for Russia for all he is worth. But will he be a friend of Russia when the war is over, and when, thanks to Hitler's foolishness in attacking Russia and the Red Army, the military power of Germany will be destroyed?

It is true that Lord Beaverbrook is an enthusiastic supporter of the Anglo-Russian Treaty in which we have signed a treaty of alliance with the U.S.S.R. for the next twenty years.

If Lord Beaverbrook is going to carry his admiration for Russia into the post-war years, he will certainly have to drop his old cry of Empire Free Trade and building a tariff wall round the British Empire. That means keeping Russia out. If there is to be trade with Russia after the war, Russia will have to send her grain and timber and other agricultural produce here in order to pay for the machinery which will be necessary to re-equip her destroyed factories.

Will our tariff reformers, 'the-keep-the-foreigner-out' school, those who want to build a tariff wall round the Empire and make the British Empire a self-contained economic unit and let the rest of the world go hang, will these gentlemen be so enthusiastic then? We will have to wait till then to discover whether or not the Beaverbrook press enthusiasm for the Russians is a thing which will last.



## CHAPTER SIXTEEN.

**HITLER'S BRITISH ADMIRERS.**

**H**ITLER came into power in Germany in 1933. He had made no secret of his intentions. He was pledged to tear up the Versailles Treaty, to get back the German Colonies, and to gain "Lebensraum" for Germany by attacking Russia and annexing the Soviet Ukraine.

No politician ever gave the world beforehand so clear a programme of his future action as Hitler. It was all clearly outlined in "Mein Kampf." But how could this be done without involving Germany in a war on two fronts?—which had always been the nightmare of the strategists of the German General Staff.

Hitler's whole policy was a gamble based on the calculation that a British Tory Government would never agree to go into war in alliance with Soviet Russia. With the facts about British-Soviet relations since the Revolution, Hitler certainly had some justification for this belief.

The British Tory Government was firmly in power, and its hatred of Russia was intense. It had won its elections by exploiting the Bolshevik Bogey, and its leaders were deadly opposed to Communism, and had shown that they regarded the Soviet Union and its ideas as opposed to everything the British Empire had stood for. And Hitler was not anti-British. On the contrary, had he not expressed his admiration for the British Empire?

How could the most conservative, imperialist power in the world go to war on the side of Moscow? How could red, white and blue mix with red? It was quite true that the British Tory Government paid lip service to democracy, but look how they admired Mussolini, and secretly envied him because he had destroyed the Communists, the Socialists and the Trade Unions.

**HITLER A "GREAT GENTLEMAN"**

Germany had powerful friends in Britain who would never allow an alliance with Russia. Prominent British public men soon openly praised Hitler and the great work he was doing in Germany. Among them was Lord Rothermere and his "Daily Mail" and other papers.

"Hitler simply exudes friendship," said Lord Rothermere in one of his rhapsodies about the German Fuhrer.

"In writing this of Hitler—the man," wrote Lord Rothermere, "my only desire is to give a sound perspective to the portrait of him in British minds, and to show that the ogre is, as I wrote a year ago, a human being of great culture."

"Hitler," the British public was told through the medium of the "Daily Mail," "is a great gentleman" "He has a great liking for the English people. He regards the English and the Germans as being of one race."

Hitler had come to power in Germany "by the only means possible"; "the means and weapons by which Nazism came to power were not the wanton choice of brutal men" for Hitler "had seen his race, both in Germany and Austria, over-run by a political gang of terrorists known to be financed from Bolshevik Russia."

And here is a final peroration from Lord Rothermere: "If ever, by the Grace of God, Europe enters upon an era of dependable peace in his (Hitler's) lifetime, it is quite certain that he will show in sociology the same drive and vision that he has hitherto shown in international and internal politics."

Lord Rothermere not only wrote all this in the "Daily Mail," he republished the articles in book form called "Warnings and Predictions" (Eyre and Spottiswoode).

His Lordship died in America, where he had evacuated himself to be safer from his old friend's bombs. He did not live to see the "Daily Mail" become a fervent supporter of Russia. Perhaps, however, the "Daily Mail" is delivered to him in the place where he is now. If so, he must be greatly perplexed.

### GOERING INVITED TO CORONATION!

Then there were the financiers, the big business men, and the conservative aristocracy who were invited to the Nuremberg Conferences. People like the late Sir Josiah Stamp (Chairman of the L.M.S., Lord McGowan (of the Imperial Chemical Combine), and a large number of others. Von Ribbentrop was well-informed about opinion in Government circles in London.

Lord Londonderry, a Secretary for Air, in whose London house the Tory Party held its great receptions, was also a welcome visitor to Germany where he hunted with General Goering, and had "a charming interview" with the Fuhrer.

Lord Londonderry liked General Goering so much that he invited him over to stay with him at Londonderry House for the Coronation, but Goering declined because "of the agitation against my coming to England, which was carried to the extent of holding meetings at which I was called all kinds of insulting names, and of sending me numerous offensive telegrams, it is quite impossible for me to attend the Coronation." He added: "I am already looking forward to seeing you and Lady Londonderry again, and I hope that I may expect you soon after the Coronation. Certainly you must be with us not later than September for the stag hunts."

It was certainly not the fault of Lord and Lady Londonderry that General Goering, the incendiary who burned the Reichstag, was not sitting in one of the front pews at Westminster Abbey to see King George crowned.

### ANTI-COMMUNIST FRONT

Certainly Lord Londonderry and Goering shared a common antipathy towards Communism. His Lordship wrote in his book "Ourselves and Germany," published in March 1939:—



"I deplored the indifference with which Communism was apparently being regarded in this country. I was at a loss to understand why we could not make common ground in some form or other with Germany in opposition to Communism. An understanding of this kind which carried with it no immediate alliance and no commitments would have furnished a bridge which, in my judgment, would have been very valuable indeed"

When the German pocket battleship "Deutschland" shelled the town of Almeria in Spain as a reprisal for an attack by aircraft, Lord Londonderry wrote that "the swift retaliatory action, whose operation was confined to a period of only a few hours and to objects of military importance, was certainly not disproportionate to the crime for which it was regarded as a well-merited punishment."

The Nazi leaders were certainly justified in believing that they had a powerful friend in Lord Londonderry, who proudly published a photograph of himself along with Hitler and Von Ribbentrop in the front of his book

On the other hand, there were the influential people behind the scenes who hoped that Hitler would attack Russia and that Germany and Russia would exhaust themselves in a war while Britain stayed out.

### TURN GERMANY AGAINST RUSSIA !

There was Lord Lothian, later ambassador to the U.S.A. Ambassador Dodd (American ambassador in Berlin) noted in his diary (6th May, 1935) that in a conversation "he (Lord Lothian) indicated clearly that he favours a coalition of the democracies to block any German move in their direction, and to turn Germany's course eastwards. That this might lead to a war between Russia and Germany does not seem to disturb him seriously. In fact he seems to feel this would be a good solution of the difficulties imposed on Germany by the Versailles Treaty. The problem of the democracies, as he sees it, is to find for Japan and Germany a stronger place in world affairs to which, in his opinion, they are entitled because of their power and tradition. He hopes this can be accomplished without any sacrifice to the British Empire, and with as little destruction to human liberty as possible."

But Lord Lothian not only met Ambassador Dodd; he met Hitler. In the American ambassador's diary for 6th May, 1937, we read of another meeting with Lord Lothian:—

"He (Lord Lothian) praised Hitler for saving Germany in 1933, and referred to his long talk of 3rd May with the Fuhrer, saying that it was mostly about Mussolini and British-German relations—now quite critical. . . .

I could hardly make out just where he belonged in European alignments. He seemed to be more a Fascist than

any other Englishman I have met. Recent English criticism of Italy and especially Germany with reference to their barbarism in Spain bothered him."

Lord Lothian is now dead, and it is hardly likely that we will ever know now (unless Lord Lothian kept a diary too) what he told the Fuhrer and what the Fuhrer told him. But it was quite clear that the impression left on Ambassador Dodd was that here was an influential and powerful behind-the-scenes Englishman who represented a section of British ruling class opinion who believed that it would solve Britain's problems if Hitler turned against Russia.

A full report of that conversation between Lord Lothian and Hitler would probably explain a great deal of subsequent European history.

### CHURCHILL AND HITLER

Did Mr. Churchill hope this too in the early years of the Hitler regime? He realised, it is true, that with Hitler's advent to power had come the danger of war, but he was at great pains in his study of Hitler in his "Great Contemporaries" to pay a tribute to Hitler's patriotism.

"The story of Hitler's struggle cannot be read without admiration for the courage, the perseverance, and the vital force which enabled him to challenge, defy, conciliate, and overcome all the authorities and resistances which barred his path."

This expression of admiration for Hitler was published in 1937 when the whole world knew how Hitler had beaten up and tortured Jews, Communists, Socialists, and Trade Unionists, and when hundreds of thousands of Hitler's political opponents were in concentration camps.

Yet Mr. Churchill thought that "we may yet live to see Hitler a gentler figure in a happier age."

"Look at the great things Hitler is doing for the Germans. We could do with a Hitler here" was by no means an unusual view to be heard in the Conservative Clubs and first-class carriages in the first years of the Hitler regime, when the Nazis were proclaiming that they had solved the problem of unemployment in Germany by building strategical roads and in other ways preparing for war.

"We certainly credit Hitler with honesty and sincerity," wrote the "Daily Express" (31-10-38). "We believe in his purpose stated over and over again to seek an accommodation with us. And we accept to the full the implications of the Munich document."

All this was in striking contrast with the attitude of our Tory politicians and our capitalist press towards Soviet Russia.

Is it any wonder then that Hitler based his policy on the assumption that Britain and Russia would not line up against him?



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

**CHAMBERLAIN AND RUSSIA.**

**T**HE Russians knew that Hitler's seizure of power had greatly increased the risks of war. They had studied "Mein Kampf," realised that a German attack on the U.S.S.R and the seizure of the Ukraine was part of Hitler's policy. But they knew, too, that the German General Staff did not want to risk a war on two fronts. An alliance between Russia and Britain and France, they argued, would prevent Hitler embarking upon war.

The point of view of the Russian Government was summarised in a paragraph from an article written in March 1935 in "Izvestia":—

"If Germany realised that in the event of war in the East, she would have against her not only the countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe subject to attack, and France which is bound to them, if she realised that she could count on Britain's support, but on the contrary, that Britain would support France, she would pursue a policy of peaceful struggle to improve her economic situation, since war under such conditions might end for her in catastrophe."

This became the guiding idea in Russian foreign policy.

That is why they proposed a Franco-Soviet Pact and decided to join the League of Nations. But when the Russians decided to join the League they were faced with the hostility of the British Government.

**DIDN'T WANT RUSSIA**

Robert Dell, for many years the correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" in Geneva has told in his book, "The Geneva Racket," how lukewarm Sir John Simon was at the prospect of having Russia in the League, and how he argued it was necessary that the invitation to Russia to join should be unanimous, knowing well enough that this was impossible. Indeed, at one moment it looked as if the election of Russia to the League was about to fall through, or that Russia, as a result of the hostility, would withdraw her application for membership.

Discussing Sir John Simon's attitude, Robert Dell wrote:—

"I find it difficult to understand his action in the matter if it was not due to a desire to keep Russia out of the League. And if Sir John Simon had that desire it was because the British Government had it."

When the Russians went to Geneva, they found that at every turn they had to meet the opposition of the British Government. Distrust of Britain increased in June 1935 when the announcement was made that Britain and Germany had agreed to the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, by which Britain agreed that the future strength of the German Navy should be thirty-five per cent of the aggregate naval strength of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

This was decided without any consultation with Russia. The French Government was informed of the negotiations, but the British Government assured the French Government that it had no intention of arriving at any final agreement—and then made one without informing the French!

The result of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement was that Britain had tacitly agreed to allow the German Navy a predominant position in the Baltic; a fact which naturally alarmed Russia.

### CHAMBERLAIN AND HITLER

When Hitler marched into Austria in March 1938, the Soviet Government proposed an immediate European Conference to prevent such acts of aggression from occurring again. The proposal was rejected by the other European powers.

Throughout the controversy over Czecho-Slovakia, Russia was studiously ignored. Russia was, of course, deeply interested in what happened in Czecho-Slovakia, and was pledged to go to the assistance of France if France went to help Czecho-Slovakia. In a famous cartoon, "Low" depicted the conference at Munich with Stalin in the background, looking on cynically, and saying: "What, no place for me?"

Did Chamberlain and Hitler discuss Russia in the famous meeting at Godesburg on 15th September 1938? It is hardly conceivable that they did not. Robert Dell records the story that when Ribbentrop went later to Moscow to sign the Soviet-German Pact, he took with him gramophone records of Chamberlain's remarks about Russia which were recorded by a secret microphone installed in the room. Chamberlain interviewed Hitler alone, and even Strang of the Foreign Office (who speaks German) was not present; the conversation being carried on through a German interpreter.

But what was known was that in all these comings and goings with Hitler, Russia was held at arm's length. Had Chamberlain flown on to interview Stalin at Moscow, the whole situation might have completely changed.

Can one wonder that the Russians were suspicious?

### OFFERS REFUSED

Knowing the bitter hatred that the British Tory Government had shown of Russia in the years that had gone by, can we wonder that the Russians thought that these negotiations were meant to turn the war against them? If Chamberlain



was ready to sacrifice Czecho-Slovakia, would he not be quite prepared to sacrifice Russia in order to gain time to re-arm and save the British Empire?

That was what the Russians thought, and in the light of the attitude of the British Government, can one wonder?

After the collapse of Czecho-Slovakia, Hitler turned his attention eastwards. Although they had been rebuffed at Munich the Russians hoped to come to an agreement with France and Britain. On 17th March, 1939, Litvinov, on behalf of the Russian Government, proposed an immediate conference to be held in Bucharest between Britain, France, Poland, Roumania and Turkey. The British Government refused to agree to this proposal.

On 16th April, 1939, Litvinov proposed to the British and French ambassadors in Moscow a pact of mutual assistance between Britain, France and Russia. On 4th May, 1939, as no replies had been received from the British or French Governments, Litvinov was dismissed from his post as Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and was superseded by Molotov.

Litvinov had done his best to bring about an alliance between Russia, France and Britain. This the British Tory Government rejected.

Collective security, that magic catchword which was to solve all international problems, had meant little more than collective suspicion. Hitler was convinced that British Tories and Russian Bolsheviks would not unite in a war against him.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN.

### HOW WAR CAME.

**R**OBERT DELL, for many years the "Manchester Guardian" correspondent, has expressed the view that by refusing to agree to the conference between England, France, Russia, Poland, Roumania and Turkey, asked for by the Soviet Government on 17th March, 1939, "the British Government assumed a terrible responsibility for the present war."

For, having turned down the Soviet appeal, the British Government proceeded to give a guarantee to Poland which was announced in the House of Commons on 31st March, 1939. This alacrity in giving such a guarantee to Poland was in marked contrast with the policy of aloofness shown to the U.S.S.R.

The British Government seemed to hold the view that this would frighten off Hitler. But while Hitler did not want to risk war with the Soviet Union at that time, he was confident that the German armies could quickly over-run Poland, and, without the aid of Russia, how could Britain possibly go to the

help of the Poles? Russia was the only country that could possibly give military assistance to the Polish Army. The Polish Government, however, did not want the Red Army over in Poland and feared the Russians as much as the Germans.

In a debate in the House of Commons on 3rd April, 1939, Mr. Lloyd George denounced the British and French Governments for having isolated Russia and kept it out of the agreement with Poland.

"If we go in without the help of Russia we are walking into a trap," said Lloyd George, adding:—

"I cannot understand why, before we committed ourselves to this tremendous enterprise, we did not beforehand secure the adhesion of Russia. I ask the Government to take immediate steps to secure the adhesion of Russia to fraternity in an alliance, an agreement, a pact—it does not matter what it is so long as it is an understanding that we will stand together against the aggressors. Apart from that we have undertaken a frightful gamble, a very risky one."

Why was the British Government so friendly to Poland and so reluctant to enter into an agreement with Russia?

The answer is to be found in the history of the previous years, and the eagerness of British Tories to regard the Russians as their natural enemies.

### OUR GUARANTEE TO POLAND

Poland, however, was different. The Poles were not Bolsheviks. They had not nationalised the land or the banks or the coal mines, but had welcomed British banks and insurance companies. Had not the Prudential Insurance Company helped to finance the development of Polish coalmines and to build up a coalmining industry out of which big profits could be made by exploiting the labour of low-paid Polish miners?

The Polish Government, although many of its members were as Fascist and as anti-Jew as Hitler and liked Communism and Socialism just as much, was a respectable capitalist government with which a respectable British Tory Government could do business. But Bolshevik Russia was a different proposition.

Later on when Poland had been over-run Lloyd George returned to the question of this guarantee in an article in the "Sunday Express" (24-9-39):—

"The Chief of our General Staff was abroad in France when this hare-brained pledge was given. I have good reason to believe that on his return he and his advisers pointed out that we did not possess the means to redeem it."

In this article Lloyd George blamed the Prime Minister (Neville Chamberlain):—

"Hitler having fooled him, he felt that he must do



something to recover his lost prestige, so he rushed into the first rash and silly enterprise that entered his uninformed mind. He guaranteed Poland, Roumania and Greece against the huge army of Germany.

It looked magnificent, but men who had some knowledge of the problems pointed out to him that it was not war. I was the first to call attention to that obvious fact in the House of Commons. I denounced it as sheer madness to give such a pledge in the absence of military support from Russia."

The guarantee to Poland did not prevent war, it brought it nearer, and the march of events then forced the British Government reluctantly to open more serious negotiations with Russia.

What happened during these long, drawn-out negotiations, and why they broke down, is still largely a mystery. The British White Paper that was promised has never been published, and a heavy curtain is now drawn over what happened in those fateful months. We will know some day when the diplomats and politicians come to write their memoirs.

We will have to wait until then to know exactly what went on behind the scenes when fifty meetings were held in London and Moscow in fifteen weeks, and no agreement was come to.

### WAR OFFICE VIEW

Unofficially the British public was told that Britain did not want to guarantee Latvia, Lithuania, and Esthonia, and that the Russians did not want to guarantee Holland and Switzerland, which had no diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. and didn't wish to be guaranteed anyhow.

Our War Office was, of course, by tradition, strongly anti-Russian. Vernon Bartlett, writing in the "News Chronicle" (17-5-39), said:—

"It is fair to assume that one of the obstacles in the way is still the prejudice against the exchange of military information which it would imply."

The diplomatic correspondent of the London "Star" wrote at the same time:—

"The Russian terms for an alliance with Britain are not yet formulated officially, but it is anticipated that they will include the request for close collaboration between the military staffs of the two countries. The War Office has not the remotest intention of participating in such conversations. It would not be in the national interests, our strategists hold, to submit British secrets to a chance of leakage in Moscow. The French generals, I am told, are much more violently opposed to such talks than the British."

Can one wonder that the British War Office was reluctant

to tell its military secrets to the Russians? Had the War Office ever seriously contemplated the possibility of having to fight with the Russians?

One of our great military strategists of those days was Field Marshal Sir Edward Ironsides, who in the previous war had been fighting at Archangel against the Russians. If our great military strategists thought we would be fighting against the Russians and not for them it is quite clear why they did not want their precious plans revealed to Moscow.

The degree of mutual confidence that prevailed in these Anglo-Soviet discussions is shown in a comment that appeared in "The Scotsman" (3-5-39):—

"Most of the unofficial comment on the discussions is speculative, but it might be said colloquially that both Britain and Russia want to make certain that neither will be left 'to hold the baby' in the event of aggression."

### HITLER'S GAMBLE

Meanwhile, in Berlin, Hitler was weighing up the situation and hesitating whether he should take the gamble of an attack on Poland. All depended on the possibility of whether or not he would have to fight Russia, Britain, and France at the same time.

In a dispatch to his Government dated 1st June, 1939, M. Coulondre, the French ambassador in Berlin, wrote:—

"The Fuhrer has asked General Keitel, chief of the General Staff, and General Von Brauchitsch, C-in-C of the Army, whether in their opinion, under existing conditions, an armed conflict would turn in favour of Germany. Both replied that much depended on whether Russia remained neutral or not. In the first case General Keitel replied 'Yes,' and General Von Brauchitsch (whose opinion has greater value) replied 'Probably.' Both declared that if Germany had to fight against Russia she would not have much of a chance of winning. Both generals attached considerable importance to the intervention of Turkey; their opinion being that Turkey was likely to act in favour of the Western Powers only if Russia herself joined in. The prevalent opinion at the Wilhelmstrasse is that, if Poland does not yield, Herr Hitler's decision will depend upon the signature of the Anglo-Russian pact. It is believed that he will risk war if he does not have to fight Russia, but that if, on the contrary, he knows that he will have to fight Russia as well, he will give way rather than expose his country, his Party, and himself, to ruin and defeat."

The French ambassador at Berlin took the view that peace or war depended upon the signing of the Anglo-Russian Pact, and these views must have been conveyed to Britain.



## RUSSIA AND GERMANY

When ultimately a British military mission was sent to Moscow in August it went by boat and was headed by Admiral Sir Reginald Plunkett-Erne-Drax.

The London "Star" explained:—

"It is quite a mistake to set them down as 'staff talks.' There is no intention for the present of getting down to tactics, map plans, and disposition of forces. The conversations must first define what is meant by co-operation and that process may last as long as the attempt to define 'indirect aggression.'"

The Anglo-Russian Pact, however, did not materialise. The British Government and the Russian Government suspected each other too much.

While the British Admiral and his staff were in Moscow discussing what was meant by "co-operation," Stalin was discussing that question with the Germans too, and the British military mission woke up one fine morning to discover that a Russian-German Pact had been signed, and that the papers were featuring the picture of a smiling Stalin shaking hands with a beaming Von Ribbentrop.

Stalin, fearing that Russia might have to face the full weight of an attack by the German armies, bargained with Hitler who, anxious to avoid fighting the Red Army just then, was ready to bargain too. The result was the Russian-German Treaty of 23rd August, 1939—which paved the way for the attack on Poland and the first phase of World War No. 2.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN.

### RUSSIA AND POLAND.

**W**HY did Stalin agree to the Russian-German Pact which led directly to the attack on Poland? And how was that consistent with the propaganda of the United Front and collective security?

Our anti-Russian press attributed it to the inherent treachery of the Russian Bolsheviks, and Russia came to be regarded in Britain as Enemy No. 2. Stalin signed the Pact with Hitler because he had no confidence that Poland could withstand an attack from Germany and because he distrusted the Governments of Britain and France and feared that they would allow Russia to get the full onslaught of the German military machine. He saw that war was coming and he wished to keep Russia out of it, and if that were impossible, to gain time. Certainly he was not anxious to fight about Poland and the Poles' claims to Danzig and the Polish Corridor.

British Tories, however, attributed to Stalin the motive of seeking to embroil the world in war in order to ferment world revolution, which was of course nonsense.

At the session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. (31-8-39), M. Molotov reviewed the Anglo-Russian conversations which had lasted four months. Nothing had come of the military negotiations, he said: "They encountered the difficulty that Poland, who was to be jointly guaranteed by Great Britain, France and the U.S.S.R., rejected military assistance on the part of the Soviet Union.

"Attempts to overcome the objections of Poland met with no success. More, the negotiations showed that Great Britain was not anxious to overcome these objection of Poland, but on the contrary encouraged them.

"It is clear that, such being the attitude of the Polish Government and its principal ally towards military assistance on the part of the Soviet Union in the event of aggression, the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations could not bear fruit.

"After this it became clear to us that the negotiations were doomed to failure."

### ISOLATING THE U.S.S.R.

How thoroughly the British and Russian Governments distrusted each other was revealed in a further passage from Molotov's speech:—

"Further, on the one hand, Great Britain and France offered to guarantee the Soviet Union military assistance against aggression in return for like assistance on the part of the U.S.S.R. On the other hand, they hedged round the assistance with such reservations regarding indirect aggression as would convert this assistance into a myth, and provided them with a formal legal excuse to evade assistance and place the U.S.S.R. in a position of isolation in the face of the aggressor."

In a speech a few months before (10-3-39) Stalin had declared that the policy of the U.S.S.R. was "to be cautious and not allow our country to be drawn into conflicts by war mongers who are accustomed to have others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them."

That was the reason why Stalin came to terms with Hitler and made the Russian-German Pact.

When eventually the Germans did march on Poland it was obvious that Britain and France could not send military assistance to Eastern Europe, but could only hope to deter Germany by embarking upon a European war, which, whatever its outcome, could not but bring havoc and ruin to Poland, the country which was to be protected and saved!



## RUSSIA AND POLAND

The campaign against Poland was short and swift; it justified all the predictions made by the Russians—and indeed by everyone else who knew the truth about the position in Poland and the capacity of its Government.

How little the Russians had in common with the Polish Government was revealed in another speech made by Molotov, the full text of which was given in the "Daily Worker" (2-11-39):—

"The ruling circles of Poland had boasted quite a lot about the 'stability' of their State and 'might' of their army. However, one swift blow to Poland first by the German Army and then by the Red Army, and nothing was left of this ugly offspring of the Versailles Treaty which had existed by oppressing non-Polish nationalists."

How much Hitler feared being involved in a war with Russia at that time was clear from the agreement by which Russia was given the Eastern part of Poland and a free hand in Latvia, Lithuania and Esthonia. Russia was given territory which the military strategists thought would place the Red Army in a strong strategic position on Germany's eastern frontier.

The war in Poland had lasted a much shorter time than the Anglo-Russian negotiations for a Pact. It was clear that Britain and France could do nothing for Poland.

## STOP THE WAR

With the end of Polish resistance and the flight of the Polish Government, the Soviet Government urged that hostilities in Europe should cease. On 29th September, 1939, it signed a joint communique with the German Government expressing the opinion "that the liquidation of the present war between Germany on the one hand and Great Britain and France on the other would meet the interests of all nations."

In a leading article "Izvestia" expressed the official view of the Soviet Government when it said:—

"Even the blind can now see that the Polish State in its earlier form, and on its former territory, cannot be restored. And yet the war waged by Britain and France against Germany is conducted under the flag of the restoration of Poland. Therefore the further continuation of the war cannot be justified by anything, and is a senseless shedding of blood. The cessation of this war would answer to the interests of the peoples of all countries."

The attitude of the Soviet Government was obviously not that of a government that wished the extension of the war. On the contrary, it saw that the war which had flared up in

Poland would inevitably spread and wanted a final effort to stamp out the flames before they burned up more of the world.

### LLOYD GEORGE'S VIEW

Lloyd George was one of the few who urged that peace discussions should be seriously considered. In an article in the "Sunday Express" (8-10-39) he wrote:—

"Those who recognise that all wars must sooner or later end in peace, and that no reasonable opportunity for reaching that end should be neglected, are apt to be treated as shivering pacifists. A stubborn and precipitate negative will alienate opinion, which it is essential that we should conciliate and win to our aid. When Hitler talks peace it is described as a peace offensive; when a British speaker talks peace it is surrender.

If we had to deal with Germany alone we might, with reason, plead the experience which has taught us to distrust the good faith of the Nazi leaders. But in this case we have to take into account the fact that two powerful neutrals are involved in peace discussions. If Russia is anxious for a peace talk now it would be a sad mistake to refuse. We surely ought to know now that snubbing Russia is a costly piece of insolence. Do not let us repeat that diplomatic gaucherie. The Ukrainians are not Poles, neither are the White Russians. We are not, therefore, in honour bound to sacrifice hundreds of thousands of British lives to restore these promises to Poland."

These were wise words, but Lloyd George's appeal and warning were ignored. The British Government had gone into war and could not bring itself to think of peace negotiations at the invitation of Russian Bolsheviks. The Germans might have won in Eastern Europe, but the invincible French armies were preparing an offensive in the West!

The British Expeditionary Force would be there in time to march in triumph on Berlin. The most popular song in Britain declared our intention "of hanging the washing on the Siegfried Line." And we were not only confident about beating Germany but were preparing to take on Russia as well.

### CHAPTER TWENTY.

#### THE WAR WE JUST ESCAPED.

WE missed being involved in a war against Russia in 1940 by the skin of our teeth. The history of the whole war might have been completely different if the British Government had been able to carry out the plans it had made at the



beginning of 1940 to send an expeditionary force to fight the Russians on the Finnish Front.

In the light of subsequent events it is hardly credible that in the first winter of the war the British Government should have sanctioned such a completely lunatic adventure and deliberately set out to attack Russia. But that was actually what happened and undoubtedly Mr. Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, favoured it.

Had this war developed, Russia and Germany would have been allies against us, and we would have undertaken the formidable task of having not only to face the military power of Germany but that of the U.S.S.R. as well.

For it is much easier getting into war than getting out of it. Had the proposed British Expeditionary Force been sent to Finland it would probably have been wiped out. Once we had begun a war with Russia we would have been embroiled in an endless adventure which would have swallowed up vast numbers of men and undoubtedly led to defeat.

It was pure madness on the part of the British Government that was so convinced of the "invincibility of the French Army" (Winston Churchill) and the genius of our General Staff, that it was prepared to wage war against the Red Army as well as the German Wehrmacht.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of the Russian war on Finland in 1939 (and the present writer regards it as one of Stalin's major blunders) it was obvious that we could have absolutely nothing to gain by getting involved in the gigantic gamble of a war on Russia.

We were saved from this disaster by the Governments of Sweden and Norway who would not sanction our troops crossing their territory, and by the Finns who did not make the formal appeal to the governments of these countries to let the British Expeditionary Force through.

For a full account of the lies told by the British press about what actually happened in Finland and the way war hysteria against Russia was whipped up, the reader should turn to "The Soviet-Finnish Campaign," by W. P. and Z. K. Coates (Eldon Press, 6s.).

## CHURCHILL ATTACKS RUSSIA

Mr. Winston Churchill, in a broadcast (20-1-40), violently attacked Russia.

He said:—

"The service rendered by Finland to mankind is magnificent. They have exposed, for all the world to see, the military incapacity of the Red Army and of the Red Air Force. Many illusions about Soviet Russia have been dispelled by these fierce weeks of fighting in the Arctic Circle. Everyone can see how Communism rots the soul of a nation; how it makes it abject and hungry in peace, and proves it base and abominable in war.

We cannot tell what the fate of Finland may be, but no more mournful spectacle could be presented to what is left of civilised mankind than that this splendid Northern race should be at last worn down and reduced to servitude worse than death by the dull, brutish force of overwhelming numbers.

If the light of freedom which burns so brightly in the frozen North should be finally quenched, it might well herald a return to the Dark Ages when every vestige of human progress during two thousand years would be engulfed."

At the time this Churchill oration sounded superb. Later events showed that he was just talking nonsense.

### RUSSIANS SUSPICIOUS

It was the Russians who withstood the full onslaught of the German military machine. Paris fell in a few weeks before the German attack, but Moscow held out. That would not have happened had Communism in Russia been quite so rotten as Mr. Churchill told us it was.

But Mr. Churchill's oratory can be adapted to suit all occasions. Two years later he had forgotten the Finns. He had declared war on them at Russia's request, and he was engaged in paying fulsome and lavish tributes to the "base and abominable" Russian armies that were showing such magnificent courage because they were now fighting on our side.

But with Mr. Churchill (the champion of intervention in Russia) orating like this, and with General Ironside (who had been the Commander-in-Chief at Archangel in 1919), Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, can we wonder that the Russians thought we were going to make war on them?

Russia had, of course, flouted the League of Nations in attacking Finland, and this was the reason advanced for sending military help. And the British Government, which had showed such reluctance to taking any action against Italy over Abyssinia and had so strongly supported non-intervention in Spain, showed remarkable eagerness and enthusiasm when it came to taking action against Soviet Russia—and against the Bolsheviks whom British Tories and brass-hats looked upon as the natural enemy.

When the League of Nations expelled Russia it was with the full approval of the British Government.

The Government encouraged volunteers who wished to fight against the Russians in Finland, and, in a reply to a question in the House of Commons (14-2-40), Mr. Peake, the Under-Secretary at the Home Office, declared that "a general licence has been granted to British subjects to enlist in the Finnish Forces, and a licence has been granted to the recruiting organisation which has been established in London."



## ARMS FOR FINLAND

Large quantities of arms were supplied to Finland. In the House of Commons (19-3-40) Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, in reply to critics who were criticising the Government on the ground that it was too slow in sending help to Finland, read out the following list of supplies, which had been promised and sent:—

**Aeroplanes:** Promised 152; actually sent 101. **Guns of all kinds:** Promised 223; sent 114. **Shells:** Promised 297,200; sent 185,000. **Vickers Guns:** Promised 100; all sent. **Hand Grenades:** Promised 50,000; all sent. **Aircraft Bombs:** Promised 20,700; sent 15,700. **Signalling Equipment:** Promised 1,300 sets; sent 800. **Anti-Tank Rifles:** Promised 200; all sent. **Respirators:** Promised 60,000; all sent. **Greatcoats:** Promised 100,000; all sent. **Battledress Suits:** Promised 100,000; all sent. **Anti-Tank Mines:** Promised 20,000; sent 10,000. **Ambulances:** Promised 48; all sent.

This was material enough to equip a small army, and further quantities were to have been sent, had not the Finnish war ended as dramatically as it had begun.

Later on when Finland joined Germany in attacking Russia, the Finnish Army was wearing battledress provided by Britain and using British aeroplanes, British guns and shells, and British hand grenades.

## OUR ARMY TO FIGHT RUSSIA

And it is more than likely that the tanks which we later sent to Russia were knocked out by British anti-tank guns, while Leningrad was bombed by aeroplanes sent from Britain.

On the Finnish Front Finns killed Russians and Russians killed Finns with bombs and grenades all made in British munition factories.

In the House of Commons on the same date (19-3-40), the Prime Minister declared that plans for sending an Expeditionary Force to fight Russia were approved at a meeting of the Supreme War Council on 5th February, 1940:—

**"This Expeditionary Force was to consist of 100,000 men. It was heavily armed and equipped, and plans were made for it to begin reaching Scandinavia in March and for the whole of it to arrive before the end of April."**

In case the House of Commons thought that this was not enough, Mr. Chamberlain added:—

**"Of course hon. members will realise that this was not necessarily the last force which we would have had to send. It was the largest force that we could send at one time to begin with. The question of further reinforcements was one which would have had to depend on the development of the fighting after the fighting had begun."**

## "LARGEST FORCE POSSIBLE"

The Government did not seem to have had the slightest idea of what a British Expeditionary Force would have had to meet in Russia. But it was prepared to go into Russia up to the neck.

Mr. Chamberlain emphasised this :—

"The largest force which it was physically possible to transport, making the maximum use of the ports and railways which would be at our disposal. He added that we were prepared to increase the original force to any extent and as rapidly as possible in the light of experience and of military development."

Mr. Chamberlain explained that the British Government suggested to the Finns that "they should make a public appeal for assistance not later than 25th March, 1940, and after that appeal had been made we proposed ourselves to make a formal appeal to the Governments of Norway and Sweden to allow the passage of the expedition."

The Finns, however, did not make the appeal suggested by the British Government. The British Expeditionary Force did not sail. We were saved by a narrow margin from being involved in a large-scale war against Russia which would surely have been the maddest gamble in the history of the war.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE.

### WHAT HITLER ACHIEVED.

**S**PEAKING at a meeting at Manchester on 20th June, 1943, Sir Stafford Cripps said :—

"I believe that if history records Hitler as having been of any use whatever to the world it will be because he destroyed the distrust which had formerly existed between Soviet Russia and the rest of the civilised world, and so opened the way to a new and more hopeful organisation of national security.

Sir Stafford Cripps was British Ambassador to Moscow in the months before Germany attacked Russia, and he should be in a position to know. If there is friendship with Russia to-day it is not due to the fact that the British Government pursued a policy of friendship with Russia and persuaded the Soviet Government that it was in the interests of the Russian people to enter the war on the British side.

The appointment of Sir Stafford Cripps to be ambassador in Moscow did not allay Russian suspicions of Britain. In fact,



they continued right up to the eve of the German attack. When Sir Stafford Cripps gives the credit to Hitler for bringing about British-Soviet friendship he is historically correct. Russia certainly did not get involved in the war as the result of any affection for us.

### BRITAIN AND HITLERISM

The Russians held the view that Britain, not Germany, was responsible for the continuation of the war after the collapse of Poland. In his speech to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., reported in full in the "Daily Worker" (2-11-39), M. Molotov said :—

"Everybody realises that there can be no question of restoring old Poland. It is, therefore, absurd to continue the present war under the flag of the restoration of the former Polish State. Although the Governments of France and Britain understand this they do not want the war stopped and peace restored, but are seeking new excuses for the continuing of the war with Germany. The ruling circles of Britain and France have been lately attempting to depict themselves as champions of democratic rights of nations against Hitlerism, and the British Government has announced that its aim in the war with Germany is nothing more or less than destruction of 'Hitlerism.' . . .

But there is absolutely no justification for a war of this kind. One may accept or reject the ideology of Hitlerism as well as any other ideological system, that is a matter of political views. But everybody should understand that ideology cannot be destroyed by force, that it cannot be eliminated by war. It is, therefore, not only senseless but criminal to wage such a war as war for 'destruction of Hitlerism' camouflaged as a fight for 'democracy.' . . .

It is the fear of losing world supremacy that dictates the ruling circles of Great Britain and France's policy of fomenting war with Germany. Thus the imperialist character of this war is obvious to anyone who wants to face realities and does not close his eyes to facts. One can see from all this who is interested in this war which is being waged for world supremacy. Certainly not the working-class. This war promises nothing to the working-class but bloody sacrifice and hardships."

That was how the Russians viewed the war until June 1941. Their whole outlook was coloured by suspicion and distrust of the British Government and the British ruling class.

### STALIN'S RESPONSIBILITY

Certainly the Russians were not won over to our side by any exhibition of good-will, tact, or even the ordinary caution

of diplomacy by the British or the French Governments. The French Government imprisoned its Communist M.P.s and the British Government suppressed the "Daily Worker"; actions which were regarded as being dictated by hostility towards Russia.

On the other hand, both in Britain and France, Stalin was regarded as "Enemy No. 2." When Leon Blum addressed the Labour Party Conference at Bournemouth in May 1940 he declared :—

"In France we do not pity our Communists. We think, everyone thinks, that if Stalin had wanted it this war might well have been avoided. Stalin must share—it may be in a lesser measure, but still he must share—in responsibility with Hitler for the war which has occurred. If tens of millions of human beings in Europe are suffering to-day, if hundreds of thousands are threatened with death and mutilation, Stalin bears his share of responsibility."

This shows how bitter the feeling was between Russia and the Western Democracies in the first year of the war. For a time it seemed that Russia was far more likely to be involved in a war with Britain and France than with Germany.

### SOVIETS AND CRIPPS

Right up to the eve of the German attack the Soviet propaganda agencies declared that the rumours of growing Russian - German tension which were being reported in the British press were due to the British Government's wish to involve the Soviet Union in war. As late as 13th June, 1941, a week before the German attack, the following statement was broadcast by the Moscow Radio :—

"Since the arrival of Sir Stafford Cripps, the British Ambassador to Moscow, in London, British and other foreign newspapers have written about imminent war between Germany and Soviet Russia.

These papers stated :—

- (1) That Germany has put territorial and economic demands before Soviet Russia, and that negotiations are in progress on these demands between Germany and the Soviet Union, and on the conclusion of a new and even closer agreement between the two countries.
- (2) As the Soviet Union has refused these demands, Germany was concentrating troops on the Soviet frontier in order to attack the Soviet Union.
- (3) That the Soviet Union, on the other hand, was preparing for a war with Germany and concentrating troops on the German frontier

Despite the obvious senselessness of these rumours, responsible circles in Moscow, in view of their persistence,



considered it necessary to authorise the Tass Agency to declare as follows :—

‘These rumours are transparent propaganda spread by Powers hostile to both the Soviet Union and Germany, Powers which are interested in spreading the war. Germany has made no demands on Russia and has proposed no closer agreement between the two countries, therefore no negotiations could be carried on regarding such demands.

According to information available in Soviet circles Germany is observing the terms of the Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact as closely as the Soviet Union. Soviet circles are therefore of the opinion that the rumours that Germany intended to violate the Pact and attack Soviet Russia are without foundation.’”

### QUICK CHANGE

Eight days later the German armies were on the move. Russia's turn had come. Hitler thought that the moment had come when Germany could turn East and swiftly destroy the military power of Russia by the same strategy and tactics which he had employed against Poland and France.

On Sunday 22nd June, 1941, Winston Churchill broadcast to the world that Britain and Russia would act together. Hitler had succeeded where everybody else had failed. He had brought Britain and Russia together.

In his speech Mr. Churchill said :—

“The Nazi regime is indistinguishable from the worst features of Communism. No one has been a more consistent opponent of Communism than I have been in the last 25 years. I will unsay no word that I have spoken about it. But all this fades away in the spectacle that is now unfolding. Any man or State who fights against Nazism will have our aid. Any man or State who marches with Hitler is our foe. Russia's danger is our danger and the danger of the United States, just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his hearth and home is the cause of free men and free people in every quarter of the globe.”

The next day the tone of the British press, and especially the papers which had for over twenty years published every kind of vilification about Russia, had completely changed. It was the most complete and dramatic change round in history. The “bloodthirsty Bolsheviks” had become “our gallant Allies” overnight. As Sir Stafford Cripps has pointed out, this was due not to any act of British statesmanship ; it was the achievement of Hitler.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO.

**WHAT OF THE FUTURE?**

**M**R. CHURCHILL'S broadcast declaring that Russia's danger was our danger and that of the United States, and that Britain and Russia would henceforth fight together against Nazi Germany, marked the end of a generation of hostility and hatred based on the fear and dread of the British ruling class of Bolshevism.

For, as Mr. Churchill was quick to realise, a German war on Russia meant that Hitler had taken on a gigantic task which must inevitably mean relief for Britain in the West, and the transference of a great deal of the strength of the Luftwaffe to the Eastern Front.

The invasion of Russia was an undertaking which had brought down Napoleon, and the military conquest of the vast territories of the U.S.S.R. meant the end of the threat of invasion to Britain. And with the Germans exhausting themselves in an endless struggle on the Russian plains, the Allies would have the time to train and equip mighty armies and organise their industrial resources for building the tanks and the bombers for final victory.

**FEAR OF BOLSHEVISM**

That was what Churchill grasped clearly. The fear of Nazism was now stronger than the fear of Bolshevism. It was Hitler's turn again to raise the Bolshevik Bogey, and to make German blood creep with fearsome prophecies of what would happen to Germany if she were invaded by the Russian hordes. The British press promptly followed the Prime Minister's lead. All that it had said about the horrors of Bolshevism, about how the Reds had nationalised the women, established slave labour, and abolished God, was forgotten. The Russians became the brave God-fearing nation of simple peasants fighting for their country again, and the newspaper editors turned up their files to recall what had been said in the early days of the last war.

Within a week the "Daily Mail" and the "Daily Express" had discovered that a religious revival was raging in Russia. The "Daily Mail" reported that 12,000 people thronged Moscow Cathedral to pray for victory, and that Acting Patriarch Sergei left a sick bed "to lead 26 priests in reciting the prayers and to conduct high mass," and the bewildered British public rubbed their eyes in amazement as they wondered how this could happen in a country where blood-stained Bolsheviks had abolished religion and cut the priests' throats twenty years before.



## " ALL BOLSHEVIKS NOW "

Tory M.P.s, who had got into the House of Commons by exploiting the Bolshevik Bogey, were soon on the platform telling their constituents how much they admired Stalin and the Red Army. It is true that, for a time, the B.B.C. boggled at playing the "Internationale," but it was forced to come into line too. Never in history had the attitude of one nation to another so completely changed.

The "Daily Express," which had a few years before been a fervent admirer of Hitler, transferred its affections to Stalin.

"Oh, Stalin is a great man" said Lord Beaverbrook (8-11-41), "I could feel the pulsating power of the man. The Russians are led well and wisely. I put my faith in that man's leadership."

The first British Labour Government had been vilified and brought down because it had proposed lending a paltry forty million pounds to Russia, and for years every obstacle had been put in the way to granting the trade facilities to a Russia which was struggling to build up her industries after war, revolution, civil war, and famine.

But when war came British politicians tumbled over one another to press the Government to send Russia the planes and bombs and munitions she needed without stint. Had a thousandth part of this friendship been shown to Russia during the previous twenty years the war would never have come.

## THE FUTURE

In 1924 when the Socialists talked of signing a treaty with Russia, it was discredited as "shaking hands with murder"; now we have signed not only a treaty of alliance with Russia "to render each other assistance and support of all kinds in the present war against Hitlerite Germany," but we have also pledged ourselves to co-operate with Russia for a period of twenty years.

Will this friendship between Russia and Britain last? It will if we remember what we owe the Russians and realise that we owe an eternal debt of gratitude to them for their sacrifice in the war, the sacrifice which has without a doubt saved the people of Britain. But we also owe them reparation for all the stupidities and crimes and blunders of the British Governments that preceded the war, when they were struggling to build up their Revolution in a hostile world.

In his book, "One World," Mr. Wendell Willkie has written :—

"Many among the democracies fear and distrust Soviet Russia. They dread the inroads of an economic order that would be destructive of their own. Such fear is weakness.

Russia is neither going to eat us nor seduce us. That is—and this is something for us to think about—that is, unless our democratic institutions and our free economy become so frail in practice as to make us soft and vulnerable. The best answer to Communism is a living, vibrant, fearless democracy—economic, social, and political. All we need to do is to stand up and perform according to our professed ideals. Then those ideals will be safe.

No, we do not need to fear Russia. We need to learn to work with her against our common enemy Hitler. We need to learn to work with her in the world after the war. For Russia is a dynamic country, a vital new society, a force that cannot be by-passed in any future world."

Let us hope that the future policy of Britain and America towards Russia will be guided by this wise and friendly spirit.

Will the hate be switched against Russia again, and will the Bogey of Bolshevism be resurrected again when the fear of Nazi Germany is no more?

We never know. For, though there are people in Britain and America who want to see Russians kill Germans by the million and so end the Nazi peril, these same people hate Communism, or any kind of Socialism, because they fear that it threatens their power and privileges, and the system which enables them to get rich by the exploitation of the workers.

The propaganda machines which are to-day so enthusiastically pro-Russian may to-morrow be again trying to inflame passions against Russia—the passion which are the prelude to war.

Let the British people remember and beware.

THE END





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