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53

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289

A visit to Russia, 1927.

"A VISIT TO RUSSIA."

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

THE TEMPLE, SUNDAY MORNING,

OCTOBER 23, 1927, CLEVELAND.



In speaking about Russia, friends, I am not qualified to bring you a new message of any startling revelation, nor can I speak to you as one having authority. My stay in that country was all too brief and my impressions all too hasty to warrant any major conclusions on my part or any great credence on your part. I went to Russia not to make a careful study of the country--a task which would have required many years and a more elaborate equipment than I possessed. I went to Russia simply to get the "feel" of the country, to see how men and women were living under the new regime--to catch, if possible, a bit of the mood and the temper of the populace. I went there to correct certain impressions which I had formed from reading and from hearsay about Russia, and it is only some of these impressions thus corrected by personal observation that I can give you this morning.

I tried to see Russia as the Russian would see it--difficult as that may be. I tried to guard myself against the constant temptation of making comparisons,-- comparisons between Russia of today and America of today. I tried to remind myself all the time that Russia was never like America; the Russia which the revolution overthrew was not one which had given the people political freedom, which had given the country a prosperous peasant class or a contented working class, or a large well-to-do middle class.

The average Russian today who looks back beyond the last ten years to the oldczarist regime finds very little in it to hanker after. The peasant in those days lived like a serf, next door to the brute--impoverished, illiterate. The workingman in Russia in those days was exploited beyond any conception of the Western man--underfed, underpaid, miserably housed,--a workingman whose every effort to improve his conditions was met with the Cossack's knout, with the sword and with the Siberian exile; and even the middle class in those days was constantly victimized by a group of autocratic corruptionists the like of which it would be difficult to parallel in the annals of autocratic government.

It is this system which gave Russia neither economic competence nor political freedom; it is this system which drove the Russian people on, on, but unprepared, into one of the most disastrous wars in history, where millions of them were butchered and slain and betrayed by their own corrupt officials,--it was this Russia of blood and terror and corruption that the revolution overthrew, and there are very few people in Russia today who lament its passing.

One must try to keep these facts in mind, for they help him to understand the attitude of the Russian today towards his government. There are very few people in Russia today who are enthusiastic about their government. Why should they be? The millennium which was promised to

them as soon as the proletarian revolution would have proved successful--that millennium has not arrived. There is still in Russia today a great deal of poverty and misery, vast unemployment, and a pitifully inadequate dole system. There is still in Russia today high prices, a dearth of commodities, rigid living quarters, vast inequalities and practically no freedom.

So that the millennium has not come in Russia with the proletarian dictatorship, and the kingdom of Karl Marx is something entirely different from the Kingdom of God. And so the people of Russia are not very enthusiastic about their government. But if you succeed in gaining the confidence of an average Russian so that he is ready to answer a point blank question, and you will ask him, "Are you satisfied with the present government?" he is likely to say, "No, not satisfied, but when was it any better in Russia?" Or "Is it not likely to be worse when this government is overthrown and the old autocracy comes back into power?"

You must understand that the average Russian today does not fret as much as we would because of the deprivation of freedom or the loss of liberty because the average Russian never enjoyed freedom. The Russian people for centuries has been ruled and dominated by a despotic clique, and the despotism of the modern autocrat does not irritate the Russian nearly as much as it would a people such as us which is habituated to freedom. Nor is the

average Russian, strange to say, outraged about the confiscation of property which has so outraged us, because the average Russian had no property that could be confiscated. And in passing it might be said that Bolshevism is likely to succeed in any country where the vast majority of the people have no property which can be confiscated. And so while the masses of the Russian people today are not enthusiastic about their government, they are not opposed to it, and any attempt to overthrow the present regime can count upon very little support from the Russian people themselves. The peasant will be afraid to lose all land which the revolution gave him; the workingman will be afraid to lose his new-found power and dignity, and it is this negative loyalty of the Russian people which is the greatest strength of the present regime.

The present rulers of Russia must be credited with having evidenced a real concern for the welfare of the masses. They are sincere people; they are earnest people; even if they are doctrinaire and hard and unimaginative and misguided, perhaps, in their economic theory, they are sincere and earnest people to the very limit of their very limited capital, and funds have been used in the endeavor, for example, to eradicate illiteracy in Russia in that most illiterate country. They are employing the most advanced pedagogic schemes for child and adult education in an effort to teach the millions of unlettered Russians the rudiments of education.

The poverty of the government, however, seriously interferes with an effective carrying out of this highly commendable program, which was so cynically disregarded by the old czarist regime. Relatively as much has been done by the rulers of Russia for the health of the people, for the protection of motherhood and childhood, and for the improvement of the sanitary conditions of that country. A whole lecture might well be devoted to these truly magnificent efforts for that country, where disease is rampant, where infant mortality is appalling, and where the very rudiments of sanitation and cleanliness are generally unknown. But here, too, while the program is magnificent, the performance must wait upon greater means.

The present government of Russia must also be credited with having established law and order; with having built up an administrative machinery for that country, and with having preserved the unity, the integrity of the Russian Empire. When one considers that ten years ago Russia suffered the most disastrous military debacle known to history, and that for five years thereafter Russia was victimized by a host of the bloodiest revolutions and counter-revolutions, fighting at times on as many as twenty fronts; when one recalls that Russia was strangled for years by the military blockade of the Allies, that it was decimated by ghastly famines and that it was economically almost ruined by a fantastic communism,--I say, when

one remembers these tribulations through which that people has passed during the past ten years, one marvels almost at the appearance of order and stability and normalcy which Russia presents today.

The railroads of Russia are operating--and on schedule; and in the larger cities the railroads are comfortable, even luxurious. Airway and waterway navigation are maintained; the post, the telegraph, the telephone, the automobile, the theater, the movie, the hotel, the restaurant, in fact, all the evidences of what we call Western European civilization are operating in Russia--at least in the larger cities of Russia; and life is as safe on the streets of Moscow or Odessa or Kiev, as it is in the streets of Western Europe or America--certainly safer than in Chicago.

The Bolsheviks, then, have established law and order in a country of 140 million people which stretches from the Baltic to the Pacific, and which covers one-sixth of the surface of the earth. They are also to be credited with having built up an administrative machinery--entirely new--for their national government and their provincial government and their city governments,--an administrative machinery to supercede the old machinery which was broken down with the revolution, and which they themselves helped to break down; and the marvel of it is that this new machinery, which was built up hastily and under pressure, actually functions.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the present rulers of Russia is in the direction of preserving the unity of Russia--a country which is made up of more than a hundred races and peoples. It was a colossal task to keep that country so constituted from turning into another Balkan imbroglio of conflicting and hostile peoples and races and nationalities, and they accomplished this huge task not by force of arms but by a broad-minded, broad-visioned policy of self-determination. They granted to every nation and every substantial racial unit in Russia complete and absolute political and cultural autonomy within the framework of the Soviet Federation. Under the old days of the czar racial minorities, national minorities, were suppressed and their legitimate national aspirations denied. Under the Bolshevik regime these nations and races were not only permitted but encouraged to develop their national life, their national languages, their national cultures, their national modes of life.

So that Russia today is really not one nation but a voluntary federation of any number of republics and autonomies,--territories which are privileged to withdraw from the union at will; and it is this policy of absolute autonomy to each nation and the voluntary union of all which saved Russia from that fate which overtook the Austria-Hungarian Empire, where no such broad-visioned policy was permitted.

Now if the Bolsheviks are to be credited with

these, to my mind, tangible achievements--and very creditable achievements--they are to be charged, however, first, with a failure of the essential, the central feature of their program, namely, communism; and by communism, of course, you will understand, as Lenin understood, that all property shall become public property; that all citizens shall become the employees of the state; that all shall work to an equal extent and receive equal pay. For the sake of this communism the Bolsheviks confiscated all private property; not only national and natural resources or tools of production but all private property. For the sake of this communism the Bolsheviks declassed that impoverished millions of people, drove the best minds of Russia into exile, assassinated tens of thousands, resorted to the militarization of labor and the food levies, and brought Russia dangerously near to the brink of economic disaster. And this communism for which so much of blood was shed is dead in Russia. In 1921 Lenin and his disciples had to adopt a complete reversal of policy. Private trade was legitimized, and with it of course private property and private capital. Communism was dead. A new economic policy was introduced. It spelled the doom of communism. Of course the rulers of Russia today are not completely reconciled to the full implications of this new economic policy. They still look upon a private trader, a merchant, as an enemy of the government.

If one wants to set up in business in Russia

today he has many difficulties to encounter. In the first place, he must procure a license from the government for which he pays a large sum of money; in the second place, his rent will be fixed at will by the government; in the next place, he must purchase nearly all of his commodities from the government because the government has a monopoly over all imports and exports; in the next place, he must pay an exorbitant income tax to the government; in the next place he will pay perhaps five or ten times as much for his private lodgings as he would ordinarily if he were not a merchant; and if, in spite of all these difficulties, he still seems to prosper, the government will proceed to open a store of its own alongside of him to drive him out of business. But in spite of it all, private business in Russia is going on apace, and in the rise of a new bourgeois class and in the rise of a new well-to-do peasant class, the leaders of the Russian revolution see the failure of the communist program written large.

My first disillusionment to communism in Russia came in the city of Constantinople, when I applied to the office of the Russian Navigation Bureau for passes to Odessa on a Russian boat, the Tchitcherin. The first question that was asked of me was whether I wanted first, second or third class accommodations. I was a bit startled to find these lines of distinction on a Russian liner, but when I arrived in Odessa and began traveling through Russia I found the same thing persisted on the trains. It was

first, second or third class. I found in the hotels that a room with a bath cost more than a room without a bath. I found that two rubles would purchase a better meal than half a ruble; I found that in the government stores if you had no money your membership in the communist party would get you nothing; I found in these self-same government stores some people buying jewelry and diamonds, and others shabbily dressed and hungry-looking standing outside looking in; I found that in the factories and the shops the skilled workman was being paid more than the unskilled; the foreman was being paid more than the skilled workman; the technician was being paid more than the foreman. In fact, I found in Russia all the shameful earmarks of capitalistic society which you find throughout the world. Communism is dead in Russia.

And the Bolsheviki are to be charged also, if you can call it charged, with the failure of yet another principal item in their program--the world revolution. They banked a great deal on that. They still do to a large extent, but not as hopefully. They believed that as soon as the proletarian revolution would triumph in Russia, that the spark would inflame the working classes throughout the world. But these otherwise clear-thinking and rationalistic leaders of the Russian revolution somehow miscalculated here. They forgot, or they didn't wish to remember, that the conditions of the working classes in Western Europe and in America are not at all like the conditions of the

working class in Russia, of the peasant class in Russia. For, after all, the working people in Western Europe and in America are enjoying political freedom, they being subject to legitimately or legally recognized organizations for self-protection and for mutual helpfulness, and they do share relatively in the prosperities of those countries where they are. The vast masses of the people are conservative and they do not resort to drastic measures of revolution unless provoked thereto by dire conditions, and these dire conditions did not exist in Western Europe and in America.

If Bolshevism has no chance in the United States, for example, the fact is due not to the vigilance of our State Department or to the efforts of our self-appointed professional patronizers. Bolshevism cannot thrive in a country like the United States because millions of workingmen in the United States own millions of homes, millions of bank accounts, millions of insurance policies and millions of automobiles. And because the world revolution did not come about Russia remains isolated, and because Russia is isolated Russia is fearful, afraid--afraid that it has become dreadfully militaristic. Everybody is talking war or preparing for war in Russia. Outside of my hotel window in Moscow there was a little open space, and while I was there a target was set up there and from early morning until sundown a Red soldier was training Russian boys and girls in shooting,--and that goes on in every town and

village in Russia .

They are convinced--or the leaders have convinced the Russian people, that the nations of Europe, especially England and France, will not permit Russia to succeed; they will overthrow and crush the present Russian government at the first opportunity. If they are right, if the nations of Western Europe will undertake a war against Russia in order to dictate to the Russian people what their form of government shall be, they will, to my mind, be committing as colossal a blunder as they committed in 1914; for the Bolshevik people are counting upon another world war such as we had to place them in the saddle of half the world. The last war enabled them to seize control of Russia, to establish themselves for a short period of time in Hungary, and to come very near success in Germany. Another world war, with all its attendant deprivations and impoverishments and horrors, is just the thing they are waiting for to put them in control of half the countries of Europe.

There are certain plagues which make headway only when a people is deficient in vitality as a result of famine and other untoward circumstances, and there are certain hurtful, desolating ideals which spread like a plague among peoples only when those people have become impoverished by the horrors and the deprivations of wars which are never their own making.

I should like to say a word about the conditions of our people in Russia. I found Jewish life in Russia

very much disorganized and broken up, but by no means crushed. Economically the Jewish people in Russia suffered perhaps more than the rest of the population, because so many of our people in Russia, as elsewhere, were merchants or traders and were engaged in imports and exports, in commerce, and the communist government declassified them all, deprived them of their trade, of their stores, dispossessed them of their capital, impoverished them and threw them out upon poverty and unemployment, and hundreds of thousands of them had to choose between manual labor, which was not plentiful, and agricultural work, for which they were not prepared, for which they are not equipped, and starvation. Thousands of them starved. Many of them sought safety and refuge in agriculture, and an organization was built up in Russia to foster the settlement of Russian Jews upon the soil. We here in America, through the Joint Distribution Committee, have contributed large sums of money for the relief of the Russian people, for the Jews upon the soil. In the last four or five years some 80,000 souls have been settled in seven distinct regions--mostly in Southern Russia and in the Crimea--settled upon the soil, and many a Jew has been absorbed in the industrial life of the country, and a large number of them have been absorbed into the governmental positions of Russia.

So that today Russian Jewry presents this composition: there are in Russia today about two and three-fourths million Jews; there are 200,000, approximately,

heads of families; a million of them are engaged in government positions of one kind or another, either political or commercial. Anyone who manages a government store is a government employee. And so a million Jews derive their sustenance from employment in government positions. About a half a million of them are what they call in Russia . . . --laborers in their own rights,-- tailors, cobblers, masons,--not employed by the government but carrying on their activity in their own store. About a half a million of them are what is known as . . . --the new economic policy men, that is, the new traders who have come up since the Bolsheviki were compelled to re-introduce private trade in Russia. And about 175,000 of Jews are on the soil. That accounts for about 2,175,000, and that leaves unaccounted for some 575,000 Jews who have no visible or permanent source of income. And they present a very sad, a very tragic factor in Russian life today.

Culturally, religiously, the condition of the Jew in Russia today is not good. The Russian government, as you well know, is hostile to religion. It is distinctly and avowedly anti-religious. In the public schools it teaches the little children atheism and contempt for all forms and expressions of religion. Religious observance on the part of men and women is permitted; that is, a man is allowed to go to a church or a synagogue, but no public instruction of children under eighteen is permitted. So that no Jewish community has the privilege of building up

or of opening up a religious school. The father alone is permitted to teach his child religion or Hebrew,--a one-sided policy, a medieval policy, but a policy very strictly enforced in Russia. But Russian Jewish life is hardy and the Russian Jews are not yielding to this policy, which spells the doom of Judaism in Russia, and so there has sprung up in Russia a network of subterranean schools, Marano schools, where in secret Jews are teaching their children their faith.

I read this message which was published in our newspapers a few days ago from Russia: "A sentence of six months imprisonment was imposed and later commuted to a fine of 50 rubles on the local rabbi of the town Romni, district of Poltava. The rabbi was charged with teaching religion to Jewish children under sixteen. It was charged that the rabbi kept the children in the local Beth Hamidrash (the synagogue) behind closed windows and locked doors, where he instructed them in the Bible and the Talmud. One of the three synagogues in Kutelne, Zsitomir, was seized by the workers and will be converted into an artisans' club."

Synagogues and churches have been confiscated by the government and many of them turned into clubs. In Moscow there was a little synagogue which had been in existence for a generation. They occupied small quarters. The Russian commissar informed them one day they would have to move or have to pay a fantastical, exorbitant rental, which these poor people could not pay; and so they were

fifty dollars in our American money--to obtain a seat in a synagogue.

So that in spite of the anti-religious Jewish program going on in Russia, not only against Judaism but against Christianity, religion seems to hold its own. Near the walls of the Kremlin I found this sign chisled in the stone: "Religion is the opium of the people"--put there by the Bolsheviks. But ten steps away there was a sacred shrine at the very entrance to the Red Square, which is the heart of Russia, and that sacred shrine was crowded day and night with worshippers.

It is interesting to watch this modern struggle between organized religion and organized anti-religion, and it is interesting to watch the outcome of this struggle. Zionism is banned in Russia. It is regarded as counter-revolutionary. A Zionist organization cannot be registered in Russia. Anti-Semitism is on the increase, strange to say. Officially the Jew in Russia enjoys absolute equality with the non-Jew; there are no discriminations officially against the Jew of Russia, but there is an unofficial, a popular anti-Semitism in Russia as elsewhere, and this has so grown that the officials of the Communist party have been compelled to take measures recently to check the anti-Semitic feeling which is sweeping over Russia. And the anti-Semitism is to be found even in the highest ranks of the Communist party itself. Really, there are other reasons for anti-Semitism besides the

economic ones.

I left Russia, friends, with a few clear ideas fixed in my mind. First of all, that the pacification of the world cannot be achieved without the pacification of Russia and its absorption into the concert of nations. You cannot keep a nation of 140 millions of people permanently quarantined and isolated without affecting the stability of the well-being of all the surrounding peoples. My second conviction was this: that if communism failed in Russia it failed not because of any external pressure but because of the inherent policy of communism, and if the present day state capitalism of Russia is to fail it will fail not because of any outside pressure which will be put onto the Russian people, but it will fail because of its inherent fallacies. If it does not fail, if state capitalism is more economical and proves to be more efficient than our own competitive, private capitalistic system, then the world ought to know it and we all ought to benefit by it.

There is nothing inherently sacred in one economic system or in another. From the point of view of morality, of abstract moral idealism, it matters very little whether the title to this mine or to this factory is vested in an individual or a corporation, or cooperative, or the state. The important thing is: does that particular system yield the most of social well-being? That is the test; that is the only crucial test.

Russia needs the world; the world needs Russia. The present rulers of Russia seem to have established a de facto government; they seem to have established law and order in that government. Most of the nations of the world have recognized these simple facts and have acted accordingly. They have given official recognition to the Russian government. The more cautious among them only extended commercial alliances with Russia. Our own country has done neither. In my humble opinion it should at once establish official commercial relationship with Russia, looking towards an ultimate recognition of that government when our own government will have satisfied itself that the Russian government is content to attend to its own business without interfering in the affairs of other peoples.

And this is my last conviction which I have brought with me from Russia: that the way of national salvation still lies in popular government and not in class dictatorship, whether that dictatorship be the dictatorship of Lenin or that of Mussolini. They are both baneful; they are both primitive in technique; they are both grounded in force; they have both been weighed in the balance of history and found wanting. Both of them carry within themselves the seeds of their own destruction.

Democracy is slow; democracy is cumbersome; democracy is faulty, but so is the whole of human progress. The Kingdom of God cometh not in haste. The ideals of

mankind must first travel the hard road of frustration and defeat and deferment before they can reach the halls of transfiguration. The Kingdom cometh not in haste. No Red army and no fascist legion can bring it about. It is the people themselves, burdened with the responsibilities of their own freedom, enlightened by increasing knowledge derived from increasing experience; it is the people themselves, the masses of the people, bruised by their own mistakes, encouraged by their own victories,--it is the people themselves who must, slowly and painfully but nevertheless steadily and assuredly, make their way to the kingdom of justice and truth and freedom.

Between the ways of Lenin and the ways of Lincoln we may still in confidence choose the way of Lincoln. Between the ways of Mussolini and the ways of Stalin and Kalin, and the ways of Woodrow Wilson, we may still confidently choose the slow, deliberate, difficult, democratic way of Woodrow Wilson.

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248

1. Having authority - "feel" - mood. "check
up" -

2. Guard against comparisons with Com.

① Pol. Econ. systems.

② Peasant. self. Prot. exploited - M. & C. Union

③ Communist Pol. inherently - War.

3. No enthusiasm for present regime -
- but fear returns. Negative loyalty.

① We not resent loss of freedom

② Private Property -

4. Credit. ① Concern for masses. Education.
- Health Work. Welfare Work.
- Sanitation.

② Law & Order - In a country which
10 yrs - Barbarism etc. Empire 9/10

③ Imprisoned new Pol. machinery

④ Unity - National Movements
- Union & Republic Structure. Territories.

5. Failures ① Communism. 1921 N.E.P.
- NOT remembered. - Private Trade-Union.
~~②~~ First 2nd 3rd class.

② The World Revolution - Enthusiasm
carried them away -
- workingmen's Conventions -

③ Violated - Militarism

6. Left Russia - per central union
- ① Russia must be restored to Great
 - ② Russia must be allowed to
work out her own salvation
 - ③ Subversion forbid -
 - ④ Matrilineal -

③. Should establish Trade Treaties -
Recognition

7. Germany - way of adv. in direction
of Pop. front - Principle
- Germany for Councils not in hands

1. Active Cur-

2. Prod. to new (2)

Russia
H

1. One having authority - "feel". correct.
2. R. furiously loved or hated - Truth revealed
 - Tried to guard myself - Compassion
 - ① The system which Rev. Matthew
looks back - illiterate - exploited -
 suppression - War -
 - ② No freedom to report -
 - ③ No private property -
 - ④ Not enthusiastic - life very hard - unenjoyable -
 - fears worse -
3. Godit - ① Real concern for masses - Education -
Health - motherhood - sanitary -
 ② Orders & Administrative Machinery
 for a country which 10 yrs -
 remarkably normal stable roads -
railroads - post etc. Safe - Chicago
 - estab. law under 140 m. Heching
from Balke.
 ③ Imprisoned machinery.
 ④ Greatst achievement. Left Russia under
- Balkan emblyos -
absolute racial & cultural autors.
- Russia is voluntary union -
 "The autonomy of each indiv. Nation - and the
Voluntary Union of All."
4. Fairness. Communism - ① Unperished ② Compromised
fed & declassified - ④ Assassinated -
 - 1921. M.E.P.

① Private Trading permitted - but still regards him as enemy. Taxes -

① New Bourgeoisie

(2) My 1st Disillusion. - Cartachupa
- all shameful ear-marks -

5. Wald Revolution. Failed.

① Rest of Europe - present neither same pol
background - same exploitation -
- Wars are conservative - Unreversed

(2) Isolated - afraid - Militaristic

6. Opponents - Trotsky. -

7. Left R. with few central ideas -

① Pacification etc. demand - Unrealistic
- cannot be perm. guaranteed -

(2) R's Communism failed not be.
- State Capitalism - title to
mine -

(3) ~~Should be~~ Comm. Treachery - Then
Recognition.

8. Nat. Salvation in direction of pop. gov. not
dictatorship - Lesson in Munich -
- Seed of their own destruction.

- Slow, cumbersome -

- Kingdom cannot wait with haste!

- No Red army - no ~~FF~~ For will arise -

1. I bring to you friends, no new message from Russia, and no startling Revelations. ^{nor shall} I speak of that vast, incomprehensible land as one having authority. My stay in R. was all too short and my survey of conditions all too hasty to warrant ^{accurate} ~~definite~~ ^{important} conclusions on my part or great evidence on yours. I went to R. ^{not to make a thorough study, it was a job, which, would have required years of study and more elaborate equipment than I possessed.} to get the feel of the country - to see the life, the people under the new revolut. regime, to catch, if possible, the mood and temper of the populace. I wished to ^{"check up" on} correct the impressions which I had formed about R. from reading ~~and~~ ^{or} hear-ings. And it is ^{only} some of these impressions, ^{partially} revised and corrected, which I can give you this ^{morning} afternoon.

2. (R. is in the unfortunate position of being either furiously loved or furiously hated - and in the plane of these high passions, the truth is almost frequently ^{chased and} ~~subject~~ ^{scored}. Even a would-be impartial observer finds it difficult to

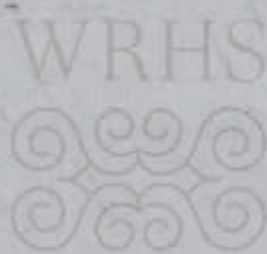
penetrate the ^{most} subtle & propaganda which this
verse partisan struggle has emitted, just as he finds
it difficult ^{with the best intentions} to free himself of his own prejudices
and pre-judgments. I tried to see Russia as
^{I tried to understand R. peasant in terms of R. part.}
the Russian sees it - however different that was.
I tried to guard myself against ^{the natural tendency} ~~seeing~~
^{temptation} ~~disparaging~~ ^{betwixt} ~~present-day R. and~~
^{to the evident discredit of the one & the other} ~~the one & the other~~ ^{to remember their}
^{the other} ~~R. conditions were worse than those~~
in America. The pol. & econ. system which the
Hon. Mr. Matthews ^(I am not thinking now of the British Empire) was not one which "achieved for
R. a prosperous peasantry population, a
contented working class, & a large, ^{well-to-do} ~~prosperous~~
middle class in political freedom. The
^{average} present-day Russian who looks back ~~across~~ ^{back} beyond
the 10 years of the Bol. regime to the days of the Gar-
finkel pitifully few things in that earlier
regime to hanker after. The peasant who constitutes
90% of the R. population - was next door to a ^{perfect}
serf, and in his impoverished, illiterate, ~~backward~~
The working man was exploited to a degree un-
known in Western Europe or even under-
fed, ^{housed} ~~living~~ in miserable quarters - whose every
effort to improve his condition was brutally suppressed
by the Cossack knout, by imprisonment and
Siberian exile. Even the small middle class -

So that in all that I ^{shall} say about R. I would beg you
to remember that there are always 3 sides
to a question, my side, your side, and the
right side.



confidence of a Russian and he ~~is~~ ^{is} ready to
answer ~~just~~ the point blank question as to whether
he is satisfied with the present ^{no} regime - he will
as a rule say: "I am satisfied but up to ^{now} it tells under
the Czar? A change must come ^{and} ~~will~~ ^{be} ~~from~~ ^{the} ~~old~~ ^{new} days, ~~it~~
~~of~~ ^{another} ~~will~~ ^{say} ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~nothing~~ ^{will} ~~will~~ ^{follow} if the present gov't should be
overthrown. The R. does not put under the
restraints of a ^{real} dictatorship as we would, for
he has never had any freedom. He was always
ruled by a despotic Czar. ^{and he possesses a great deal of mental freedom in contrast to the Western}
Corporation & properly seriously outrage
the vast majority, the R. ^{for the vast majority}
the R. had no property ^{to be} could be incorp.
cated. (And parenthetically it may be ^{stated} here
that R.R. is likely to succeed in ^{every} country
where the vast majority of the people have as property
which could be incorporated. It becomes quickly
apparent to an impartial observer that the masses
of R. if ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~permanently~~ ^{permanently} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ government are certainly not
against it and that attempts to overthrow the
Soviet gov't will receive little support from the
R. themselves. The peasant ^{will be} afraid of losing
his land the working man his union dignity
4. ~~And~~ ^{And} ~~power~~ ^{power}, they will defend the gov't ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~out~~ ^{out}
~~because~~ ^{because} ~~they~~ ^{they} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~fear~~ ^{fear} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~reaction~~ ^{reaction} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~re-~~ ^{re-} ~~en-~~ ^{en-} ~~lar-~~ ^{lar-}
~~ments~~ ^{ments}. This negative loyalty is the ^{very} ~~strength~~ ^{strength}
of the present regime.

soldiers in Odessa was quickly translated for
me by my interpreters as saying: pretty, is this,
little brother, but when was it ^{any} different.



1. J. life in R. is badly arranged.

1. Economically - R. Rev. broke the back-bone, the large J. middle class - what was the largest most imp. element of R. Jewry. Jew is everywhere a merchant traveling, in R. - even before then, his trade, his store, ^{his workshop} right at carrying on trade. He was impoverished & forced to choose bet. manual labor which was not plentiful, agricultural work for which he was not prepared, or starve. Many starved. R. colonization movement was begun - 927 years - 80,000 souls settled. Many have been absorbed into govt. employment. And the N.E.P. has made possible the return many to private trade. So that to-day R. Jewry ^{estimated at 23/25 million} is compensated the following.

1,000,000	in R. employ.
500,000	Kustars - Tailors etc.
500,000	N.E.P.
175,000	Peasant

2,175,000

Other 575,000 unaccounted for - no definite source known

— govt R. is anti-Rel. Trade otherwise in liberal Suppressed - Handicrafts for the R.

2. Cultural & Religious Suppressed - Handicrafts for the R.

any hall. plan ^{the young} ① Masques schools - Teacher separated Quota carried 17/12
② Confederation Synagogue - Mosque - Friday semin.
③ Over 100 Ruble for seat at Friday semin.
- among anti-Rel. of R. exemptions - illegal

3. Zionism is counter-productive Hundred exiled
- Tied up with ft. R. Thinks R.

4. Anti-Semitism - On urban - No Jewish question -
- among underclass in village - among Communists -

4. To the credit of the dictators, R. it should be ~~fact~~^{said} that they have evidenced a real concern for the welfare of the masses. They are earnest and sincere even if misguided in their econ. theories. ~~They~~ To the very limit of their ^{very} limited funds, they are probing educations in an effort to eradicate illiteracy from that most deplorable country, ~~where only~~ ~~to~~ ~~can~~ ~~read~~ ~~write~~. ~~all~~ The most advanced pedagogic methods in child & adult education are being employed ^{now} but the poverty of the ~~first Central~~ ~~govt~~ ~~and~~ ~~as~~ ~~the~~ ~~federated~~ ~~soviets~~ has seriously impeded this most commendable effort, so cynically ignored by the Gant regime.

Relatively much is being done by the rulers of R. for the health of the people, for the protection of mother and child, for the improvement in the sanitary conditions ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~standards~~ of the land. A whole better may be devoted to these truly mag. efforts made in this direction in a land where disease is widespread, infant mortality appalling, and where the rudiment of ^{sanitary} personal & cleanliness are generally unknown — But here again the ^{outlook} program is splendid, the ^{human} performance largely waits upon greater means —

Ken is the J. Good Educator. He is
amusing. We have enjoyed about 20
R. They are a wonderful report.



5. The Bol. must be credited also with having established order within that vast Empire, with having imposed a new & effective administrative machinery in the country, and with having ^{secured} ~~secured~~ the integrity of the country. —

1. In a country which 10 years ago experienced the greatest military debacle in history which for 5 years thereafter was torn by ^{bloody} ~~bloody~~ and civil war, which was subjected to a strangling blockade by the Allied powers and ^{and econ. shattered by a military campaign} ~~demanded~~ by a ^{hardy} ~~hardy~~ ^{warrior} ~~warrior~~, R. appears to-day remarkably normal, orderly and stable. Railroads are running on schedule ^{but the large cities with complete} ~~and reg. communication by air travel is rapid~~ ^{and} ~~at times in places~~ ^{luxurious trains} ~~the~~ port, telegraph, telephone, streetcars, taxis, theaters, movies, restaurants and all other forms of West. Eur. metropolitan life are ^{in operation} ~~functioning~~. Life is as safe in the streets of Moscow or Odessa or Kiev ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~as~~ ^{as} it is in any ^{large} ~~city~~ ^{city} — certainly safer than in Chicago. The Bol. have ~~imposed~~ ^{imposed} established law order in that vast Empire of 140 m. people which ~~is~~ ^{is} stretched from the Baltic to

the Pacific and which cover $\frac{1}{6}$ of the earth's surface.

2. They have also under ~~great~~ ^{with ~~unusually~~ ~~ability~~} pressure, improvised an almost entirely new admin. machinery ^{nat. regional and municipal} that is ^{to} supersede the old machinery which completely broke down in 1917 and which they helped to dismember. And the miracle is that their hastily constructed ~~and hastily constructed~~ machinery of govt. functions.

3. Perhaps their greatest achievement is the manner in which they kept Russia ~~which~~ ^{in the} ~~composed~~ ^{composed} of 100 races that from breaking up into another Balkan imbroglio of hostile states. And they accomplished this not by force of arms but by broad mass ~~intermarriage~~ ^{policy} of national self-determination. The B. ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~stands~~ ^{stands} absolute pol. & cultural autonomy to within the frame work of the Soviet Federation to each & every racial or nat. group in R. Under the Czar these rac. minorities were oppressed & their nat. aspirations denied. Under the Soviet system they are not only allowed

but encouraged to develop their particular
nat. cultures, languages + working life. R.
to day is really not one nation but a ^{voluntary} federation
of ~~autonomous~~ ^{almost} ~~autonomous~~ Republics, and
autonomous territories. These which are free
to secede from the union ^{whenever} they so desire.
Thus nat. antagonisms which wrecked
the Austro-Hungarian Empire have been
wiped out by this noble ^{formula} of
"No autonomy for indiv. nations and the
voluntary union of all!"

6. If the B.R. are to be evolved with the achieve-
ments they are to be charged with the ^{complete} failure
of the essential ^{+ central part} of their program - which
~~alone~~ is their only "raison d'être" - Communism.
^{work} There is no Comm. in R. to day. In the
wake of Com. the B. Comproach all private
property - not merely ^{great resources} the tools of production -
declassified + impoverished millions, drove the
best minds of Russia into exile and
assassinated ^{resorted to the most barbaric, lawless and fiendish} tens of thousands of them, and ~~it~~
but L. dangerously near complete Econ.
disaster -

~~There was to be no~~

And communism according to Lenin
that all property shall become common property
meant that all citizens shall become
the employees of the State, ^{that they} all shall work
to an equal extent, ~~all~~ shall carry out
regularly the measure of work appointed
to them, & all shall receive equal pay.



In 1921 Lenin ^{who wrote the Communist Manifesto which was based on his} ~~decided~~ had to acknowledge
defeat. The N.E.P. was introduced ^{which was a compromise} and ~~Comm. was~~
lead. Private trading was again permitted. Hence
also private capital and private property. The
govt has not yet completely reconciled itself to
the implications of the N.E.P. which it was compelled
to introduce. It still regards the private trader
as an enemy - and attempts in every way to
thwart & hinder his activities. ^{by merchant}
The R. must buy his commodities ^{in vast quantities} from the
govt agencies - for all ~~export~~ imports as a
govt monopoly - He must pay for a license. He
will be charged an exorbitant rent for his
store & an even larger rental for his private
dwelling. He will pay an income tax which
is set at will by the govt. And if he is
too successful the govt will open a store
adjacent to his - & will compete with him.
But private trade ^{small} ~~industry~~ ^{is} nevertheless
free in space in R. and in the fourth
of this new bourgeoisie, as well as in the
rise of a new class of rich peasants - the
govt. see the complete failure of their philo-
sophy written large.

My first disillusionment about R. Com. came
in Leningrad when I applied at the R. Bureau

Price for passage on the Steamship Tohoku
which was to take me to Osaka. I was
startled when the clerk asked me at the
Voyage agent whether I wanted first, second,
or third class ticket. So this was Cum. I thought!
And on the train ~~from S. D. it is also a first~~
I on the station buffet S. D. it is also
1-2 or 3 class. And in the hotels a room
with bath cost more > a room without bath.
~~in fact~~ ~~all the same~~, and 2 meals would buy
a better meal than 12 a week - and in
the stores ^{sent you} you had no money your
Cum. membership card would not get you
no thing ^{no more} ~~no more~~ ^{buying diamonds} ~~you were walking in~~ ^{my} ~~the~~ ^{clothing} ~~way~~ ^{bag}
varied according to your skill and
the need ^{which the industry has} for you - in fact all the shameful
earmarks of capitalism were
every where in evidence -

And I was frequently moved to ask my-
self. as I later learned many earnest Revol.
were asking themselves - was it all worth while.
Could not it have reached a ~~desirable~~ ^{desirable} ~~to~~ ^{to}
present status ^{State Capitalism} ~~if it~~ ^{if it} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~without~~ ^{without}
the frightful ~~cost~~ ^{cost} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~maintaining~~ ^{maintaining} Cum.
And I was forced to answer that it could not.

But then I would ask myself - could not the
nations of W. Europe have gotten along without
the East war. The answer here or there is the
same. They could have - but they didn't. And
upon reflection I found that it was rather futile to
question the logic of ~~such~~ great historic movements.
A lot of factors - ~~some~~ Econ. soc. pol. psych-
accidental - contributed to the Revol. Rev. Russia
passed thru the Econ. phase ~~before~~ had to go
through it -

7. The Revol. failed in yet another important item, their
program - the World Revolution. They wanted a great
deal on that. They believed that the triumph of the
prolet. Rev. in R. would set the whole world
afire. ~~influence~~ ^{inspire} the proletarians of the whole world
to similar revolt. Here their enthusiasm blinded
them otherwise very realistic & unselfish
thinking. The working class ^{of every class} of the great capitalist
countries of Europe & Am. perceived neither the same
pol. background, nor suffered from the same dire
Econ. exploitation as the R. working class & peasants.
They were pol. free, they were organized in recog-
nized assoc. which to a degree protected their
rights, and they shared to a degree in the prosperity

of their resp. Countries. The masses are con-
servative and when they are not provoked on
by dire distress and palpable hypocrisy they do
not revolt. ^(Rev. America) And so the world Rev. did not
materialize. —

[illegible]

B.P. cannot thrust in a country like the U.S. not
because of the vigilance of the 101% - but be-
cause of the millions of homes and bank accounts
and ~~automobiles~~ ^{insurance} policies owned by millions
of Am. workers -



The greatest nation in the world. The great target nation in the
world, in point of size, ^{and only by the force} cannot be unduly exploited or
guaranteed without interfering with the entire process
of internat. seriously affecting the econ. spot.
murders of the rest of the world. R's experiment
in econ. failed not bec. of external pressure but
bec. of the inherent fallacy of Comm. R. present
exp. in State Capitalism may similarly fail. If it
does, it will be effected not thru ^{external} military
intervention or econ. boycott but bec. of its inherent
fallacy. If it does not fail - if State Capitalism
is a sound policy - better & more effective economical
production & greater social good - than our present,
Compet. capitalism - then the world ought to
~~have been benefited by that experiment~~ ^{will be to}
~~needs Capital.~~ From the point of view of abstract
morality it matters very little whether title to
a mine or a mill is vested in an individual,
a corporation, a co-operation, or the State. The
test is whether the particular arrangement contributes
most to ^{the best way to estab. adv. points for which we have waited 10 years - must off} ~~social well being~~. Russia used the
world. The world needs Russia. Some nations have long
ago seen these simple facts. That except R. Other
more countries have only contented themselves with
Comm. Treaties. The U.S has done nothing.
It should, in my humble judgment, do the latter
first, as a preliminary to ultimate recog - after
it was shown that R. is now ready to attend