

# Counter-Revolutionary Plots In Russia

(Translated from the Russian by Andre Tridon)

I  
From the People's Commissaire for Foreign Affairs Tchitcherin to the Russian plenipotentiary in Berlin, —Moscow, September 2, 1918:

A plot was unearthed to-day which had been engineered by foreign diplomats led by the head of the English mission, Mr. Lockhart, the French Consul-General and some others. Their aim was, after bribing certain detachments of the Soviet's troops, to overthrow the Council of the People's Commissaires and to proclaim in Moscow a military dictatorship. This was a regular conspiracy relying for its success on forged documents and bribes. Among other documents brought to light there was a statement to the effect that if the revolt was successful, forged letters alleged to have passed between the Russian and German governments would be published, and also forged copies of treaties, whereby a sentiment would be created favorable to the declaration of a new war against Germany. The plotters took advantage of their diplomatic immunity and were protected by certificates personally signed by the head of the English Mission in Moscow, Lockhart. Several copies of the documents are already in the hands of the investigating committee. It has been proved that in the past fortnight one million two hundred thousand rubles had been distributed for the purpose of bribery by the English lieutenant Reilly, one of Lockhart's agents. An Englishman arrested in the plotters' secret meeting place and brought before the investigating committee was found to be the English diplomatic representative Lockhart. He was released as soon as his identity was established. Unsuccessful attempts to bribe certain corps commanders brought about the exposure of the plot. Investigations will be continued with all possible thoroughness.

II  
"What the Plotters Were Planning to Do"—From the Moscow "Pravda," September 3, 1918.

Lockhart and an officer of the Soviet's troops met for the first time at a private house on August 4th. They discussed the feasibility of arranging an uprising against the Soviet authorities in Moscow about September 10th, at which time the English troops would be advancing in the Murman region. The date of September 10 was considered as very important owing to the fact that Lenin and Trotzky were to attend a meeting of the People's Commissaires on that day. It was also planned to seize the Imperial Bank, the Central Telephone Exchange and the Telegraph station. A military dictatorship was to be established and all meetings

prohibited pending the arrival of the English troops.

The Russian officer received from Lockhart the sum of 700,000 rubles to be spent in preparing the uprising. On August 22 another conference was held at which he received another 200,000 rubles and at which plans were elaborated for seizing all the papers in Lenin's and Trotzky's offices. On August 28 the Russian officer received another 200,000 rubles and it was agreed that he should go to Petrograd and enter into communications with the English military group and the White Guards.

The threads of the entire conspiracy converged in the British mission, the second in authority being the French Consul General Gresnard; then came General Laverne, a French officer and several other French and English officers.

The negotiations between the Russian officer and the foreign plotters took place on August 29. The possibility of starting simultaneous movements in Nijny Novgorod and Tambov was discussed. Negotiations were carried on with the representatives of a number of allied powers with a view to paralyzing the resistance of the Soviet authorities to the Cheko-Slovaks and the Anglo-French forces, especially by bringing about an acute food shortage in Petrograd and Moscow. Plans were likewise laid for blowing up bridges and railroad tracks, for incendiary fires and the destruction of stores of food stuffs.

III  
"The Arrests at the British Embassy"—from the "Pravda" of Moscow, September 3, 1918

The investigation commission holds 40 men, most of them Englishmen, who were arrested on August 31 in the British Embassy. Dzershinsky, chairman of the commission, had received important information on the relations existing between various counter-revolutionary organizations and the representatives of the British government.

Hiller, a member of the commission, was authorized to search in the British Embassy and to make arrests if necessary. Accompanied by Commissaire Polisensko and his assistants, Hiller arrived at the Embassy at five o'clock in the evening. They surrounded the building and gained access to the ground floor. But when they proceeded on their way to the floor above, shots were fired from there. Shenkman, one of the Commissaire's assistants fell with a wound in his chest. Lissen, a scout, was killed on the spot. Hiller with a detachment of scouts forced his way into the rooms on the second floor and arrested the men he found there, all of whom held up their hands. The fight went on in the corridor,

the scouts returned the fire, killing one of the men they had come to arrest. It was learned later that he was the naval attache Cromie, who had fired the first shot. Among the prisoners is Prince Shakhovskoy.

In the course of the search letters were found which contain damaging evidence against the British Embassy, and also a large number of weapons.

IV  
An Editorial of the Moscow "Izvestia," the Official Organ of the Soviet, on Tchitcherin's Telegram to Joffe.

It was planned to seize the People's Commissaires at one of the Council's meetings at which important questions were to be discussed. The guards of the Kremlin were to receive bribes in consideration of which they would allow themselves to be also arrested. The members of the People's Council were to be sent to Archangel. At least such was the first plan. Soon afterward, Reilly expressed doubts about the advisability of sending Lenin to Archangel. Through his ability to make friends with simple people, Lenin might on the way to Archangel win the sympathy of his guards and prevail upon them to let him escape. Reilly declared it would be safer to shoot Lenin and Trotzky as soon as they were arrested.

During the night of August 31, members of the investigating commission entered the plotters' meeting place. Among the men who were arrested there was an Englishman who refused to give his name. Brought before the commission he declared that he was Lockhart. After Peters had verified the truth of that assertion he asked Lockhart to explain the attempt made to bribe the commander of the Soviet's troops. Lockhart denied categorically having ever had anything to do with that officer. When the exact dates on which he had met him were mentioned and other documents were produced, Lockhart declared excitedly that as a diplomatic representative he could not be subjected to any examination. It was then explained to him that the question had been put to him to enable him to prove that the Lockhart who had organized the plot and the English representative of the same name were two different persons.

The Fried brothers, one a major, the other a colonel, who were also arrested, were in the employ of the Soviet government. They had for some time been stealing documents and reports on conditions at the front and the movements of troops. Their reports were made in several copies and delivered to the English and French missions. An actress of the Art Theatre acted as go-between.

## The Revolution—Russian and German

WHEN in March 1917 the Russians overthrow the Czar much ink was spilled by both the capitalist and Socialist press in proving that the Social Revolution was at last an accomplished fact; that it was not; that it would shortly be in operation and finally that Russia was not sufficiently developed capitalistically for the establishment of Socialism. Each side cited names and statistics to support its particular contention.

Since the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, however, events have moved swiftly. Despotism has been followed in quick succession by constitutional monarchy, bourgeois democracy, liberal-socialist coalition and revolutionary Socialism or Bolshevism. Some of these transitions have been accomplished so quickly that the outside world scarcely heard of the new government ere it had fallen. The proletariat in action moves apace and its march is ever forward.

The quick changes of government, nevertheless, were not directly accomplished by the workers but by the forces bent on retarding their progress. They were merely so many lines of retreat hurriedly established by the bourgeoisie and as hurriedly discarded until the final battle came which was to wrench control from the hands of the middle classes or establish them in power until such time as another revolutionary epoch swept them into the discard for ever.

The Kerensky regime was this last line of defense in Russia and its strength may be judged by the fact that it was overthrown by telephone and with the loss of less lives than it took to reform the corn laws in England. To suppose, how-

ever, that with the rise to power of the Soviets the bourgeoisie is finally disposed of in Russia would be a mistake of the first magnitude. Many a desperate struggle, national and international will yet be fought before the workers are finally triumphant, but events in Russia have already shown the tendencies of the times and the lines along which the struggle will develop.

Thus in viewing affairs in Austria and Germany the progress of the revolutionary movement may be gauged by comparison with Russia, taking into consideration, of course, the differences in the forces operating in the various countries. It must be particularly remembered that the Russian bourgeoisie were less fitted to hold the reins of government than the bourgeoisie of other countries on account of the fact that they had practically no place in the old Russian government and had little or no governmental experience to guide them. In Germany the middle class have in the past, taken a prominent part in the lesser governmental activities of the country and are familiar with the machinery of office and the right wing of the Socialist movement has also functioned in the government, particularly since the beginning of the war.

Already the Germans have arrived at the Kerensky stage and it is probable that the present government may remain in office for a protracted period; with minor changes in the personnel from time to time. The Scheidemann group are in power on the surface but indications are not lacking that the actual power is more and more being vested in the Soviets under the leadership of the group Internationale and

the Spartacus group. As in Russia the moderates are arranging for a Constitutional Assembly and are demanding that the Executive Committee of the Soviets cede their power to the Assembly, but at the same time it is admitted by the press that the government is in urgent need of the Soviets. How soon this admission will result into the now historic cry "All power to the Soviets" can only be a matter of conjecture. Certain it is that the German Soviets have a tremendous opportunity, having not only the example of the Bolsheviks to guide them, but having also their active co-operation in spreading propaganda, and if the present government would attempt anything so suicidal as the return of the Kaiser as a constitutional monarch it would appear that the time for the Soviets to take control is already at hand.

The actions of the Kaiser and the various places he will take up his abode will doubtless exceed the Czar's both by their peculiarity and their variety. The report that he is about to return to Germany is in all probability as true as the report in circulation some time ago that one of the Czar's daughters was on her way to America to take up a vaudeville engagement. There would appear to be a much greater danger in the continued presence of Hindenburg as the head of the German army than in any of the Kaiser's activities but Kerensky's experience with Korniloff will probably warn any government in Germany from allowing itself to become involved with Hindenburg.

One thing is certain from all the reports coming out of Germany: the proletariat is awakened after the sleep of ages and Russia is the guarantee that they will sleep no more.

### COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM

IT IS important, in considering developments in Germany, to emphasize that the fundamental struggle is between Socialism and Socialism, between two kinds or conceptions of Socialism, the moderate petty-bourgeois and the revolutionary proletarian. The Social-Democratic Party, the majority party of Scheidemann, Ebert & Co. is distinctly counter-revolutionary. The Executive Committee of the Social-Democratic Party, of which Ebert was a member, on October 17, issued a declaration against a revolution: "All this agitation is the work of confused, irresponsible persons, using Bolshevik revolutionary phrases, who are trying to rouse the workers to strikes and demonstrations against the Government that would have no sense nor object at present, makes it more difficult to bring about peace and to democratize Germany. . . . As the authorized representatives of the Social-Democratic Party have always declared, we wish to transform our political structure into a democracy and our economic life into Socialism by means of a peaceful change. We are on the road toward peace and democracy. All agitation for an attempted revolt runs counter to this road and serves the cause of the cause of the counter-revolution." (Our italics.) And this, just at the moment when the proletariat was on the verge of bursting forth in that elemental revolutionary

action that shattered the autocracy, and made a breach in the old order through which the proletariat could break through for action and the conquest of power! The language of this counter-revolutionary declaration was used in Russia against the Bolsheviks by moderate Socialism: it is characteristic and universal. This hesitation, this utter lack of audacity and revolutionary initiative, this horror of proletarian mass action, characterized the Social-Democratic Party before the war, characterized its majority during the war, and characterizes its policy to-day, when the German proletariat is accomplishing great things and Frederick Engels' prophecy of thirty years ago might come true—that out of the next general European war would emerge Socialism. Their theory has become life, and they contemptuously reject life itself.

### WORK TO DO

A capitalist editorial writer's life is not a happy one these days. Events are moving so swiftly that he wishes to offend no one. He is in much the same position as the old lady who always bowed her head whenever His Satanic Majesty's name was mentioned in church and on being asked by the parson to account for such strange behavior replied:

"Well, civility costs nothing and one never knows what might happen."

The papers who a short time ago covetly approved of the lynching of Frank Little, and openly lauded the Bisbee deportations and similar outrages against the American workers are now urging that employers take their employees to their expansive bosoms, explain all their troubles, thank God that they are not as the other bosses and finally whisper in the ear of the already overcome worker a word against Bolshevism.

Mr. Creel's bureau for distributing useful information among uninformed Europeans and Americans is urged to continue its good work.

"Their (the Bolsheviks) propaganda is international in character" says one of these editorials.

Their appeal is to the people who are dissatisfied. There are millions of such people in every big nation. Our own country is not free from them. . . .

"We are not fighting against men with guns and gas. We are fighting against ideas. We can overcome those ideas only by sending better ideas against them. There is work, therefore, for Mr. Creel's Bureau. . . ."

Those who remember what Mr. Creel's bureau did about the Sisson documents will agree that there is work for Mr. Creel's bureau to do—right inside the bureau, with a broom.