

powers which at the present period is ameliorating itself every day. On the Northern front the Soviet troops have just re-conquered Shenkursk, on the Eastern front having temporarily lost Perm they have re-captured Ufa, Starlitamak, Belebey, Orenburg, and Uralsk, the railway communications with Central Asia being now in their hands. On the Southern front they have recently taken the important railway stations of Povorino, Alexikovo, Uriopino, Talovaya, Kalach, Boguchar, the railways of the region thus passing into their power, whilst from the Southwest the Ukrainian Soviet troops moving from Lougansk are threatening Krasnoff's rear. In the Ukraine the Soviet troops of that republic have taken Kharkof, Ekaterinoslav, Poltava, Kremenschug, Chernigoff, Ovruch, as well as numerous other less important towns. White-Russia, Lithuania, Lettland have almost completely passed into the hands of the Soviet troops of these republics together with the large towns of Minsk, Vilna, Riga, Dvinsk, Mitau, Windau and others.

The remarkable consolidation of the internal situation of Soviet Russia is shown by the negotiations with the Russian Soviet Government begun by members of the previous constituent assembly whose representatives Rakitnikoff, chairman of their Congress, Sviatitsky, Secretary, Volsky, Khmelev, Burevoy, Tchernenkoff, Antonoff, all members of the Central Committee of the Social-Revolutionary Party, arrived yesterday, February 3rd, in Moscow, these well-known social-revolutionaries having with great force pronounced themselves against Entente intervention in Russia. The amelioration of the relations between the Soviet Government and those elements of Russian society hitherto hostile is being illustrated by the change of attitude of the Mensheviks whose conference has likewise protested against Entente intervention and whose paper "Vperiod" (Forward) appears now in Moscow. The growing internal order is seen by the suppression of the district Extraordinary Commissions.

As to the false news of the foreign press concerning alleged disorders in Petrograd and elsewhere these are, from beginning to end, only fiction. Emphasizing once more that the situation of Soviet Russia will necessarily influence the extent of the sacrifices to which it will consent, the Russian Soviet Government nevertheless maintains its proposition to negotiate upon the points enumerated above.

As to the frequent complaints of the Entente press about the **Russian revolutionary international propaganda**, the Russian Soviet Government, whilst pointing out the fact that it cannot restrain the liberty of the revolutionary press, declares its readiness in case of necessity to include in a general agreement with the Entente powers the pledge to refrain from any interference in their internal affairs.

On the indicated basis the Russian Soviet Government is disposed to begin negotiations immediately whether on Princes Island or elsewhere, with the Entente powers collectively or else with some of them separately, or else with some Russian political groups, according to the desires of the Entente powers. The Russian Soviet Government asks to name without delay the place to which its representatives are to be sent, as well as the date of the meeting and the route to be followed.

People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs,

Tchitcherin.

Moscow, February 4th, 1919.

The acceptance of the Allies' invitation has by no means been prompted by the mere desire to score a diplomatic success. Nor must it be taken as a sign of weakness. As the official note of Tchitcherin points out in detail, the military position of the Red Army is immensely favorable; and all the signs are that the counter-revolutionary forces are on the verge of utter defeat. The acceptance of the invitation is prompted by the earnest desire of the Soviet Government to avoid further bloodshed, and to bring peace to Russia, so that she may have the opportunity of proceeding with the work of constructing the new Socialist order.

In accepting the invitation the Soviet Government was under no delusions as to the nature of the people they will have to meet, or the business they will have to transact. It knows perfectly well that just as it is impossible for a tiger to master his instinct, so it is impossible for capitalist governments to be guided by any other motive than that of serving the interests of the exploiting class. It knows that the Allies' ardent avowals of friendship for the Russian people, and their profuse offers of assistance are only worthy screens behind which to conceal their eagerness to lay their hands upon the undeveloped resources of Russia.

With its rough revolutionary candor, therefore, the Soviet Government completely disregards the silk and suavity, the posing and hypocrisy of traditional diplomacy, and frankly says to the Allies: "Never mind sympathy and good wishes, you may cut that out; we make you a purely business proposition, we want peace and are prepared to pay for it. You want us to repay the Tsar's loans, you want concessions on our forests, our mines, on railway construction—very well, we are prepared to consider it; **NAME YOUR PRICE.**" What can be more fair or outspoken than this? It is for the Allies to accept or refuse. So far no reply has been received, and the war goes on.

British and American Soldiers!

You can see now who stands in the way of peace. It is the capitalist governments of your countries, who compel you to undergo the horrors of war, and who keep you away from your loved ones who are yearning for your return. It is they, and not the Bolsheviks, who are bringing ruin and anarchy into Russia. It is they who maintain the civil war in Russia, for without the support which they are giving **through you**, the counter-revolutionaries would long ago have been crushed, and normal life restored in Russia. Do not permit yourselves to be deceived by the lies of your officers. Your country-men at home, soldiers as well as civilians, are violently opposed to the attempt to crush the Russian Workers' Revolution. Their protests have so far been so strong as to compel your government to pretend to desire peace. You can help to make the desire real, by refusing any longer to do the dastardly work you have been brought here to do. Why, if you refuse to fight, then peace is made, and there is no more to it! That is sense, is it not?

Your fellow-workers at home have given up their blind obedience to the capitalist and military class; they are going to dictate the policy of the governments. Are you going to lag behind? You, too, wake up, be men, and we shall soon sweep away the reign of capitalist exploitation and plunder!

The Group of English-Speaking Communists.