

Prison and Hospital Life
in
Soviet Russia

By

Dr. Weston B. Estes

Formerly Captain, Military Intelligence Section,
United States Army



The Beckwith Company

NO. 299 MADISON AVE.

NEW YORK CITY

Beckwith Bulletin No. 2

Price, Twenty-five Cents

Copyright 1922

FOREWORD

As time passes, the issue becomes less obscure. The *rapprochement* of Germany and Russia, so long anticipated by those who discern, has become a certainty. The German Red Cross Mission of 1921 to Russia was a commercial venture; Max Warburg & Co., the Hamburg bankers, have been granted exclusive shipping rights by the Soviet Government; German products are fast filling the needs of the Russian people; the depreciated shares of "nationalized" Russian stock-companies have been bought up by German bankers in anticipation of "denationalization"; German technicians are filling places in the industrial life of Russia made vacant by slaughter of *bourgeoisie* under the pretense of enforcing a new social and political millenium. Facts clearly show the trend of events.

Thus the Germanizing of Russia progresses each day, aided by a group of internationalists, friends of Germany, who shape as they can the policies of Entente countries. Doctor Estes learned many things while confined in a Moscow prison. He discovered what he so forcibly brings out: *that communism was never intended to be successful but was designed for and used as a means of destruction.* The Bolshevik revolution was in reality a German revolution, stimulated by the German Jewish Banking cabal. It was no more a reaction of a desperate people against oppression than is Sinn Feinism. It was intended to drag Russia out of the war, and then to make of Russia a German province. In both it has been eminently successful.

Who will venture a prediction as to the ultimate end of this program? Germany is so "poverty-stricken" that she cannot pay just obligations to France! Russia under a Soviet has repudiated a similar debt. Yet the rulers of both, bound by racial ties, have absolute domination over boundless resources, yet undeveloped, and all but countless individuals. What means this union for the rest of the world and the Anglo-Saxon peoples?

PETER BECKWITH.

New York, March, 1922.

"There are plenty of people who, against all the evidence, still believe in communism, socialism, government ownership of railroads, Non-Partisan Leagues and the like, but then there are many people who still believe in fairies, ghosts and Russian rubles as an investment for trust funds. We shall continue to have countless books on socialism, just as we shall always have blue-sky stock; not because either is worth the paper it is printed on, but because, as Poor Richard says:

"Samson with his strong body, had a weak head,
or he would not have laid it in a harlot's lap."

Editorial, *Saturday Evening Post*, Feb. 4, 1922.

"It would be hard to overestimate the damage that has been done to the world by writers like Karl Marx, who have put out dull romances in the guise of serious economic discourses; or by those politicians who issue unlimited promises at the expense of the tax-payers, provided they can be discounted in votes from the tax-free. The people, and in that term we include merchants and manufacturers as well as farmers, have plenty of troubles, plenty of grievances, but they will not be cured by any panacea in the politician's pharmacopoeia. As Poor Richard says:

"Here comes the orator, with his flood of
words and his drop of reason."

Editorial, *Saturday Evening Post*, Feb. 4, 1922.

Prison and Hospital Life in Soviet Russia

by

Dr. Weston B. Estes

*An Address Delivered Before the Members of the Associated
Physicians of Long Island, Garden City, October, 1921*

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Notwithstanding some difficulties in entering Soviet Russia, I came to the conclusion afterwards that the commissars were in reality glad to see me. They opened the gate and after I stepped over the border, they closed it very quickly. In Esthonia, they couldn't arrest me; in Moscow, they could. I have every reason to believe that they were anxious to make of me a personal acquaintance. As a matter of fact, to take moving pictures was something of a camouflage because I was really very anxious to do some business with the Communists and their Government. For two years, we had heard from many sides—and you hear it today—that the blockade of Russia was responsible for the chaos and devastation which is there. There is that element of doubt in the minds of many people as to the facts. Is there a real blockade, or is there a chance to do some business with these people? I had a strong desire to find out the truth, and find it out for myself. I gathered a little company of business men together, and they told me to get the truth. They said to me, if there is a blockade, we will break it. We will sell Russia or any other country those wants which we manufacture. At the same time, I was interested in moving pictures because there is a demand in this country for authentic information concerning those things which are going on in Soviet Russia. Facts are wanted by the American people more than anything else.

I had been in contact with the radicals and communists in New York City and had reached the point of having an eager desire to know. It is a fact that very few of us know much about the Communist movement or its present-day dangers. You may say that these people are fanatics, but some are very sincere. They, as well as we, depend on foreign sources for information, and they are very strong and very dangerous. These people believe in Lenine and believe that he has done something worth while. Some of these radicals also asked me to go into Soviet Russia and they helped me get there, and they said that they wanted pictures taken of the great schools which reputedly had been set up in Russia by Lunacharski, where all men and women

up to forty-five years of age were given two years in which to learn to read and write! We also wanted to know more about his wonderful system of children's colonies.

I left New York in January, 1920, on the steamer "Stavangerfjord" and first landed at Christiania where I met the Swedish radical Stang. I realized afterward that Stang was quite as ignorant of true conditions in Russia as radicals in other parts of the world. Stockholm was the next stopping point, where I met Ström and Hellberg, the official Soviet representatives in Sweden. They advised me to see Litvinov, the chief Soviet agent outside of Russia. I did see Litvinov at Copenhagen where we discussed the possibility of selling American-manufactured goods to Russia. Then we went to Finland where in Helsingfors I came into close contact with the Finnish Reds. Our application to enter Russia was made at Reval, Esthonia, to which point we went from Helsingfors. By that time the Polish war had just begun and practically all *visés* were being denied, except to a few well-known foreign communists who were enroute to attend the Second Congress of the Third International to be held at Moscow. We waited in Reval three and a half months and finally, by a little manipulation, succeeded in getting our papers stamped, and this is how we did it.

When I was in Helsingfors, John Reed, the American communist, was under arrest by the Finnish Government, imprisoned at Albo, and stopped in an attempt to reach America. I had something to do in procuring his release, and after his return to Russia I secured authentic information to the effect that John Reed's life was in danger. I wanted to get into Russia and I used these facts to get there. By those devious ways in which, under the circumstances, people communicate, I sent word to John Reed that I knew his life was in danger even in Russia and that he would never be allowed to leave it again, alive. The plan worked, for the following reasons: John Reed knew me and knew that I was safe. He had been betrayed by certain radical elements in Helsingfors and he himself knew that his life was in danger, therefore he was eager to seek information from me and further assistance in getting back home. Reed obtained my *visé* personally from Chichérin, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs. The gates were opened and on August 2nd, 1920, I crossed the frontier.

The Russian train in which I reached Petrograd was typical of the transportation facilities as they existed at that time. The cars were dirty and unkempt: the train never proceeded at a greater speed than twenty miles an hour, with frequent stops on account of defective equipment. The air brakes refused to function once, and twice the running gear of cars broke down. Many car windows were broken. The train was so crowded that people rode on the steps. When we arrived at Petrograd, late in the evening, there were no lights in the ordinary coaches with the exception of a few candles.

On the way across country we saw many men working in the fields, as it was harvesting time. Apparently there was nothing the matter, nor were there any unusual conditions. We counted the factory chimneys in an effort to judge of industrial conditions. I counted two hundred dead stacks and about a dozen from which smoke was issuing.

We walked around the streets of Petrograd for two days. There was no evident disorder. There was a great deal of grass growing in the side streets while the main thoroughfares, such as the Nevsky Prospekt, were fairly clean. The shops were all closed on that fam-

ous street; the only places that we saw open were soldiers' and sailors' tea rooms, a Soviet aptek (drug store) or two and a few government food shops before which long queues of people were waiting for service. We also saw one flower store, and the Singer Sewing Machine Building, which was open.

Apparently most of the street car lines centering in that district were in operation. Under government control no one paid fare and the consequence was that every car was jammed. People stood in long queues at stopping points to board, and seemingly waited hours for the opportunity to ride to their destination.

Under the Czar's Government the Petrograd-Moscow Express covered the distance between those cities in seven hours. Our train consumed fourteen hours, arriving in Moscow at noon. We were met at the station by an automobile, and by a man who afterwards was destined to play a large part in our Moscow experience, Moghilevski, who was commissar for the Foreign Section of the Extraordinary Commission, which is the highest authority in the Soviet Government. His position is one which means as much as the descriptive name implies. The "Checka" really runs the Russian Government through terrorism. It is a court of first and last resort from which there is no appeal. Not even Lenin or Trotzki negative its decisions, so that Moghilevski typifies the character of the government for which he works. Moghilevski is a Polish Jew of the exaggerated variety. He used to be a gambler and shady character. He was a man about thirty-five years of age, with a wicked face. A slight defect in one eye gave him the appearance of having a tendency toward cross-eye. Moghilevski is decisive and of quick manner, wasting little time on preliminaries. Later, when appearing before the "Checka" and under arrest, Moghilevski told me that the "floor of this room is soaked with the tears of persons pleading for mercy, but this is no place for mercy. This is a place to exterminate counter-revolutionists." Moghilevski in his way is the most powerful man in Russia, and the fate of foreign prisoners rests entirely in his hands.

Moghilevski took me to a sadly deteriorated apartment house which in older days was a fashionable residence. A little later John Reed called, apparently eager to know what information I had for him that would be helpful. We talked nearly an hour. In this conversation I began to get an inkling of true conditions, and Reed told me a few minutes before we parted that things were not going as well there as world communism would have us believe. In the meantime Moghilevski, ever watchful, dodged in and out of the room without taking the precaution of knocking. This made Reed nervous and we did not finish our conversation. He finally left, with the remark that he would meet me on the day following.

I did see John Reed once more. On the following night, he acted as my interpreter before the Extraordinary Commission for the Suppression of Counter Revolution, the "Checka," and then he passed from my personal observation. With prison at hand and death staring me in the face, he whispered, as he left the room of inquisition, 'Do not worry, everything will come out all right. I will help you all I can.'

It would be a difficult matter to prove that John Reed was murdered, and yet if he had been, the event would have fitted in perfectly with my previous knowledge to the effect that his life was in danger,

and with my knowledge of political conditions. It must be said that the Communist Party in Russia was divided into two factions, the Jewish and Gentile groups, with the former in the ascendancy. You may perhaps have noticed that the Communists have been cleaning house. It has been cleaned so that now only about half are left. Jews are in absolute control of the party without even a respectable minority. Obviously, John Reed did not belong to the Jewish majority. His race and his sincerity in his beliefs raised suspicions in the minds of his Jewish antagonists. It has been officially recorded that he died of typhus fever. His own wife, herself a sympathizer with Bolshevism, says that he died of neglect. I doubt if the truth will ever be fully known.

When John Reed left my room at the hotel, Moghilevski reappeared. He spoke no English, and going out again, there immediately came in five agents of the "Checka." One of the men had been a sailor and undoubtedly, Bolshevik-like, he was put in charge of the party because of the paucity of his English. They searched and re-searched us thoroughly for three hours—went through our clothes everywhere. Then, under arrest, we were taken in an automobile to a prison at No. 2 Lubianka. Then occurred another examination lasting four or five hours. The heels of our shoes were knocked off; linings of our satchels split; coats and clothes ripped to pieces—in fact, we were thoroughly searched. All personal documents were seized. At two o'clock in the morning, allowing us each a towel, Mr. Flick and I were ushered into the courtyard, and after another thorough examination by the keeper of the prison, we were laced in separate cells.

It was a simple, small room in which I was placed, and I remember that I was amused at the absurdity of finding myself locked up in a room. It was about $7\frac{1}{2}$ by 11 feet—three boards nailed together resting on saw horses for a bed—and a table. The window was rather large, barred, and with frosted panes to prevent seeing out. It was of the customary continental type with double sashes, and was nailed up. And in this room, on the second floor, I was kept in solitary confinement for three months, during which time I was subjected to twenty-three inquisitions before the counter-revolutionary tribunal or "Checka."

Our food was very insufficient during the eight months that I was in this prison. The quarters were so ill-heated and dirty, and lack of exercise and the crowded condition generally so undermining that finally these things told on my health and one by one symptoms began to appear which under ordinary circumstances, would have entitled me to hospital treatment and the care of a doctor. That was not my lot, however, for several months. The inroads on my health began to be greater and greater. Finally, at the protest of a fellow prisoner, who was a Russian doctor, an interesting character appeared to "write me" into a hospital. She was a certain Dr. Feinberg, a Russian Jewess who again represented a type which is in control of Soviet forces. Dr. Feinberg headed a Commission, and as such had authority in all matters pertaining to the health of prisoners in Moscow. Her decision was final and absolute in such matters. When she appeared in my cell she presented a rather welcome diversion. Her hair was sloppy and bobbed. It was tied with a dirty red ribbon—and she had a suspicious habit of scratching her head. Her clothes

were soiled and mussy. Dr. Feinberg is very near-sighted and wears thick glasses. Her fingernails were uncut and black with dirt. This was the woman who had absolute authority over the health of one hundred thousand prisoners in Moscow and final say as to whether I was sick enough to go to a hospital. The fact that I had a hernia, dysentery, neuritis, insomnia and was scorbutic did not weigh in Dr. Feinberg's mind as causes for admission to her hospital. The determining factor was that I had a fever. Therefore, I think I am justified in my conclusions that her professional capacity was not large.

It was a cold March day and the snow was on the ground when I was ordered to leave the cell with my pack. The guard took us to the curb station where I stood for nearly an hour, with another sick man, *en route* to the hospital. And this brings up an interesting incident. At this time one of the few things that had not been nationalized in Russia were the *droshkis* or public horse cabs. I am satisfied that even the Bolshevik could not have done this. The procedure which followed gave us something to laugh at. A cab was commandeered by the leader of the guard, during which process there was a long and wordy argument between the driver and the officer. Then we climbed in, drove three or four blocks and the driver refused to go any farther inasmuch as another cab was nearby. The driver never by any chance paid any attention to his starving horse, but devoted his attention entirely to our soldier. In four and a half miles to Butierki prison hospital we were transferred from cab to cab nine different times, each driver growing more vociferous in his protestations. Some of the arguments were terminated only when the guard drew his pistol.

On arrival at the hospital the first thing that happened was that all our street clothes were taken away from us. We were supposed to have a receipt for them, but on leaving it is quite customary to be told that your boots or your hat, or something else, have been stolen. They shoved me into a ward where there were thirty-five patients suffering from all kinds of diseases: tuberculosis, skin lesions of various kinds,—and nearly everything else one could think of, all in one small room. We had little iron beds with boards for springs and they were covered with dirty straw mattresses. The dirt was something frightful and the vermin likewise. In the five weeks I was in the ward I never saw the slightest attempt made to clean the place. Patients expectorated on the floor. It was so damp that any food held over from day to day was almost invariably moulded. There was a small sheet-iron stove in the center of the ward. We had an armful of wood each day, and it was the custom to divide the small allotment into two parts, using one in the morning and one at night. I wondered for three days whether there were any doctors around, but finally one appeared and went through a very superficial examination. I do not know what particular good a diagnosis would have been in my case because there was very little that could have been done about it, even if he had had the most accurate technical knowledge. I learned in this five weeks that, for instance, the medicine available for use consisted largely of a little salol, bismuth occasionally, some castor oil and, for one who had the price to pay for it, an occasional dose of veronal to assist in sleeping. And in this prison hospital ward one could readily gain a conception of the enormity of the universal graft system which prevails in Soviet Russia.

For instance, hard by our ward there appeared one day three

Russian Jews who had been arrested for speculation. They secured their transfer to the prison hospital through bribery and secured, through the same means, approximately competent surgical attention for their troubles. The whole arrangement was negotiated through bribery and graft and they obtained what none others could get, even to the extent of having sent to them from the city, Mellenkrodt's ether (made in St. Louis) for their own use and safety. They bribed the nurse for extra care. They paid for services of a special doctor,—the regular surgeon was away on his vacation and the money these men distributed paid for the services of another. Sterilization of instruments and dressings which no others could obtain were theirs. Special arrangements were made for the exclusive care and safety of these three Jewish speculators whose life in the present hospital was one long violation of the communistic theories. These three men were not exceptions of their type. There were many such.

One of the chief reasons why I was anxious to be transferred to the prison hospital was that we had understood that the food in the hospital was better. We were getting one-third of a pound of bread daily in the prison, and it was rumored that the ration in the hospital was one and a half pounds. There was little more food available in the hospital, but considering its nutritive value, in reality, it was less. The bread ration at the hospital was one-half pound. There was a great deal of unrest and complaint on account of insufficiency of the food, and many patients were asking to go back to other prisons where, in spite of less freedom of movement, the food was better. Our bread ration for twenty-four hours—always less than two hundred grams—was given to us in the morning with hot water. There were two diets, regulation and so-called light, but there was little difference between the two so far as nutritive value was concerned. The regulation diet included a bowl of fish or cabbage soup, the former with the fat skimmed off before it reached the ward. Sometimes at noon we would receive small pieces of boiled meat. The quantity allowed for each, one may judge from the fact that the contents of an ordinary washbasin was divided among thirty-five men. For supper we had a small portion of millet or some grain, boiled, with no salt or seasoning. A little later a kettle of boiling water was sent into the ward with which we were supposed to make tea. The tea we furnished ourselves, if we could. In addition we had what was called a coffee ration, consisting of ground-up grains, acorns and other things, to the extent of one teaspoonful. Real coffee was never actually furnished. We were also allowed fifteen grams of sugar each day, but oftentimes it never came. Our fat allowance in the form of butter, which in theory was supposed to be furnished, was so small that it was said to be included in a portion of boiled rice or millet furnished at supper time. As a matter of fact it was never there, the authorities failing to furnish it, or possibly it had been stolen.

Ten months after arrest, eight months of which were spent in the prison and two in the prison hospital, I received my first American Red Cross package, having lost forty pounds in weight.

Speculators and bandits, and those who had relatives and friends in the city (with money), could receive food packages five times a week and, relatively speaking, they fared very well. I secured food oftentimes by selling my clothing,—socks, boots, shirts, etc., to guards.

It became noised throughout the hospital that an American dentist was there, and through the intervention of friends, I was transferred

to the surgical ward where I could use my technical knowledge. The dental instruments consisted of a basket of forceps, none of which were of much value. They had been roughly treated by being used as nail-pullers, can-openers, etc. Consequently they were filthy, with rusty joints and in a generally dilapidated condition. A few pairs were available for use. With these I gradually worked up a thriving business, but oftentimes I was so weak I could not even hold the forceps, so finally was obliged to give up work.

In the meantime, however, a murderer had been sent into the hospital, and was to be executed. He was one of a gang of twenty-four men who had raided a food warehouse, and in the *melee* which followed he had chopped off the head of a watchman with an axe. He and another man were caught, the rest escaping. He had been held in the hope of getting information concerning those who had escaped. Through an interpreter this man asked me to remove a remarkably fine piece of solid gold bridge work from his mouth, trying to make me believe that his teeth were bothering him. Finally the truth came out. It appeared that he was expecting to be shot any night, and he said he realized that if he went to his execution with such a fortune in his mouth it would be knocked out after his death by the guards—following their usual example of taking all valuables from the dead. He was anxious to have his wife receive the benefit of his previous dentistry. Naturally the commission was declined. This was not the only instance where requests of this sort were made to the dental surgeon of the prison hospital.

As dentist to the hospital I was supposed to receive an extra half pound of bread, but it never reached me. In the meantime I had an attack of neuritis which evidently came from an infected upper tooth. I pulled that molar myself, but the story is too harrowing for even a Medical Society.

An interesting phase of life in Soviet Russia, where attempts have been made to enforce communism and where collectivism has reached its climax, you will be interested in, because it is the logical culmination of a program initiated by Workmen's Compensation Acts Compulsory Health Insurance, and other forms of social insurance, such as is now in practice in American and England.

Prior to my departure from Russia in August, if you desired medical attendance the procedure through which, legally, you must go in order to obtain this much desired help was as follows: First you took a trip to the nearest registration bureau, which is usually located in an apothecary shop. There is always a long queue waiting and you stand for hours in the street, no matter what the weather, for an opportunity to present your claims. It finally comes, and you depart in the hope that sometime you will get relief. The physician who is assigned to your district usually appears in about three days, but not always. He is a much overworked man, largely because of the increased illness resulting from semi-starvation. The doctor calls. His visit is apt to be cursory and he finally departs leaving you with a prescription. Then the same routine must be followed again in order to obtain your medicine; the long line is still in front of the apothecary shop, and when finally you reach the counter it is more than probable that the drugs which have been prescribed are not to be had and one must be contented with substitutes.

If the patient must go to the hospital the same experience is yours. You register after a long wait, and maybe days or weeks

later the ambulance, or some other conveyance, calls to take your dearest one to a place, damp, cold and foodless. In June of this year the hospitals of Moscow were refusing patients unless they could bring their own food.

On the other hand, there is a brighter side to the picture. The speculator, the communist and the bandit with money can get what he wants by more direct methods. Apparently the communist system broke down, because now physicians are allowed to work in private practice after giving a portion of their time to the Soviet under the communist system.

Thus you can see there are more rules and regulations in Russia, on paper, than in any other country in the world, and very few of them are actually lived up to. The consequence is that if you are wise—and have money—government regulations mean little. No one with roubles follows the government routine. If you want to procure a suit of clothes in Moscow, first you apply. A full suit of clothes for a man costs about one and a half million roubles, and a woman's suit about two million roubles. This sounds pretty big, but the day I left Moscow five million roubles equaled about a hundred dollars. I was a billionaire in Russia, and I left Russia in a pair of old cavalry trousers and no socks. Those, of course, are prices charged by the speculators and are, therefore, illegal. Practically there are no clothes in Russia to be obtained legally, except by the commissars and a few of their friends.

The surgeon in charge of the barracks, where I was an inmate, was a very hard-working, able man. The operations were confined largely to patients suffering from hernia, appendicitis, and gun-shot wounds in bandits. Scarcely ever was a clean operation carried out without infection, except in isolated cases where the liberal use of bribe money obtained better work from the attendants. In connection with the operating room there was only one out of five sterilizers in order when I was there. Consequently the field of work was distinctly limited, especially in view of the fact that the chief surgeon had no assistant. There were a few nurses who had lost their enthusiasm and morale. One of the chief assistants was an ex-cavalry officer from Wrangle's Army, himself a prisoner.

At times there was no water in the operating room, and such as could be obtained was poured out of a pitcher to "scrub up." Many times there was no soap. I never saw but one or two towels in the operating room. The field of operation was never covered with sterile cloths, and yet all of the infections apparently occurred after the patients reached the wards, where it was simply impossible to carry out any degree of sterility in dressing wounds.

Many men died in the ward. They never received any helpful attention. Never once did I see a laboratory diagnosis attempted. In fact, there was no laboratory. If there was strychnine in the hospital I never saw it, and I do not believe there was any. On rare occasions camphor was used as a stimulant, but the supply was small. On one occasion I did see an infusion of normal salt solution. But the deaths in the ward were harrowing because of the lack of opiates and anodynes, so relief from pain was almost impossible. Men died like sheep, with no more self-consciousness than an animal would have. In fact, animals in America are better treated than men in Soviet Russian hospitals and in prisons.

Those who survived likewise manifested those attributes of ani-

mal life, such as we conceive of being attributes of wild beasts in the forests. No man died but what the food underneath his pillow was immediately stolen by those who survived him. I have seen fights in the wards among those who would profit by the loss of one of their own comrades. I saw a father and son fight over a scrap of food just prior to the former's death. And this is the condition of things which has brought Russia to a point where world communism would bring all of us, calling it a humanitarian movement. Can you conceive of the terrible mess in which Russia now lives? This hospital has the reputation in Moscow of being the best run and most efficiently conducted prison hospital in all Russia.

I do not blame those physicians who were attending the patients in Butierki. There were seven of them for five hundred and fifty patients, one of whom was supposed each day to serve the full twenty-four hours. Half of them were women. The only Communist in the crowd was a Russian Jewess who acted as Chief of Staff. This woman was about thirty-five years of age, with bobbed hair and rather attractive features; much more presentable than her superior, Feinberg. As Chief of Staff she had authority over all the prison inmates of the hospital and of the physicians who cared for them. As to her professional skill, it was most ordinary. She occasionally came into the ward, looked around and walked out. Some of the attending physicians were very lax in their attentions. In many instances the inmates saw the attending physician only twice a week, and even then many of the patients were missed.

In this country full of paper regulations, hospital records were naturally of dubious quality. As a rule the ward nurse kept these records, such as they were, but oftentimes she was susceptible to friendly advances. Occasionally a so-called Control Committee visited us for the ostensible purpose of seeing to it that the hospital was properly administered and the patients received attention. The real intention behind this was to weed out those who were well enough to go back to prison. Those visits were always anticipated by friendly advances to the nurse, and in some instances by the more or less substantial addition of "Sovietsky roubles." The coincidence of a rise in temperature as charted prior to the visit of the Control Committee was oftentimes startling, and that is one way in which many of the speculators and others with a pull retained their beds and their greater freedom in the hospital. The natural consequence was that many sick men were forced to remain in prison uncared for, and many were forced to leave the hospital simply because they had no temperature and no pull.

The story of my prison-found friend Sergius X, will illustrate many of the glaring incapacities, or the absolute indifference of government by graft. Sergius was an extremely well-known man in Moscow, of fine character, a splendid scholar, member of the Russian Academy, an author of scientific treatises and books, who also was a business man and had done much to develop the city of Moscow in its civic and industrial relations. Sergius fared as well as any man with brains could fare in such a jumble as this. He had lost his all,—confiscated by his government with no return or reward for his valuable collections and library, and he lived with his wife and two children in two rooms, using a kitchen in common with many other families in the same house. He was finally placed in charge of the "Commissariat Controlling the Hunters Who Went into the

Forests to Shoot Game for Flesh and Pelts," a ridiculous position for one of his attainments.

I first saw Sergius in prison. The door of the cell where fifteen of us were crowded together opened and in he walked. He was six feet one in height, thin from long sickness and solitary confinement and with uncut beard. I shall never forget him. We soon found out who he was and what he was, and we learned that he had been arrested three and a half months prior to that, snatched from his family—just on his feet after five months illness with acute pleuropneumonia. Since that time, and before we saw him, he had been in solitary confinement. He was my cell-mate for three months, supplied to some extent with food by his family, but in the main undernourished, like the rest of us. None of us enjoyed either air or exercise. Shortly after Sergius was put in our cell (and five months after his arrest) he first learned of the reasons therefor. The months had passed and Sergius could not discover for what reason he had been arrested. Protests were of no avail. Finally he was taken before the "Checka" for inquisition and he learned he had been arrested because, it was said, his son, twenty-one years old, had been engaged in counter-revolutionary activities. Sergius protested. He had no son twenty-one years of age. He was a well-known man, and with little difficulty his previous history could have been determined. Many people were in prison with us who had known him for years. He had married late in life, being at that time about fifty, and had only two children, the eldest of whom was barely fourteen. And yet apparently the "Checka" gave no thought as to the fact that his previous history could be learned from those right in our cell.

Sergius stayed with us for three and a half months, and then one cold, snowy February day he was ordered to leave the cell, and we afterwards learned that he had been tramped through the snow and slush of Moscow four and a half miles to Butierki prison. Later, he was transferred back to our prison and kept in a cell in the basement for nearly two weeks, a cell which was partly underground and reeking with damp and filth. The chapter closes with the death of Sergius in the *balnitza* where he had been taken from the basement cell in an unconscious state.

I could multiply such instances by the score. Would it take one long to decide in the light of such facts that the main purpose for which this system was inaugurated was to blot out the brains and ability of the great Russian people?

The story of my release is a short one. Mr. Hoover with his Food Fund was the ostensible means, and in this manner exhibiting a tact and courtesy quite unusual to a band of international criminals, the latter were allowed to save their faces. There is, however, another story behind that, the center of which lay in the trip of two warships up through Baltic waters, and which was stimulated through the efforts of the State Department. Coincident with the Baltic excursion an unofficial demand for our release was made, and soon we were without the confines of Soviet Russia.

The picture of conditions generally in the large cities of Soviet Russia is reflected in the conduct of the Butierki prison hospital. I can assure you that the word "mess" is about the only way in which it can be described.

It is inevitable that one who has spent months in a Russian prison and who has come in contact with people of every walk and

grade in life and who has listened to their stories,—their sad stories of struggle and sorrow and hardship—should have formulated some conclusions. Indeed it is right and necessary that he should do so. These people as I met them in prison would talk very much more freely on the inside than they would have dared on the outside. Many of them, at the time I heard them talk, were on the brink of their graves, which made truth more precious to them than would have been possible in any other time of life, and the first great conclusion based on these months of hardship and suffering is one that will startle you. It is this: *that Communism is the most successful system that has ever been launched as a political program.* And I know there is not a man in this room in view of what I have said, who is not shocked into wonder and amazement at this positive statement that I know to be so true. *Communism is the most successful system that has ever been launched as a political program,* and you are wondering how I can harmonize that with the story which I have already given you. It is perfectly simple if you know the true significance of events in Russia. Communism in Russia was never designed to work by its disciples and those who were actually its inaugurators. It was never intended to be a system of government that could possibly be successful, because inherent qualities which are necessary for the proper government of peoples are not present in any system of communism. The purpose for which it was instigated by those who had a hand in its inception was to use it as a method of destruction and to lead Russia to chaos. And they knew that this desired end would surely accompany an attempt to establish it as a working theory of government. They knew what its end would be as well as you or I, and therefore I am perfectly justified in saying that communism has worked successfully,—exactly as its originators intended, to destroy.

There can be no question but that the aim of the whole program as it has unfolded itself to us in the past five years, the whole plan of action as we have seen it, has been laid for the purpose of a capitalistic domination of Russia, and has also for its ultimate aim the making of Russia a provincial state under the actual if not nominal control of Germany.

Do not talk to me of humanitarianism in murder, altruism in thievery, or liberalism in oligarchy! These are as distant from each other as the east from the west. Socialism is not liberalism or progress. It is the rankest kind of reactionism, and do not forget that in the system which has been used so beautifully and so precisely for the destruction of Russia and for its subjugation at the hands of the German Jewish bankers, there is not one political principle, there is not one sociological fact which was not employed by those who were in control of the French Revolution, and who had exactly the same object in mind—*domination.*

I believe this program has achieved its fruition. One can scarcely open a current newspaper or magazine without seeing evidence of German industrial control gaining ascendancy in Soviet Russia. You have before you worked out a program which has produced in Russia a vacuity of brains and ability, left behind unlimited resources, unlimited unskilled labor, and a political condition which can yield nothing but eventual control from external influences. "Nature abhors a vacuum," it is said. The technical numbers necessary for the development of Russia's resources will flow naturally from that point where there is a surplus.

The picture stands before you. Destruction as called for in the doctrines of Karl Marx as a prelude to reconstruction, that reconstruction to take place under certain conditions and certain influences, each fact predestined by the course of events promoted and encouraged by Entente Governments. This time and age is not a healthful one for kings. Political domination by single men or groups of men without the aid of capitalism is a bygone phase of our civilization, but having survived the troublesome period of political domination through autocracy, we have yet to regulate the industrial domination of capitalism. And this is the secret behind the curtain of Central European International Politics, and it is by this that we should judge current events. If, therefore, we find that the condition of Russia is such as to make us believe it will eventually be dominated as a German province, we have but one conclusion left, and it is that the great interlocking banking group of Germany, that group which stabilized the political changes of Germany from autocracy to a nominal Republicanism, is the group to which we must look for responsibility for the chaos and destruction which they have achieved through Bolshevism as a camouflage. And these men by no means are working alone. They have their representatives working in, and their coordinating individuals influencing, every civilized government on the face of the earth.

The dangerous element in the so-called radical movement is not the alien propagandist, the cart-tail orator. His work is only too open. The dangerous element is the directing force which has its center in Berlin and which is composed of those men who, through financial success, have achieved industrial and financial domination of the Central Empires.

The dominant note at the present time in our lack of relations with Soviet Russia is the question as to whether we shall establish with it trade relations, and I desire to most emphatically register my protest against any such procedure. England has opened the way, and to what extent has it profited her? Nothing. She is in the position of one who has consented to enter into relations with criminals for the sake of personal selfish benefit, and also because of pressure exerted on her by the representatives in England of the same group to which I have alluded. We must under no circumstances encourage any such adventure for possible commercial reasons.

On the other hand, every effort is being made to entice this government into the most restricted talking relationship which shall act in its turn as an entering wedge to larger negotiations. Here, apparently is the line of thought: "We cannot get the United States to recognize us as a *de facto* government. Nor can we tempt them to recognize even a trade agreement, therefore we will get them, if possible, to alleviate our hunger." Thereby starting a train of events which in their logical conclusion must lead to relationships of some kind.

It is therefore with some misgiving that I have heard the stories of famine which have come from Russia in the past few months. There is famine in Central Russia—dire famine, but that exists largely because of lack of transportation facilities. In the relief of it from outside sources the problems to be solved are as great or greater than as if the resources which they have, were put to suitable use. But I would not now discourage anything which this great American republic can do to alleviate the sufferings in Central Russia. I believe

that we should do all that we can, and more, not only because of the lives which undoubtedly will be saved but on account of the fact that these people are looking to us as the last hope that they have in the world, and we should not fail them.

And so I say to you, help in every way that you can, but see to it that in your help you will utilize those channels which are above suspicion in their attitude toward Soviet Russia and the camouflaged destructive principles which it represents. In looking over this field I feel certain that there is only one organization which is to be trusted with American relief, and with American money, and this is the American Relief Commission of which the head is Mr. Hoover. In almost every instance, as evidenced by the present position of the Joint Distribution Committee, whose affairs are being administered by the communists in Moscow, and the Nansen Fund, whose distribution was largely accomplished through German communists, these organizations are tinged and infiltrated with friendship for a system with which we must have nothing to do.

Mr. Hoover's organization is not only honest and efficient, but of all things it is what none others are, non-sectarian from a religious or racial standpoint.

What is to be the end of this political morass of Russia? I do not know. The best of the Russians with whom I have talked and the most intelligent, are universally of the belief that outside influence only coalesces the national Russian spirit and provides suitable excuse for the present regime to sit still tighter in the saddle. I feel that they must work out their own salvation and that no armed intervention from outside sources will do anything but damage and add to their woe.

On the other hand, shall we, a free and enlightened people, knowing full well and with a hyper-intelligence, viewing the trend of events—shall we make no effort to stem an influence which eventually will engulf all civilized countries, I believe not. Russia will have to care for herself in a military sense and in a political sense, but our helpfulness in their need must be ever at her command, with a steady sympathy always ready to find expression in acts. Food and supplies will push them to their feet, and they will take care of themselves.

I fear prophecy and therefore will make none. The factors at work are so multiple, so antagonistic in the present situation that it would be impossible to trace coming events with any precision. My personal belief, pessimistic as it is, is that much more blood will be shed in Russia before a stable and equitable government is organized. Nor would I confine this bloodshed to Russia. It is a grave question in my mind whether we shall not yet again see another great world war, if Russia's future is not soon settled, not as a province of the German Empire but as a free and independent State.

Yet there is a brighter side to the picture. By education, counter-propaganda, by word of mouth, even when suppressed as printed words, people are learning the true significance of the Russian revolution, and in the future I am sure the events which have happened between October, 1917, and the present time, will be used in our educational institutions, as have in the past the events of the French Revolution, as examples of great mass reactions of our times.

By THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND and others.

A SERIES OF ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY PAMPHLETS

During the war, the Duke of Northumberland was liaison officer between the Political Section of Scotland Yard and the Home Office. As such, he became possessed of a vast quantity of information not generally known. He fully realized as few did the danger to the British Empire and to civilization which attended the revolutionary movement in England and particularly that part which had to do with Sinn Fein and the Labor Party.

The result was the organization of the Duke of Northumberland Fund and this group has now distributed in England several million leaflets and pamphlets which have figured large in the gradual dissolution of the Lloyd-George-Coalition Government. It is not ordinary propaganda material, but presents historic truths in simple form. There are about twenty pieces, but the delivery of individual prints cannot be guaranteed owing to the fact that some are now out of print and unobtainable.

Following is a partial list of titles: "The Conspiracy Against the British Empire," separate pamphlets dealing with the Irish question, the separatist movement in Egypt and India, and other political movements involving the stability of the British Empire; "The Conspiracy Against Religion" and "The League of Nations," the latter two of which are especially valuable to American readers.

These reprints are especially necessary to historians and students of current events, for they present a side which cannot be found in current periodicals.

Net, \$1.00 per set, postpaid. Sets cannot be broken.

By ADOLPHE SMITH, Official Anglo-French Interpreter from 1882 at the Congresses of the "Internationale."

THE PAN-GERMAN INTERNATIONALE

1. Marx and His Successors. 2. Trade Unionists Abroad. 3. How the Germans Captured the Machine. Reprinted from the London *Times* of July 29, 30 and 31, 1919. Mr. Smith here gives personally known facts to show how Germany used the Socialist movement to further its own ends prior to and including the late war.

Twenty cents each, postage paid. Discount in quantities.

By the late WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON.

THE SECRET HISTORY OF "THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION"

"Every student of the revolutionary movement in America should read this book *with an understanding*. It was originally published in 1871, the material gathered from English and French Government archives and gives the inner political workings of 'The Internationale.' At Brussels, Karl Marx captured control of organization for the German Jews from Bakunin, and here is the history. It has now been reprinted for the information, particularly, of those who cannot see obvious relationships."—PETER BECKWITH, in *Little Mirrors of Bolshevism*.

Net, one dollar, and four cents postage.

By MRS. NESTA H. WEBSTER

Author of "The French Revolution, a Study in Democracy."

WORLD REVOLUTION

The Plot Against Civilization.

This book was discussed for two hours in the House of Lords, and at that time was designated by Lord Sydenham of Combe as "the most important contribution to history ever made by a woman." Using unchallenged documentary evidence, Mrs. Webster traces the revolutionary movement in Europe from the inception of Weishaupt's *Society of the Illuminati*, by continuity of organization and personnel through the French Revolution and the various minor revolutions of Europe down to and including the Russian Bolshevik revolution. It might be possible to debate with Mrs. Webster's conclusions but none can question the facts she has uncovered. "The chapters on 'The Conspiracy of Babeuf' and 'The Growth of Socialism,' though packed with good things and good quotations, pale in interest before the admirable essays entitled 'The Revolution of 1848,' 'The Internationale,' and 'The Revolution of 1871,' and the sections of the work which carry on the history of Revolution up to the Russian crisis of our own day."—THE SPECTATOR, London. Illumined by a large chart indicating the relationships of the various revolutionary organizations to each other.

Net, \$3.50; by mail, \$3.65.

By GEORGE PITT-RIVERS

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The introductory letter is by Dr. Oscar Levy who plainly indicates the inspiration of the world's unrest. *For writing this introduction, Dr. Levy was firmly requested to leave England by the Home Office.* Some people have even called it a banishment. Of especial interest is the body of the book in which Mr. Pitt-Rivers discusses *sadism* and the *revolutionary instinct*, a connection well understood by psychiatrists but rarely considered by lay authors.

Net, \$1.00, postage prepaid.

With Introduction by A. H. GWYNNE

Editor of the *Morning Post*, (London)

THE CAUSE OF WORLD UNREST

In the summer of 1920 the *Morning Post* of London printed a series of articles calling attention to the apparent unity in the propaganda and actions of those who were fostering the revolutionary movement throughout the world. The connections were traced to the various vicarious secret societies of the Continent, including the *Grand Orient* of France, with which World Masonry does not affiliate.

This book is a preliminary study to Mrs. Webster's "World Revolution" and one should not be read without the other. Its publication immediately caused a wide sensation, and this is the American edition. Net, \$2.00 the copy and 14 cents to be added for postage.