

Soviet Russia: Safe or Unsafe?

By ISRAEL AMTER

FOR nearly four years, the capitalist governments endeavored to bring Soviet Russia back to the "fold" of capitalist nations—by sword, cannon, hunger, sabotage and destruction. They did not succeed, for no other reason than that the germ of revolution was too strong. The Soviet Government had come to stay. It was rooted in the lives of the people—it was a product of their suffering and sacrifices.

Today, four years after the Armistice, with Europe a seething cauldron, with industries in many countries of Europe at a standstill, their workers and peasants empty-handed and famishing—today the workers of the world, and particularly of America, are turning to the economic reconstruction of Soviet Russia. The workers and farmers of America are helping the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia to rebuild the industries, reopen the mines, restore the railroads, bridges and factories that were destroyed during the civil war.

American organized workers have founded the Russian-American Industrial Corporation for the purpose of industrial reconstruction in Soviet Russia. The needle industry is the first to be exploited. One million dollars is to be raised and used for re-equipping with modern machinery seven factories in Moscow, Petrograd and Kazan, so as to produce clothing on the huge scale of American quantity production for the Russian people. The Soviet Government stands behind the enterprise, guaranteeing all funds invested and an 8 per cent dividend.

Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and of the Russian-American Industrial Corporation, went to Soviet Russia and received the guarantee from Lenin, premier of the Soviet Government.

No worker asks questions—he acts on the motive of class solidarity. Is his money safe, invested in enterprises established to bring Russia's industries back to life? He does not ask questions—he helps!

Not so the capitalists of the world. "Is our money safe?" "Will we get returns?" "Is the Soviet legal system safe?" "Has the Soviet Government the right of confiscation?" "Can the workers strike?" "Are their rights supreme?" These and a myriad of other questions rise in the mind of the capitalist investor. Quite rightly. But they would not bother themselves about Soviet Russia, were it not the land of the greatest possibilities. They know very well that without the resources of Soviet Russia at the disposal of the world, Europe cannot be restored.

A few facts will serve to answer their doubts:

First of all, six countries have concluded commercial treaties with Soviet Russia: Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Italy, Sweden and Norway. Nine nations have concluded peace treaties: Germany, Poland,

Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Finland, Persia, Afghanistan, and Turkey.

The Argentine Government has sent a message to the Congress of Argentine asking authorization to lend the Soviet Government 5,000,000 pesos (\$4,750,000).

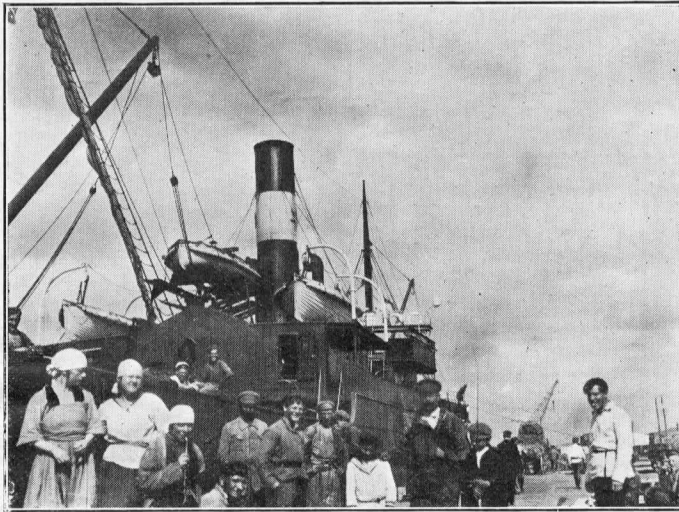
One hundred and sixty French Chambers of Commerce are taking a referendum on the question of resuming trade with Soviet Russia. The President of the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce favors a recommendation for "re-establishing French industrial-commercial relations with Russia." M. Herriot, mayor of Lyons, recently returned from a mission to Soviet Russia. Reporting to Premier Poincaré, he stated that he had been asked by numerous French commercial concerns to arrange for dealings with the Soviet Government. Upon his return, the French Foreign Office announced that "with the visit of the French mission, we find that we have many parallel interests, and it is apparent that Franco-Russian affairs are getting paramount attention."

Soviet Russia will have a delegation at the Lyons Fair in March, and French industrial products will be exhibited at the Nizhni Novgorod fair.

Russia imported 55 million poods of goods in 1921, about 3 million in the first quarter, 20 million in the last. She exported 13 million poods, less than 500,000 poods in the first quarter, more than 7 million in the fourth. Although this is far from being a large amount, the progress made it striking.

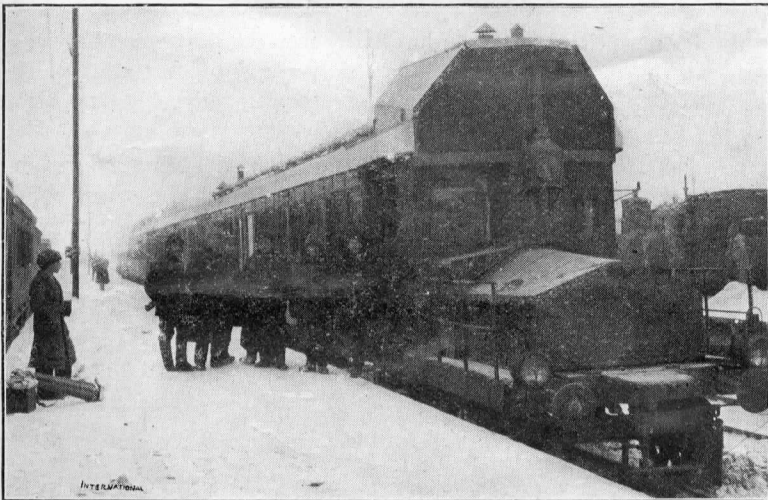
Malcolm Sumner, of the New York Bar, recently returned from a mission to Europe on behalf of American financial and industrial interests. He had frequent conferences with Chicherin, Krassin and other Russian leaders. Among other things he stated that "Ameri-

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ON A PETROGRAD DOCK

A scene showing a German steamer in the Petrograd harbor. It is being loaded with Russian flax.



SIGNS OF RUSSIA'S TECHNICAL PROGRESS

A new type of electric car, said by leading engineers to be one of the most powerful ever constructed, has already been installed on the Moscow-Petrograd line. This shows one of the new trains leaving a station en route.

This new type of aero car is being used by the personnel of the General Staff in Moscow. It is gasoline-driven, with a huge aeroplane propeller, and can make 30 miles an hour over the snow-covered streets.

Russians are not beggars, but for the sake of the children we become beggars."

MAY 19.—Today I went along as a member of the commission to a ten-minute interview with Trotsky, Zinoviev and Bukharin—the great Russian Troika of Action, Theory and Internationalism. Trotsky looks fine, much better than about eight years ago when I first met him in New York. Bukharin I had also the pleasure of meeting in New York, but of course, neither of them remembered it.

MAY 20.—This evening we were the guests of the Soviet Government at the State Opera House, where "Carmen" was played. The singers were mediocre, but the costumes and scenery very beautiful. What surprised us most was that without any knowledge on the part of any one in the audience a sort of celebration in honor of the conductor of the chorus, who has been connected with the theater for forty years, took place between the first and the second acts. Lunacharsky, the Commissar of Education and Art, spoke. Then came various delegations of those connected with the theater—artists, chorus, ballet, workers—each reading their congratulations and then kissing the conductor of the chorus.

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cans and western Europeans who have visited Russia during the past year agree that trade is being resumed in an orderly manner, and that the Soviet Government shows every sign of stability."

Roy Anderson, an American business man, at one time adviser to the Chinese

National Government, after a stay of several months in Soviet Russia, states that "the Russians have a very strong Government, and that is wholly for law and order."

A number of prominent bankers in this country advocate trade relations with Soviet Russia; Otto Kahn, of Kuhn, Loeb & Co., Frank Vanderlip, ex-president of the National City Bank; Louis Clark, president of the American Exchange National Bank; S. Davies Warfield, Baltimore banker; J. G. Shurman, banker; ex-Governor J. P. Goodrich, of Indiana, banker.

Perhaps, however, the most notable fact in connection with the stability of the Soviet Government is the Russo-Asiatic Consolidated, Ltd., a British concern that has been negotiating with the Soviet Government regarding an enterprise involving £56,000,000. The holdings of this concern are in Siberia and the Urals, negotiations being conducted by Urquhart, the capitalist, and Krassin, for Russia. As a result of the Near East situation, the negotiations were temporarily interrupted. But there is no doubt they soon will be resumed.

Does any business man then doubt the stability of the Soviet Government? Do any of the nations that have concluded commercial treaties doubt it? Great Britain is supplying 35 per cent of the imports in Soviet Russia, Germany 24 per cent. Nearly half of the Russian exports are going to Great Britain. Does this demonstrate an unstable condition?

It does not. On the contrary, the steadily growing exports and imports indicate clearly that trade is improving, that the industries are operating at higher capacity. The railroads are running on schedule time. The

coal mines are furnishing twice as much coal as they did a year ago.

After going through four years of civil war, Soviet Russia today is in far better condition than several other countries of Europe. Austria is practically bankrupt. The workers of Hungary are suffering terribly. Germany is steadily going down. Soviet Russia alone of all European States shows continued improvement. And yet American capital is being invested in German, Hungarian and Austrian industries—though there is every chance of its being lost.

The only danger that hitherto presented itself to capitalist enterprise in Soviet Russia has been confiscation. The new economic policy with its appropriate laws now safeguards all capitalist investment that is admitted.

But in the case of the Russian-American Industrial Corporation, the position is exceptional, for the Russian Government regards this as a case of "friendly capital". The Russian Government, in fact, regards the Russian American Industrial Corporation as being in a business partnership with it and not only guarantees all money invested, but also guarantees a minimum profit of eight per cent on every dollar.

The Friends of Soviet Russia has received 1,225 individual contributions, totaling \$8,725.85, from December 1 to 15. Receipts numbers 13676 to 14900 have been sent out to cover these. The printing of all the names here would take many pages and would thus cut in deep on the Russian news and other articles in this issue. It has therefore been decided to omit the list while the receipts are so heavy. It has been set separately and will be sent to those making applications therefor. The financial statement, however, is printed in full in this issue.

Financial Statement of the Friends of Soviet Russia

RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

From date of organization, August 9, 1921, to November 30, 1922.

Statement "A"

The INCOME of the National Office is received chiefly from FSR Locals and other Workers' Organizations. Receipts are issued for income received, and published in detail.

For the first fiscal year, ended July 31, 1922, there was received and reported, Receipt Nos. 1 to 12115.....				\$734,922.70
For the second fiscal year, Receipt Nos. 12116 to 13125 have been reported in detail, a total of.....				29,129.82
For November, 1922, of the second fiscal year, Receipt Nos. 13126 to 13675 are published in detail in our official organ, "Soviet Russia," dated December, 1922, a total of				11,673.26
Total Received and Acknowledged (including Orphans Drive and Sale of Toys)				775,725.78
The above income was deposited in a bank account and before it was withdrawn for relief there was received INTEREST amounting to:				\$878.96
For the first fiscal year				211.44
For the second fiscal year to date				1,099.40
Making a TOTAL INCOME of.....				\$776,816.18
From which is DEDUCTED the following:				\$5,448.01
For first fiscal year, previously detailed				
For second fiscal year to date:				
Adjustments to prior year, Credit		72.46		
Bank Charges	2.25			
Returned by Bank—Receipt No. 13,324	5.00	7.25	65.21	5,382.80
Leaving INCOME RECEIVED BY NATIONAL OFFICE				\$771,433.38

BUSINESS OFFICE EXPENSES:

In order to carry on the work of receiving funds, valuables and clothes, making appeals and spending the money for relief and aid, the National Office needs a secretary, office employees and a business office. The expenses paid for these needs are:				
For first fiscal year, previously detailed				\$29,222.40
For second fiscal year to date, detailed in Statement "B" below				9,068.30
Leaving INCOME less BUSINESS OFFICE EXPENSES				\$733,142.68

Part of this amount was used for PUBLICITY and APPEAL EXPENSES:

- (a) in raising the total income
- (b) in collecting clothes
- (c) in aiding Soviet Russia by the dissemination of friendly information
- (d) latterly, the friendly information has for its specific object the promotion of the Russian-American Industrial Corporation (Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America). The appeals for funds and clothes and the dissemination of information is made largely through locals.