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Constitutional Government for Russia

An Address Delivered before THE CIVIC FORUM
in Carnegie Hall, New York City
January 14, 1908

BY
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Member of the Third Duma for St. Petersburg

WITH PORTRAIT

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NOTE

Professor Milyoukov made the journey from St. Petersburg to America on the invitation of THE CIVIC FORUM, for the sole purpose of delivering this one address. He remained in America but three days, being obliged to hasten back to Russia in order to be present when the Duma resumed its sessions after its three weeks' recess at the time of the Russian Christmas. At the meeting in Carnegie Hall, when this address was delivered, Right Rev. Henry C. Potter, Bishop of New York, acted as Chairman. The Hall was crowded to its utmost capacity by an audience which numbered nearly four thousand persons, representing the most influential elements in the city. The address made a profound impression, and at its close, on motion of Hon. Elgin R. L. Gould, President of the New Netherland Bank and formerly City Chamberlain, a vote of sympathy and appreciation, and of thanks to the speaker was unanimously carried.

On the following evening, January 15, Hon. Herbert Parsons, Member of Congress from New York, gave a dinner and reception in Washington, in honor of Professor Milyoukov. There were present as guests on this occasion: three members of President Roosevelt's Cabinet, namely, Hon. William H. Taft, Secretary of War; Hon. James R. Garfield, Secretary of the Interior; and Hon. Oscar S. Straus, Secretary of Commerce and Labor; Hon. Robert Bacon, Assistant Secretary of State; Hon. William Loeb Jr., Secretary to President Roosevelt; Hon. Joseph G. Cannon, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Hon. Sereno E. Payne, leader of the majority in the House, and over one hundred other members of the Senate and the House, besides many other prominent officials of the national Government. In introducing Professor Milyoukov, Congressman Parsons said that he was certain that this leader of the Constitutional Democratic party of Russia had the complete sympathy of every member of the Government of the United States. This statement was received with prolonged applause by all present.



Paul Mitropoulos

Constitutional Government for Russia

Four years ago, when I first came here to address an American audience on Russian affairs, Russia was approaching its political downfall and I tried to unveil some threatening symptoms under the then placid surface of things. On my second trip a year later, I hardly had time to complete the picture by pointing out the urgency of radical reform, political and social. We were already in the rapids of the year 1905—the year of the Russian Revolution. This year brought with it a real downfall of the autocracy, by the well-known Manifesto of October 30th. Some people thought then that the reasonable aim of the movement had already been attained, since Russia was thenceforth to be a modern constitutional state. Others took the event as a new departure in the direction of something larger and unprecedented. But few foresaw that the success achieved was the highest mark to be recorded by this flood-tide, or that after some few moments of surprise and bewilderment, a descending course would set in.

This was our case. The obstacles rose, more and more threateningly, until now, after two years of struggles, after two Dumas dissolved, we find ourselves in a sort of political whirlpool. Whether or not a natural outlet will be discovered, whether the flood will follow a quiet course or rush toward new cataclisms, who can foretell!

The uncertainty in the great struggle of modern Russia could not fail to slacken the general interest in it. People have grown weary from the too many details, and have gradually lost sight of the final aim of the movement. Of those who were enthusiastic admirers of this struggle for freedom in its dramatic beginning, there are few who know how to preserve their keen

interest amidst all its entangled developments. Of the many millions who cast a furtive glance at the glorious cataract when the revolution was at its height, how few are there who care to follow the disorderly course of the waters down the gorge!

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you may accompany one who has taken no part in the events. My comparison of the waterfall may be a disadvantageous introduction. But recently one of your writers in this country threw upon me personally, as a leader of the Constitutional Democratic party (that is, the Cadets), the responsibility for the failure of the two first Russian Dumas. Were this true, it would make of me as your guide this evening, a very unreliable guide indeed.

Of course an excuse was kindly found for me—the excuse of being an “idealist”—a complimentary term, I suppose, for “Utopian.” This is far better, certainly, than to be characterized as a “conspirator,” a “revolutionary,” or even an “anarchist,” as one of my countrymen in this country was recently called. But, I must confess, not one of these terms appeals to my political taste. In a certain sense I cannot object, and, I hope, nobody can, to being called a political idealist. Even in this country of practical politicians, where politics and realism have long been synonymous terms, there are times when idealism enjoys a certain currency. When a great cause is at stake and great issues are being fought for, political idealism is never wanting. In fact, I think that a real idealism is hardly ever superfluous, and I am quite sure that you are not the people to make this term a reproach.

In any case what is called idealism in a country of practical politicians may pass as very sound realism in a country of political dreamers; and what is realism in times of general outbreak, may become idealism when the flood recedes and stagnation sets in. I hope that you will take these circumstances into consideration before you “locate” me definitely.

The party to which I belong, which was the leading party in the first two Dumas, has always kept, up to the last moment, at the center of political movement. Some of our enemies consider our policy too radical, while many others find it too moderate. But everyone opposed to the policy of the Constitutional Democratic party, has found it particularly dangerous for this very reason that it has kept within the reach of practical possibilities. Precisely for this reason the party was particularly hated and feared by both extreme currents of the Russian movement—by

the reactionaries as well as by the revolutionaries. Both extremes appealed to violent methods of struggle and were busy preparing new strokes and counterstrokes, which our party tried to make unnecessary and impossible. And, of course were the constitution to strike root in Russia and were quiet to be secured by large social reforms, what hope would remain either for a restoration of autocracy or for a social overthrow? That is why our enemies on both sides have used violent means in the endeavor to thwart the political course which our party has chosen.

As a result, we must admit that our position as mediator is now very much weakened. Other parties much more conservative than ours now play the rôle of peacemakers. Unfortunately, we cannot find their good services quite disinterested. Nor do we find general reconciliation to be acceptable on their conditions. The order of things they are likely to bring about, we cannot expect to be either constitutional or democratic. We believe that the political situation they are going to create will be extremely unstable, being too much of a compromise with the autocracy and the nobility. And as this situation is likely to bring with it new complications and to provoke new struggles, we do not wish to take upon ourselves the responsibility for its consequences. That is why we realists of yesterday are now classed as idealists; and having formerly been described as opportunists, suffer now from being termed revolutionaries. We have not changed, but things have changed very much all around us. Public opinion is with us. But the masters of the present day do not represent public opinion. The leading majority of the third Russian Duma is governmental, while the country remains what it was before—in opposition.

Now that you know the general situation and my own place in it, let us enter into our subject. This, of course, cannot be a detailed account of the Russian revolution. All that I can do is to analyze the moving forces of that revolution and to outline the principal phases through which it has passed. Thus I hope to help you to a clearer insight into the real causes of the origin and the failure of this movement, and to enable you to form an independent judgment as to its possible outcome.

Of the four consecutive phases which one may distinguish in the course of the events of the last three years, the first two mark an ascending movement, while the last two show a gradual but uninterrupted retrogression. I am tempted to call the first

ascending phase of the movement the national phase. For the movement is national in its origin as well as in its manifestations. The revolutionary movement originated in a state of general disaffection which grew acute after the great national disaster of the late war with Japan, and spread widely through all classes of the population. The aim of the movement was one and united—a current saying in those days was, “we do not want reforms, but *the* Reform, the Constitution.” And its action was united. This accounts for the strength of the movement and for the rapid success in the concession conveyed by the Manifesto of October 30.

The second ascending phase begins with the fall of autocracy. This was the negative aim of the movement, common to all of the aggressive parties. As soon as it was reached, the divergence in the positive strivings of yesterday's allies became manifest. The revolutionary elements of the movement, intoxicated by their sudden victory of October 30, persuaded themselves that the world stood on the eve of a social overthrow and that Russia must give the signal for it. Thus the revolutionary movement first differentiated itself from the constitutional movement. The revolutionary phase, however, was short and proved fatal to the success of the whole movement. It began with the October victory. It came to its close with the December defeat of the armed insurrection at Moscow. Then the ebbing tide was held back for a time by the initial activity of the first Russian parliamentary representation. Thus the movement, with the opening of the first Duma, entered upon its third stage.

I should call this third stage constitutional, from the methods of struggle then tried. How did this phase end? I should be very much pleased to tell you that the employment of constitutional methods of struggle has not ended yet. But this would not account for the predominant fact by which the fourth phase of the movement is characterized, namely, the increasing use of unconstitutional methods by the enemies of the movement, who now take the offensive. Therefore I call the fourth phase counter-revolutionary. It began with the violent act of the dissolution of the first Duma, and it became particularly emphatic after the “Fundamental Law” was flagrantly violated simultaneously with the dissolution of the second Duma.

Will this counter-revolutionary phase end with the fifth phase, that of a restoration of autocracy? Or rather will it bring us back to the third—the constitutional phase? I do not wish to

play the prophet, but one must at least prepare for the worst, and there is no use in attenuating the danger.

Let me now go a step further in our analysis. After having discriminated political phases, we can discriminate between the leading social groups involved in the movement. With each political phase we shall be able to point out a definite social group that is responsible for it. The first, or national phase, is the one exception, characterized as it was by the co-operation of many advanced groups. In fact, with the national phase, social groups just began to organize, and it was public opinion in general, and its leaders, the intellectuals, that took the lead. The learned professions and the representatives of local self-government, these were the chief moving forces which promoted the movement and tried to formulate its demands.

In the second or revolutionary phase, the leadership belongs to the socialists. They acted in the name of the proletarians, but at the same time they sought for allies among the peasantry and in the army. In the third phase, the constitutional, the party which I have the honor to represent played the leading rôle, the Constitutional Democrats. In the fourth phase, the court, the bureaucracy and the nobility begin to prevail. The court and the nobility in particular have become the leading forces in an openly avowed movement which is now setting in for the restoration of autocracy.

Now, brief as this analysis is, I believe that it will throw a certain light upon the delayed outcome of the general movement and explain why it proved—partially and temporarily, let us hope—a failure. The exactness of the analysis one can hardly dispute; and it implies a certain explanation. To make this clear, it remains for me to fill in the gaps and to supply the most necessary links between the political movements and the social elements just analyzed.

To repeat, the national phase was distinguished by the fact that the aims of all advanced groups were then held in common. Even groups which in the revolutionary stage went far asunder, contributed together to the success of the initial phase. Thus in its very origin the movement was two-fold. It opened with the famous Petition of Right, formulated on November 22, 1904, by members of the gentry, and two months later it was reinforced by the first appearance of the working masses, whom Father Gapon led to the Winter Palace on the Red Sunday, January 22, 1905. The final triumph, the Manifesto of October

30, 1905, was also attained through the indiscriminate co-operation of all the advanced groups. After this first victory, won through a general strike which was quite unprecedented in its extension, the socialists repeatedly issued orders to the workingmen to strike again, and each time the attempt was a failure. The one successful strike which wrung from the government the decisive concession was prepared and led in great measure by the intellectuals, and in a quite spontaneous way was supported by various social groups. For example, even the capitalists, without exception, supported their laborers while on strike by paying their wages for the entire time. Private shops and offices voluntarily closed in compliance with the general state of public opinion. Professors forcefully told the government that it must not oppose the meetings held within the walls of the higher institutions of learning. The juries declared themselves unable to pronounce sentences during the days of the strike, while judges and tribunals went on strike with the rest. Even the officials in several State offices stopped their work. In short, it was an outbreak of universal enthusiasm, which proved to the government that further resistance was impossible and brought it to surrender.

Then it was that the revolutionary elements grew self-confident, and went their own way, preparing for a more decisive blow. Much later, the socialist leaders themselves were brought to a realization that their own estimate of their power was greatly exaggerated, as likewise the amount of real influence which they had over the proletarians. But by this time their optimism had grown boundless. Even the impossible had begun to seem possible—I mean, the impossible according to their own doctrine. The element of truth in their argument was that no decisive results could be won from the government in the way of voluntary concessions. And indeed, even such concessions as had been granted on October 30 were by no means voluntary. If proofs are wanted for this assertion, they will be found in the present activities of the government—in its attempt to withdraw as far as possible even the concessions given. But from an exact observation the socialists drew quite a wrong conclusion, namely, that no concessions of any kind were wanted because the proletarians by themselves were strong enough to bring about an armed insurrection, to form a revolutionary government, and thus to dictate the will of the people. The general strike, according to them, was nothing more than a mod-

est introduction to the real fight. They ordered new strikes after strikes; they organized a nucleus for a revolutionary government—their St. Petersburg Council of Workingmen Delegates, elected by the workingmen in St. Petersburg factories. They even anticipated an actual advent of socialism as a result of their coming victory, though such a result was in formal contradiction with their own accepted theory. The current doctrine then was that the coming revolution was to be bourgeois, not socialistic. But in their growing impatience, the St. Petersburg socialists were unwilling even to wait for this bourgeois victory for the realization of their minimum program. The Council of Delegates issued an order on November 11, according to which the eight-hour day was to be introduced in all factories by the workingmen themselves in a revolutionary way.

In vain some few delegates tried to persuade their comrades that it was sheer madness to undertake the struggle with the capitalists before their struggle with autocracy itself had come to a satisfactory ending. The results were, of course, disastrous. The private and government factories, challenged by their workingmen, replied with a series of lockouts. About 100,000 men lost their work, and the threat of a new strike proved ineffective. After two weeks of hopeless resistance, the Council had to surrender and withdraw its order. The government felt encouraged, and took the offensive. On December 9, the President of the Council was arrested. On December 16, one day after the revolutionary manifesto was launched by the Council, all its members were imprisoned. Then, as a last attempt, a new strike was proclaimed, to serve as an introduction to the armed insurrection which was to be tried at Moscow. The moment could not have been more badly chosen for the decisive blow. After some ten days of haphazard fighting, the Moscow insurrection was crushed by the guard regiments, and this put a speedy end to all theories of a permanent revolution in Russia. Moreover, the Moscow defeat served as a signal for a relentless prosecution of the adherents of the revolutionary movement throughout Russia. Special military trains were kept ready and military expeditions were sent far and wide, especially to the outskirts of the empire, the Caucasus, the Baltic provinces, and to Siberia, which proved particularly rebellious. The army ransacked the population, with no discrimination between the guilty and the innocent. Whole villages were burned, people were hanged and killed on mere suspicion, contributions were levied

on the "internal enemy," and so forth. By means of all these atrocities, what still remained of the revolutionary conflagration was mercilessly stifled. "Peace" was restored on the great roads and in the large cities.

Still the end of the revolutionary movement was not yet. There remained the villages, and the last hopes of the revolutionaries were transferred to these. Of course the outbreaks in the villages were less dramatic and less calculated to attract public attention than revolutionary proceedings by the workingmen, concentrated by tens and hundreds of thousands in the large cities. But the agrarian troubles were far more perilous, and they affected the well-being of the privileged and influential class of landlords more strongly than the strikes of workingmen affected the Russian capitalists. Russia is not yet an industrial country, and in spite of all the recent development of Russian industry, the number of workingmen in the factories does not exceed two per cent of the population, while the peasants constitute eighty-five per cent.

The peasants of course were unable to march under the banner of socialism and obey its orders. But we saw that even among the proletarians the influence of socialistic societies was not so strong as their leaders presumed it to be. If socialism had some elements of organization which lead to success, it also had its theories which brought the movement to ruin. Socialism tried to impart to the Russian peasants its organization and theories. A counterpart to the Council of Workingmen Delegates was started under the name of The Peasants' Union, in order to organize the agrarian outbreak. Socialism tried also to adapt its doctrine to the kind of agrarian terrorism to which Russian peasants were particularly inclined. But here the centralizing influence of socialism was still weaker; the movement itself was even more spontaneous and depended more upon its own intrinsic causes.

These causes were never lacking in a Russian village, and particularly so after the great emancipation reform of 1861. "More land," this was for half a century the constant cry of the Russian peasant. He got less than his expectation in the "great reform," receiving only too little from the land he had tilled for his landlord. And for this little he was compelled to pay too much out of his scanty earnings. From that time, as the population went on increasing, the individual land-holdings became still smaller, while indirect taxation grew out of all

proportion to the increase in the population. The cry for more land became the cry of distress, the cry of starvation. During the summer months of 1903, an agrarian outbreak took place quite spontaneously. Famine-stricken, the peasants came in crowds to the neighboring landlords. Finding that these possessed much more grain than they needed, while they themselves had nothing to eat, the peasants quietly carried off on their carts what they considered superfluous. In the year 1905, the year of revolution, amidst the general excitement of that time, agrarian troubles broke out again on a much larger scale and took a more violent form. In the autumn of 1905, the trouble spread over more than a third of European Russia, that is, in one hundred and sixty-one districts out of four hundred and thirty-six—thirty-seven per cent of the area of the country. About two thousand estates and country houses of landlords were burned or ravaged. The entire loss suffered by the landlords at this time was estimated at about fifteen million dollars. "Some one must perish, either we or our landlords," the peasants were heard saying. And the landlords' utterance was no less telling: "If we do not cut down our estates and give the peasants new allotments, they will cut us down!"

Thus the agrarian question assumed first rank among the burning questions of the day. The different proposals for the solution of this question served thenceforth to differentiate the political groups. After some brief period of hesitation, corresponding to the third political phase, the government sided with the land-owners, while the opposition took decidedly the side of the peasants. Under such circumstances, the Constitutional Democratic party was founded, which had to play the leading rôle in the constitutional phase of the movement. This party was composed of the more advanced elements among the Russian gentry and of the more moderate elements among the members of the learned professions. The chief aim of the party was to reconcile the idealistic aspirations of the movement with the practicability of the issues, and thus to inaugurate in Russia a régime of political freedom. The elements of the new party already existed in the previous political organizations; and this is why only a few weeks after its constituent congress, held in the very turmoil of the October strike, the party counted already more than one hundred thousand members. A few comparisons will make clear the political position of the Constitu-

tional Democratic party in the midst of the extremes of the movement:

1. The revolutionary movement aimed at a commonwealth, while the reactionaries wanted to re-establish autocracy. The Constitutional Democratic party decided to fight for a parliamentary rule under a constitutional monarch.

2. The revolutionists wished to have a charter worked out by a constitutional convention and sanctioned by a victorious revolution. The reactionaries did not want any charter at all, or at the worst, a consultative representation granted by the Tsar. Our party proposed a charter worked out by the first representative assembly, subject to the approval of the Tsar.

3. As to agrarian reform, the revolutionists defended the principle, "The whole land to the whole people," the land to be appropriated by the people themselves, acting through their delegates in local committees, which were to be elected on the basis of universal suffrage. The government would permit nothing except a regular sale of land through the medium of the existing Peasant Bank, and at the open market price. Our party proposed a systematic extension of the emancipation reform of 1861, by dealing out additional allotments to the communes from the free (crown) lands, and from the larger private estates, to be expropriated by means of a compulsory sale at a fair price. The price was to be settled by special committees formed of private land-owners and representatives of the peasant communes in equal numbers.

This was a very radical program, but to our view it corresponded thoroughly with the necessities of the moment and the peculiarities of Russian conditions. Of course we did not believe that the government would accept this program willingly and voluntarily. But one must always remember that this was the moment when the government, in spite of its December victory, was quite cowed by apprehension at the coming agrarian troubles. And they knew but too well that even for the Cadet program, the peasants were yet to be won.

However, at the same time the government still cherished the hope of being able to palliate discontent and disorder by some demagogic means. Owing to the state of public opinion in the country itself and abroad, considering the necessity of a foreign loan, being conscious of its own weakness after the defeat in the war with Japan, the government did not think of forsaking entirely the principles of national representation. But it ex-

pected to organize in the first Duma a subservient ministerial party, formed chiefly of peasants, to whom the electoral law secured a very large representation. And thus the government decided to prepare for the electoral campaign. It even enlarged the franchise by the additional law of December 24, 1905, as a concession to general demands for universal suffrage. The revolutionary elements, on their side, learned nothing. They continued attacking the bourgeoisie furiously as being alone responsible for their December defeat. They tried to discredit and denounce in advance the coming Duma as an assembly of landlords and officials, and in their blindness they proposed to the masses to boycott the impending elections. The Constitutional Democratic party was then the only party in opposition which did its best to win public opinion to the idea of a struggle by parliamentary means. Great was the disappointment of the government and the astonishment of the revolutionists when the electoral returns gave a prevailing part to the Constitutional Democrats in the first Russian Duma.

The government then hastily took measures of precaution against the "revolutionary" assembly. A foreign loan of two and a quarter milliards of francs set the government free from immediate dependence on the national representatives. A series of "temporary" laws were hurriedly published in order to bring into legal limits the "civil liberties" promised by the Manifesto. And last but not least, this period of what was called in Russia, "quick-fire gun" legislation, was crowned with a most important declaration. A few days before the opening of the session, a sort of charter or "fundamental law" was published which put as narrow limits as possible to the legislative powers of the Duma. These laws were not to be changed except by the initiative of the Tsar. And yet even though thus muzzled, the national representatives held the government in a state of constant fear and bewilderment, or else of malicious expectation. The ministry remained inactive and the Chamber was left to itself, particularly after it answered the ministerial declaration by a vote of dissent. The government was compelled to decide between a dissolution and a ministerial change. A dissolution was then still considered as fraught with every sort of danger. That is why, in its extreme embarrassment, the government thought for an instant of regular co-operation with the majority in the Duma. One of the high dignitaries who was intrusted with the preliminary negotiations,

told me openly what their motives were in proposing to call a Cadet ministry to power. "When a house is on fire," this gentleman said, "one is obliged to choose between leaping from the fifth story at the risk of a broken leg, and the peril of being burned alive."

I am inclined to think that this argument did not appear to the Tsar conclusive. The following considerations may likewise have determined the government to try a dissolution instead of "a leap from the fifth story": In the first place, the Cadets (or Constitutional Democrats), whom the government regarded for a while as leaders of the whole movement, proved unable to control the revolution, and even in the Duma did not always command a majority. There was another important group in the Duma, the so-called Group of Toil, which became very popular among the peasants, owing to its revolutionary program of land-nationalization. The activity of this Group in the Duma and outside it, re-kindled revolutionary hopes for the attainment of power. The revolutionists now completely changed their minds as to the part to be played by the Duma in the Russian revolution. After having discredited the Duma as bourgeois and quite powerless, they now wanted it to take possession of the executive power. The Cadets found themselves in an exceedingly difficult position. On the one hand, they had to fight for a responsible ministry in order to establish a normal influence on the part of the Duma over the executive power. On the other hand, they had to hold in check every attempt to appropriate the executive functions by the Duma itself. Of course this was enough to paralyze any great measure of exertion. But the chief reasons for the government to abstain from any co-operation with the Cadets was the agrarian program, which frightened the nobility. Here again the Cadets had to debate between the government, which did not wish to decide for the principle of compulsory sale, and the extremists, who proposed the pure spoliation of landlords, to the great satisfaction of the inexperienced masses. Finally the government committed itself to the unconstitutional step of publishing an announcement to the people by which the legislative plans of the Duma were repudiated in advance. The Duma tried to reply, insisting on the fundamental principle of compulsory sale and inviting the population—this latter point being opposed by the Group of Toil—to remain quiet and await patiently the results of the Duma's legislation. Upon this attempt to address the population, the Duma

was dissolved and the address was never published. The leading majority replied by the famous Viborg Manifesto, proclaiming the principle of passive resistance.

The fears of the government ran high at the moment of this declaration. For some few days one dreaded military outbreaks and revolutionary dictators at Tsarkoe Selo. One spoke even of a foreign fleet to appear at the mouth of the Neva. A circular letter of the Premier anticipated serious disorders in the interior. Once more all this only showed that the government itself greatly exaggerated the forces of the organized revolutionary movement. The few outbreaks that really followed the dissolution were easily stifled. The government then gradually turned to another extreme, or rather to its habitual mistake. It began again to underrate the amount of political disaffection which had become endemic in the Russian masses. The reactionary forces lifted up their heads and the counter-revolutionary phase set in.

In fact the government never gave up its resistance to the movement, and it never tried to change its usual methods of administration. The liberties granted by the Manifesto were never regularly used. Many of the provinces of Russia (in 1906, three-quarters of them) were administered by exceptional law, and this gave a legal pretext for not enacting the constitutional liberties. The general evil from which Russia always suffered—arbitrariness in administration and non-observance of law—greatly increased in the state of civil war which practically prevailed in Russia after the Manifesto of October 30. By long practice of arbitrariness, certain habits were formed which made adaptation possible. But after the Manifesto, private considerations of individual officials took the place of an established routine. The country was divided into two hostile camps, between which no compromise was possible. High-handed deeds of petty officials were formally approved and encouraged by their superiors. The feeling of general unsafety increased immensely under these conditions, and this existing misrule became largely responsible for that state of anarchy and terror from which Russia now suffers. To quote some striking instances: in the last twenty-five years of the nineteenth century, one hundred and thirty-four death sentences were pronounced in Russia, on the average five sentences a year. In the two years following the Manifesto, the number of criminals sentenced to death (almost without exception for political offenses),

rose to the enormous total of two thousand, seven hundred and seventeen, of whom one thousand, seven hundred and eighty were executed. The whole number of persons condemned for political offenses during these two years was eighteen thousand, two hundred and seventy-four, while formerly it had not exceeded one thousand a year, and the number for 1904—about four thousand—was considered as quite exceptional.

Out of the eighteen thousand, two hundred and seventy-four condemned, one thousand one hundred and fourteen criminals belonged to a class which is rarely considered as criminal; they were directors of newspapers and periodicals, who tried to make use of the freedom of the press proclaimed by the Manifesto. Nine hundred and thirty-eight newspapers and periodicals were stopped forever in the same period of time. Public meetings—another liberty granted by the Manifesto—are practically permitted by the police only during the electoral campaigns and almost exclusively in large cities. The right of forming unions and societies, which makes the third liberty of the Manifesto, can be of service only for such organizations as enjoy the protection of the government. Registration is regularly refused to organizations which are suspected of opposition, on most futile pretexts. Not satisfied with the prosecution of such associations, the government recently began a systematic prosecution of the duly registered and legally existing professional unions. In short, any one who would tell you that Russia really enjoys the civil liberties granted by the Manifesto, would state a lie. The truth is that only those liberties were and are permitted which the government was and is powerless to forbid; and such liberties are often used without any legal restraint, while a regular and law-abiding practice of civil liberties is nearly always refused legal permission.

Thus, under the new régime of national representation, the executive power tried to remain what it had always been before, and never thought of changing its former methods of administration. And as long as the present misrule lasts, it is almost impossible for the legislative power to do its proper work.

The first Duma was forced to spend much of its time in useless exertion to stop this evil in the only legal way by interpellations on the subject of all the numberless mischiefs done by the Home Office. About three hundred and eighty interpellations were presented by the members during the hundred days of the existence of the first Duma. The reply of the ministers was always the

same: everything is being done according to the existing law. Very soon it became clear that unless the ministers were made really responsible to the national representative assembly, and unless the system of administration by exceptional laws was abolished, no redress of administrative abuses was possible for the Duma. That is why the second Duma made a very moderate use of its right of interpellation, not because it turned a deaf ear to the sufferings of the people, but because it knew the inefficiency of its defense.

When we say then, that the government took to the offensive and that a counter-revolutionary phase set in, we certainly mean something new and still stronger than mere enforcing of the old methods of administration, which were never stopped. The new feature is that new means and facilities, given by the régime of political freedom, are being used as a weapon against this very régime. The government, it is true, proclaimed itself above all parties, thus trying to set its autocratic system in opposition to party politics, essential to parliamentary rule. But under the disguise of more elevated political maxims, it only tried to organize its own political party—that of autocracy. For this purpose the government invited all elements to unite which were likely to defend the “old, holy Russia,” orthodox and autocratic.

A more fatal blow to the very idea of that “old, holy Russia” could hardly have been struck, than by trying this truly crucial experiment. Only two years ago, were not the high ideals of a “little Father” of Russia, a holy Synod, a credulous, bigoted, ignorant Russian peasant, supporting the edifice of the Omnipotent Bureaucracy—was not all this rubbish given out for the benefit of foreign readers, as the actual “truth about Russia”? And in Russia herself, who could pretend to know the real number of “Old Believers,” ready to support the ancient political system? Now, the partisans of autocracy are counted by the interested party itself, for the benefit of the whole civilized world, and everybody can judge for himself who they are and how many.

The illusion of an omnipotent bureaucracy dwindles at once to something insignificant. Red tape, by its very nature, can rarely come to real power. It may form powerful machinery, but if not greased and directed from outside, the machinery remains inactive. In its professional quality, bureaucracy necessarily possesses a certain standard of intelligence, and, in spite of all its routine, it is not necessarily averse to all reform. When

bureaucracy is left to itself, in the periods of stagnation it uses its intelligence for self-criticism and becomes skeptical and cynical. Many writers on Russia were astonished to find these peculiar features under the official surface of the Russian civil service. Russian bureaucracy—at least in its higher stages and to a certain extent—has grown liberal for the obvious reason that nobody knew better than it did, all the drawbacks of official prosperity.

I trust that you will not take these remarks for a defense of bureaucracy as a system of government. Bureaucracy is but an engine which no modern state can do without. But the force and the spirit must be brought to this engine from outside. All I want to impress on you is that the responsibility for the spirit now pervading Russian bureaucracy must be laid at another door. The real moving forces of the present counter-revolutionary phase are the court and the nobility. The attempts they are now making for a new organization of self-defense have but little in common with the regular work done by the bureaucratic machine. As I have just said, they turn for a new experiment to the building of political parties and to interfering with political elections. These are new means through which they try to perpetuate, under the new order of things, their former predominance.

We can trace back the origin of reactionary organizations to the very beginnings of political liberty in Russia. Some of you may still remember a very expressive comparison used by Mr. Stead, between what he called a "beautiful picture" drawn by his Imperial Majesty in his October Manifesto, and the same Manifesto blackened on the very next day by the brutal "brush" of General Trepoff. General Trepoff, in his quality of chief of the Russian police, suffered the so-called "patriotic" disorders and pogroms to take place in numerous towns in Russia, where they were organized, with the evident connivance of the local authorities, as counter-demonstrations against the Tsar's Manifesto. Mr. Stead's mistake was only in thinking of General Trepoff's "brush" as something incidental to the "beautiful picture." A movement which, within a week's time, carried with it three thousand victims killed outright, and ten thousand wounded and maimed, evidently testifies to a certain organization behind the scenes. Certain secret societies, organized by reactionary leaders and well-known to the police, have existed since the spring of 1905. Their avowed aim has been to defend autocracy in the

name of "patriotism." The elements of which local groups were formed belonged to the most abject and ignorant part of the mob in towns and cities, but the leading inspiration came from persons connected with the Court, and several members of the movement were known to belong to the Court. Favored by such patronage, some few active propagandists succeeded in uniting local reactionary groups into one "Union." The central organization took the presumptuous name of the "Russian People," or, to distinguish themselves from the "depraved" part of Russia, the "True-Russians." The fundamental conception was that the Russian revolution was forged by Jews and foreigners, while no genuine Russian would sympathize with it. All "True-Russians" were invited to join the only party of the Russian people—which was in itself a negation of party politics and an adequate embodiment of the "True-Russian" idea of a state in which all powers belong to the sovereign, while nothing but "opinion" can belong to the people. This was, of course, only the theoretical side, so to say, the sign-board, of the movement. The practical side of it can be fully illustrated by the reign of terror inaugurated by the "True-Russian" mob in Odessa and in some other Russian cities, with the obliging support of local administration.

Thus supported and protected, the "Union of the Russian People" soon grew over the head of the ministry itself. They openly organized their "fighting rings," to which fire-arms were officially distributed. They called upon local authorities for help and complained loudly against such as did not comply with their demands. On the question of political reliability and patriotism, they challenged ministers and Holy Synod; and they even reproached the German Kaiser on the ground that he had showed a friendly disposition toward Count Witte, "whom the whole of Russia unanimously considers responsible for all the calamities which befell our country, and who is the chief originator of terrorism and a special protector of the Jews." The most astonishing circumstance was that the Kaiser found it necessary immediately to exculpate himself, declaring that he "never displayed such a disposition toward Mr. Witte as was imputed to him."

Of course very exceptional reasons were needed to call forth such an exceptional declaration on the part of the Kaiser. The reason was perhaps that the "True-Russians" pretended to enjoy the special protection of the Tsar. It reads at the head of their statutes that his Majesty on two occasions, December 23, 1905,

and February 16, 1906, personally assured the "Russian People" that his "autocracy remains the same as it had been from ancient times." Twice also an allusion was made by the Tsar to the representatives of the "Union," that "the Sun of Truth would some day shine brightly over Russia": "Unite yourselves, ye Russian People, I count upon you." "With your help I hope to succeed in vanquishing the enemies of Russia."

The last and the most explicit of these statements was addressed to the President of the "Union" a few days after the dissolution of the second Duma, as an answer to their thanks for the dissolution: "Let the Union of the Russian People serve as a reliable support. I am sure that all true Russians who love their country will unite still closer and, while steadily increasing in number, will help me to attain the peaceful renovation of our holy and great Russia." They say the President of the Cabinet first saw this telegram when it was printed in the official organ of the "True-Russians." He grew furious and made representations to the Tsar, but it was too late; the thing was done. The fault lay, as usual, at the door of a member of the imperial household. What now was the result of all this high patronage and exceptional favor? The elections repeatedly proved to everybody who cared to know it, that if Russia was great, it was not owing to the "True-Russians." They commanded a ludicrously small vote. No one of them was elected to the first Duma. In the traditional capital of "Holy Russia," Moscow, there was only one vote cast for the leader of the party, Mr. Gringmoot, and evil tongues asserted, it was his own! In the second electoral campaign, many democratic elements were excluded from the vote and every kind of pressure was used, in order to get a governmental majority. Yet as a result, the Duma election was socialistic and Constitutional Democratic. Only sixty-three members out of the whole number of four hundred and sixty-one, called themselves "monarchists," and of these only seven were unswervingly autocratic. Only three voters in every hundred were found to be "True-Russians" in the Russian cities. Then, at the third election, the electoral law was changed and the "True-Russians" were repeatedly invited to "unite" and to "increase their membership, in order to support autocracy." What was the new result this time? Out of the five thousand electors for the whole of Russia, only seventy-two belonged to the "Union of the Russian People"! Thirty-four of them were made members of the Duma, and yet they were hardly able to increase the number of

uncompromising adherents of autocracy to something like sixty, out of four hundred and forty-two. If included with the so-called "monarchists," still they do not form the majority. When, on the occasion of the debates on the address to the Tsar they proposed to insert in the text the title "autocratic," they were largely outvoted even by this Duma, the "Duma of the land-owners." The governmental Duma, refusing to the Tsar the title of "autocrat," which in a certain sense is still used by him according to the existing law—such is the final result, which proves definitely that there are no autocratists in Russia except a very small group of people, whose sincerity and integrity are subject to very serious doubts.

With this conclusion, we come now to the last point that needs elucidation. In a country where so astonishingly few were to be won for autocratic restoration, what are then the elements which stand for political reaction? The middle classes being largely liberal, the capitalists not averse to a constitution, the bureaucracy rather indifferent but closely watching the game and ready to serve the winner, who then are decidedly on the side of the government? It is the nobility and the gentry. This class would lose very much from the impending social reform, as much as the autocracy would lose from political reform. In their grave peril, both decaying orders become natural allies. Of course, even here natural interests are very far from being identical. Now and then, autocracy in its struggle for self-preservation, gives up the defense of the nobles' privileges. Thus, half a century ago, by the great Emancipation Act, it destroyed the very foundations of the social authority of nobility. And there was a moment in the present struggle when autocracy seemed ready to endorse the Constitutional Democratic program of the compulsory sale of land, on the ground that this measure, if done at all, should be done by the grace of the Tsar.

On the other hand, the nobility would easily be won for a constitution, if only the political reform could be carried out without the social one. It was conspirators among the nobility who, a century ago, first demanded a constitutional charter. Had such a charter been conceded then, it certainly would have had a more or less outspoken aristocratic character. But the Russian nobility proved powerless to win a constitution by themselves alone. And now, after new social elements have come to the front, it would be too late, would be impossible, to separate

political from social reform. The new order of things must necessarily be at once constitutional and democratic.

According to the differences just stated, the parts played by autocracy and nobility in their alliance were unlike, and it was the nobility that got the better of it. While the exertions of the autocracy proved fruitless, the nobility, with much less of ostentation, achieved far more positive results. They likewise started a private organization, under the name of the "Council of the United Nobility." But the political activity of this "Council" did not awaken much attention at the beginning, and was even purposely kept half secret. The "Council" did not care for any open propaganda; it preferred to use its connections at court, and with them as its intermediary, to act directly upon the Tsar. This policy proved successful. The "Council" has played a decisive part in the all-important events of the last two years. Nearly all the demands of the nobles are satisfied by the Government. It was owing to their instance that a special kind of court-martial was organized by Mr. Stolypin, after the dissolution of the first Duma. The second Duma succeeded in abolishing these abominable courts, but they are now reëstablished in a new form which has made them independent of the legislative power of the present Duma. The same "Council of United Nobility" urged the Tsar to introduce a special police service for the defense of the landlords and their estates. This new army of "watchmen" was immediately organized at great expense to the treasury. Of course, agrarian troubles did not make it impossible for the landlords to dwell on their estates. It is common now to hear of country houses transformed into veritable castles, manned with armed forces hired from Caucasian warrior tribes, to protect the noble homes. On some estates searchlights are actually used at night to disclose the invisible foes who come to burn the house or even to blow up its inhabitants.

Naturally such tension cannot last indefinitely. Therefore the landlords insist upon a thorough change in the whole agrarian policy of the Government. And here again the "Council" has gained a complete triumph. For many years the policy of the Government has consisted in keeping the peasantry quite apart from the other social orders. The "tax-payers" were to be preserved in a state of absolute separation from the "lords"; and their whole course of life, their standards and habits, their views of property, family, and law, were to be peculiar to themselves.

The results, as we have seen them, proved disastrous to the landlords themselves. So the nobles came to realize that it was a source of continual danger to preserve in their near neighborhood the isolated existence of agrarian savages. And the "Council of Nobility," not satisfied with endorsing the liberal cry for the equalization of peasants with the other social groups, decided to change abruptly the very foundation of their social existence. The primitive agrarian collectivism of the peasant communes was now made responsible for all social and agrarian troubles. The nobles wished this collectivism changed to a régime of private property. And the Government, in compliance with their wishes, is now starting a new agrarian policy which will doubtless revolutionize the masses more effectively than anything else, because it provokes the social struggle of the rich and the poor in its most venomous form. Of course the attention of the peasants will thus be drawn from the landlords' estates to their own internal disputes.

But the new policy was intended to take the place of the agrarian program proposed by the opposition. In order to win for it national representation, the entire composition of the Duma was to be changed. This became now the chief object of the reactionary clique. The "Council of Nobility" worked out a scheme which is now in process of being completely executed by the ministry. The Duma was to be dissolved, on the pretext of its "revolutionary" disposition. A new electoral law was then to be published, securing the majority of representation for the land-owners. Then a new Duma was to be summoned on the principle of the new franchise.

This scheme was quite ready after the dissolution of the first Duma. But Mr. Stolypin was not yet to be won for the abolition of the existing franchise, because it was guaranteed by the "Fundamental Law" and could not be changed without the consent of the Duma. It was then decided, as a first step, to change only those parts of the Law which could be altered by means of an "authentic" explanation of the Law by the senate. Measures were also taken to influence the elections, the government being sure of having the upper hand. To the general astonishment, the country sent to the second Duma a representation much more radical than to the first one. About two hundred members belonged to different socialistic groups, some one hundred were Constitutional Democrats, while no more than a hundred took seats on the governmental side. Then the "Union of the Rus-

sian People" came to the rescue. They began at once a campaign against the "rebellious" Duma; and though now even the extreme parties were much more moderate in their opposition, the government decided to dissolve the second Duma as soon as the electoral law was ready in the Home Office. Even to take precautions was scorned at this time, and no effort was made to preserve even the external show of legality. The Duma was dissolved upon the demand for the extradition of all socialist democratic members, before it had time to give any answer. Simultaneously with the dissolution, the new electoral law of June 20, 1907, was published, and thus the "Fundamental Law" was openly violated for the benefit of the nobles. According to the new franchise, about thirty thousand large proprietors received the right to elect the majority of the third Duma. Practically no more than nineteen thousand came to the polls, and they chose for the electoral colleges more than half of the electors for the whole of Russia, 2,618 out of 5,169. The remaining 2,542 might belong entirely to the opposition; the majority was in advance assured to the large land-owners. Thus there is no exaggeration in saying that the majority of the present Duma is elected by 19,000 proprietors of the larger landed estates. They control 300 and odd members, while only 100 to 150 members represent large democratic masses and belong to the opposition. Some of them, as, for instance, the St. Petersburg delegates, are chosen by a larger vote (20,000 each) than all the three hundred members of the majority.

The change of the electoral law and the composition of the new Duma are, of course, the most brilliant achievements of the "United Nobility." The national representation is now at last brought into an artificial harmony with the interests of the ruling classes. But now that this result is accomplished, what can be their reason for objection to the principle of national representation? Is it not much better to be independent of the good will of the Tsar for protection, while enjoying at the same time a legal share in legislation and in the control of finance? And, on the other hand, why should autocracy insist upon an immediate and formal restoration, as long as it keeps in its power the "obedient" Duma?

As a result, we now witness a process of mutual accommodation between the autocracy and the landed gentry. The government consents to withdraw or to postpone the project for a democratic extension of the franchise in local self-government,

and is now ready to leave this local franchise in the happy possession of the same ruling classes which now form the majority of the national representation. It is also ready to start a new agrarian policy, according to the wishes of the land-owners. On the other hand, the nobles do not pretend to dispute in principle the autocratic rights and privileges. They are quite ready to admit, in theory, that the "historical power" of the Tsar remains what it ever was, and that the Tsar preserves his "free-will" in dealing with the "Fundamental Law" of the Empire, as he dealt with it on June 20, 1907, to their great benefit.

Thus a kind of political equilibrium is certainly attained. The immediate danger that the national representation is to be abolished entirely, is now averted. And this is the consoling feature in the situation. But is this equilibrium stable? Is the collision of class interests awakened by the revolution, now over, and is a "peaceful renovation" of Russia likely to begin with the third Duma? After all we have said, we cannot answer these questions in a positive way.

If any conclusion may be drawn from our preceding analysis, it must be this: the struggle for a constitution became a violent class struggle, with all its embitterment and mutual hatred. Great masses arose to the consciousness of the real cause of their social misery, and have learned to know who are their real friends and enemies. If the revolution in Russia has lost something of its external dramatic character, it is not because the movement has been obliterated, but because it now strikes much deeper root in the lower social strata. The real and the terrible dramatic sense of the events which may still unroll before your eyes, ladies and gentlemen, does not confine itself to the rise and fall of certain "heroes" or great personages, whose fate you may follow with interest. And it is not exhausted by some appalling statistics of people shot or hanged, houses burned, servants of the Tsar blown up or assassinated, conspiracies discovered and the like. The interest of the struggle lies much deeper. The social composition of the future Russia is now at stake. The fate of centuries to come is now being determined. And this explains why the masses, silent and mute as they may appear, put all their heart, all their hope, into the issue of the present movement, and why the movement cannot end until, in one way or in another, its main problems are settled.

And what are the forces that try to hold it in check? The alliance of the two decaying political powers for their own self-

defense cannot obstruct the royal, historical road the nation is following. The childish explanation of the movement, as inflated and fostered by a foreign or anti-Russian intrigue, cannot do away with its deeper causes. And the foolish idea that the peasants of our communes can be changed at once into private proprietors, can only cause new ferment in our villages, honey-combed with poverty and famine as they are. In short, wherever we turn or look, we only meet with new trouble to come, nowhere with any hope for conciliation and social peace.

That, I am afraid, is not the message you expected from me. I would be much happier myself if I could answer your wish for information with words of good hope and with the glad tidings that quiet and security have returned to Russia. But I am here to tell you the truth.

What do I want from you in exchange? As soon as I left for America, official newspapers in Russia began telling the lie that I was coming to this country in order to get money for my party. This, as you know, is their way of discrediting everything and everybody connected with the movement for Freedom in Russia. I need not refute them. But perhaps I did really come here for some kind of help? Anybody acquainted with the large liberality which is practised here for everything that is humanely good, would not be shocked or surprised by the supposition, and why not? Every foreigner who comes to this "Sweet land of Liberty" is supposed to want from her infinitely more than he can offer to her on his part. Well, then, I agree, ladies and gentlemen, that I really want from you something very precious and of very great moment for my country. I am wooing here for your human sympathy; sympathy with all the enormous pain and suffering of the poor and down-trodden in my country; sympathy with every noble exertion which seeks to put an end to all this pain and suffering. And what can I give you back for it? Nothing, ladies and gentlemen, nothing at all except this very feeling of the heart which ennobles everyone who is capable of being affected by it. If I really succeed in arousing in you once more that sympathy for human suffering, well then, you and I shall have reached the level where no difference in habits, in ways of thinking, no varying shades of expression, can prevent us from feeling ourselves an integral part of a great whole, which never can feel quite happy while one of its members is suffering anywhere. I appeal to you in the name of that great whole, humanity; and in

doing so, I am quite sure to give you back as much as I receive. At least, for myself, I do not know of anything so apt to elevate one's sentiment and one's intelligence to higher spheres of existence as that feeling which keeps one in touch with new worlds of humanity. That is why I was happy to cross the ocean in order to address you this evening—an occasion which I shall never forget.

Questions

At the close of Professor Milyoukov's address, the meeting was thrown open to questions, all of which were submitted in writing and signed. Professor Milyoukov replied extemporaneously, as follows:

Question: To what extent is the public discussion of political questions permitted in Russia?

Signed, JUDGE SAMUEL GREENBAUM.

Milyoukov: Public discussion in Russia is allowed to a very limited extent. The law authorizes public meetings, but the greater part of Russia is now ruled by "exceptional law," and this exceptional law puts quite out of force even the temporary law which we still have and which permits public discussion. No, practically the only time at which public discussion is permitted in Russia is at the moment of elections; and the only places where public discussion is practised even then is in the large cities—indeed, almost exclusively in the two capitals, Moscow and St. Petersburg. As far as the provincial towns are concerned, the government does its best to forbid public meetings. So I may say that the possibility of public discussion in Russia is very limited.

Question: Are the Russian peasants fit to solve the present political problems of their country?

Signed, NATHAN ESER and two others.

Milyoukov: That is a difficult question to answer. But I must tell you that if my answer seems indefinite and not entirely satisfactory, it is not for the reason suggested by my friend in the first question. Two years ago I was in America, and to speak freely was far more dangerous for me then than it is now.

I don't think that I could possibly withhold my free opinion on any subject. (Applause.) So, if my answer to this or that question is unsatisfactory, you must seek for some other explanation than is suggested in the first question.

This second question is difficult to answer because it is formulated in such general terms. "Are the Russian peasants fit to solve the present political questions of their country?" The Russian peasants are much more interested in their agrarian questions than in any political question in Russia, and yet precisely for this reason it is possible that in an indirect way it is the peasants who help most toward solving the political issues or problems. You must recognize that the workingman in Russia has always been perfectly powerless to get things done, or to command the results which an agrarian trouble or outbreak has always brought with it. So, as a matter of fact, in a rather spontaneous way the peasants are the most important moving force in Russia, but certainly the peasants by themselves are not able to solve the political problems of Russia.

Question: What does Professor Milyoukov think about the Jewish question in Russia? What will the Third Duma do in that matter?

Signed, S. LUBARSKY.

Milyoukov: Another question has been handed in, to the same effect: "What is the prospect of equal political rights for the Jews in Russia?" My party, the Constitutional Democrats, act with the Jews. They steadily supported us in the elections for the first two Dumas, and we are the only party that practically introduced the question in the shape of an appeal for equal rights for the Jews. Just as soon as we had gained the majority, we would certainly have carried this point and have brought the Jewish question to an issue, but you will see from what I have said to-night about the present Duma, about its present party composition and its character as representing class interest, that there is no possibility of this Duma's solving the Jewish question. I will say even more: If anything is done about the Jewish question in the present Duma, it will be done by people whose desire is to change the position of the Russian Jew for the worse, and not for the better; and perhaps the best interest of the Jews demands that the question be not approached in the present Duma. It must be approached, attacked and

settled, but in another way. Certainly, as to our party, we are with the Jews, and we will continue to be with them. The only true representatives of the Jewish people in Russia are the representatives of our party. (Applause.)

Question: What was the direct cause of the great massacres of the Jews in Russia?

Signed, ALEXANDER ULAR.

Milyoukov: This takes us back to the events of some forty years ago. I think the Jewish massacres were first brought into use as political means, or a political weapon, by Plehve. I believe that the idea of Mr. Plehve was to disseminate the view of the Russian revolution which I have just quoted in my remarks, namely, that the revolution was brought about by Jews and foreigners. According to this view the Jews were to be blamed, and the Jews must be stifled in order that the revolution might be stopped; and this feeling obtains until the present day. So, I think, the same Mr. Plehve, when he returned to power twenty years after beginning this propaganda, took it up again and tried the massacre of the Jews. The practice of the central government is quite evident in this matter, and I must answer the question by repeating what I have already said—such a political system and such political expedients bring as a necessary result the division of Russia into two hostile camps.

Question: Who framed the Viborg Resolution, and is it true that the Constitutional Democratic party afterward repudiated this resolution?

Signed, JOHN COLLIER.

Milyoukov: In reply I shall state rather my personal view than the views of my party. The manifesto was framed by us. At the moment when the Viborg resolution was framed and signed, the First Duma, as I have already mentioned, had been dissolved. We considered, and I think it was a fact, that the Duma had been dissolved violently and without the observance of existing legal forms. Such a dissolution was not in accord with the constitutional principle.

Well, what was the possible reply to such an act? The extreme party planned an insurrection—an uprising of the army and the fleet. We knew but too well that such an uprising would bring

only a further increase of reactionary measures, and the sacrifice of the lives of soldiers and sailors. So my party decided not to reply in that way to the illegal violence of the government, and we employed the only means remaining—a means which in Anglo-Saxon countries has been considered constitutional, as an extreme measure which a constitutional group may take when it is attacked. We proposed passive resistance; and the extremists endorsed our proposition because they recognized that at that moment they were too weak to answer the government in any other way. Both of us felt that this was the best way to preserve our unity in the face of reaction. Then the extremists tried other methods, in which we did not unite with them; they tried outbreaks in various towns. Our view proved correct, and the outbreaks were easily put down. Thereupon the government, very much frightened, began its counter-revolutionary movements, which I have described.

Now, for the second part of the question. At the moment when we framed the resolution we likewise put it forward, and it was signed by a majority of the First Duma. At the beginning of the passive resistance movement, which was inaugurated by the resolution, we laid down one condition, namely, that the passive resistance must be the resistance of a collective unity, and not an individual resistance; for individual resistance could have brought no result. And in order to be a collective movement it was necessary first to prepare for the movement, and then to start it in the whole of Russia. So in the spring the Viborg Manifesto was signed by our party, and we used the two or three summer months to prepare for the movement of passive resistance throughout Russia and to determine whether there was any chance of victory.

Well, the members of our party took an active part in the preparation for the movement. Then we met in congress again, discussed the situation once more, and decided that it was impossible to start actively a movement of passive resistance, and that we must renounce the bringing into execution of the Viborg Manifesto until the time was more ripe. We must first prepare the population. Therefore we renounced the bringing into action of this principle, which as a principle we acknowledged always, and do still acknowledge as a principle necessary for constitutional government.

Question: Will the Professor tell us why the present Duma does not think it necessary to prevent the prosecution of the members of the former Duma by the government?

Signed, L. TAYLOR.

Milyoukov: Well, you know the situation of the Third Duma, so I have only to repeat what I have already said. Besides, under any circumstances the Duma could not do what you suggest. No, I think that *from its own point of view* the government was right from the beginning. The only manner in which the issue could possibly have been pushed through, was a trial, where we could openly proclaim our defense, as the members of our party, the members of the First Duma, did in fact. That is to say, they denied to the Russian tribunal the unconditioned right to judge them, and they offered arguments, which I have already brought to your attention. So my answer is, that from the point of view of our party, interference by the Duma was liable to block any trial in court at all, and therefore we did not interfere. Even had my party been in the majority we should not have interfered.

Question: Does the Professor really think that freedom in Russia can be secured by peaceful means? The constitutional members of the First Duma believed in the same means, and they are in prison now. No, I believe that force can only be overpowered by force, and those who believe that freedom in Russia can be brought about by making speeches are bitterly mistaken.

Signed, KRAUSE.

Milyoukov: I think I have already answered that question in my present address, and anyone who will read it when it is printed, will find my answer in more substantial form than I have been able to give it in words to-night. The substance of my answer is, that it is quite true that force can only be overcome by force. (Applause.) Only, I do not endorse that policy which takes for force what is really lack of force, and brings about, instead of victory, only a mere appearance of results. (Applause.)

Question: What are the possibilities of Russia's ever becoming a republic?

Signed, ALEXANDER ULAB.

Milyoukov: Well, I am not a prophet, and I will not undertake to speak for the future times. Very likely the anti-dynastic feeling, which is great in Russia, will grow, if the mistakes of the government are to be indefinitely repeated. I do not know what will be the upshot, whether a new dynasty, or what. I do not know. I must state that this possibility is out of the reach of practical politics at the present day. It is quite out of the question now to think of introducing a commonwealth into Russia. I think myself that the greatest success we could achieve would be the bringing about of a constitutional and representative régime, but all these things have been too difficult for accomplishment at once. Of course we do not despair; along such lines we shall go until we reach the goal. (Applause.)

BISHOP POTIER:

Ladies and gentlemen: We thank Professor Milyoukov for his coming, and for the scholarly presentation of facts which he has given us to-night. I think it would be a gracious thing, before he leaves this hall, to give him a vote of thanks. So on behalf of THE CIVIC FORUM and of this large, representative, and deeply interested audience, I beg to express to the Professor the appreciation which we feel for his magnificent address, and for his statesman-like presentation of facts which we have all of us longed to know, and before this evening could not know.

(The vote of thanks was unanimously carried.)

Adjournment.

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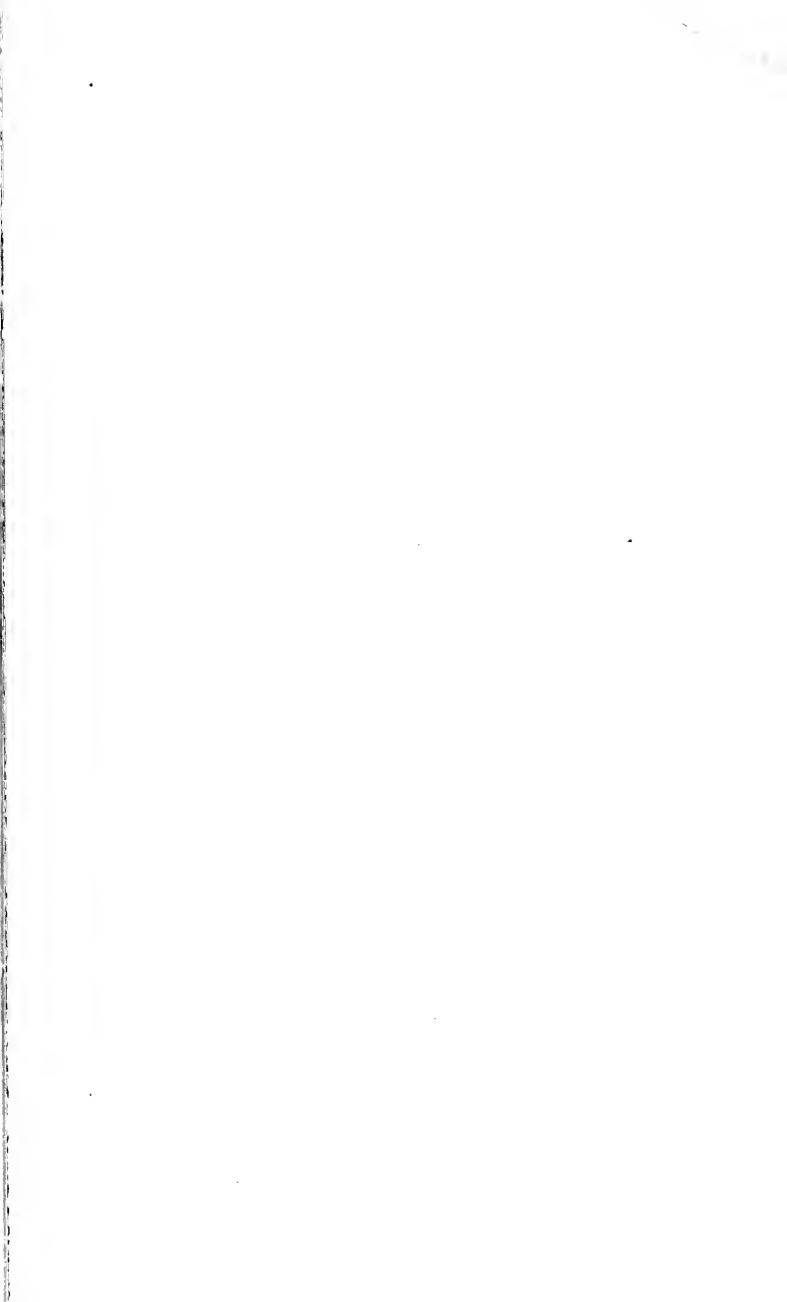
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