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**SOME FRENCH CONTEMPORARY OPINIONS  
OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1905**





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**SOME FRENCH CONTEMPORARY  
OPINIONS OF THE RUSSIAN  
REVOLUTION OF 1905**

BY

ENCARNACIÓN ALZONA, Ph.D.



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## PREFACE

IN the following pages an attempt has been made to present certain French contemporary opinions of the Russian revolution of 1905.

This revolutionary movement in Russia, as French publicists have admitted, was of particular interest to France because Russia was her ally and she was Russia's creditor. Occurring at a time when the tsar's government was weakest, the revolution brought about a critical situation which affected the balance of power in a way unfavorable to France. It retarded considerably Russia's recovery from her disasters in the Far East, which meant that France could not count on her support for some time to come. Already France's adversary had taken advantage of the paralysis of the Russian Alliance. In March, 1905, occurred the theatrical landing of the German Kaiser at Tangier, which precipitated the first Moroccan crisis. France suffered a diplomatic defeat. As France relied on Russia in the event of a European war, she had reason to feel uneasy at the revolutionary agitation which delayed the recovery of her ally from military disorganization. What she ardently desired was for Russia to regain prestige and thus to restore the European equilibrium.

There was another reason for the importance to France of the internal dissensions in Russia. She was Russia's creditor for a sum estimated at twelve billion francs or about one-fourth of the French capital invested abroad. She felt under obligation to see that a reliable government existed in Russia to insure the protection of French interests.

No attempt has been made to present the views of all the numerous political groups in France. The various opinions expressed are divided into three groups. In one group are the extremists or advanced thinkers, mostly Socialists and Anarchists. The Radical Socialists, who are of reformist tendencies, form the second group. In the third group are the moderates and conservatives, such as, the Catholics, Republicans, Republican Independents, Liberals, and Progressives. The term Socialists as here used includes Republican Socialists and Unified Socialists.

The writer wishes to acknowledge her indebtedness to Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes of Columbia University for his valuable suggestions and kindness in reading the manuscript.

ENCARNACION ALZONA

NEW HAVEN, AUGUST, 1921.

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## INTRODUCTION

KEEN interest was shown in France in the revolutionary movement which convulsed the immense Russian Empire in the year 1905. The critical situation of the mighty fortress of autocracy preoccupied French politicians, financiers, and sentimentalists. They talked and wrote about the problems of Russia; they proposed remedies; and they made predictions. It was in this year that Victor Bérard published his *L'empire russe et le tsarisme* and Alexandre Ular *La révolution russe* to meet the pressing demand for information about that mysterious empire of the tsars, known as Russia. French publicists deplored the scanty knowledge of their compatriots about things Russian; they admonished them to study the social and economic conditions in that country.

The main reasons for the French interest in the internal situation in Russia were three, namely, (1) The existence of the Franco-Russian Alliance, (2) the French capital invested in Russia, and (3) the sympathy of the French Socialists. The revolutionary agitation in Russia would indisputably affect France on account of the political and financial relations between the two states. The French Socialists, openly sympathizing with their Russian confrères, had greatly aided in enhancing the magnitude of the revolution before the French public. By their press, their public meetings, and their resolutions, they made their influence felt in the shaping of popular opinion.

The Franco-Russian Alliance, on which the French gov-

ernment counted as a protection against German aggression, had many opponents at home. Since its formation, the Socialists had not ceased to criticize its originators and its pretended utility. And when Russia in her war with Japan suffered humiliating military defeats, the Alliance, in the opinion of its opponents, had become worthless. Then, simultaneously with foreign disasters, occurred the internal revolution which rendered the Russian government seemingly powerless and on the verge of ruin. The offensive attack of the opponents of the Alliance acquired an added impetus. The propitious moment to secure the annulment of the "abominable" Alliance seemed to be at hand.

In the French political arena, the anti-ally view was voiced by the Socialist members of the Chamber of Deputies. After the event of 22 January, 1905, so-called "Red Sunday" in Russian history, Premier Rouvier declared in the Chamber that France would continue to observe the treaty of alliance with Russia. A cry of "A bas le tsar! Mort à l'assassin!" was heard from the Socialist deputies. A debate between the minister for foreign affairs, Delcassé, and the Socialists ensued. The Socialist deputies condemned the Alliance and reiterated their unconditional support of the Russian Socialists and the Russian revolution. Delcassé replied that they should be cautious in judging the internal affairs of a foreign country, adding that the Alliance had given security to both France and Russia for the past decade. For this security, retorted Bepmale, a Socialist deputy, France had paid five milliards of francs.<sup>1</sup>

Meetings were held at which the Alliance was defied. At one of these held in Paris on 27 January, 1905, Anatole France, in a stirring speech, referred to it as "the monstrous alliance of a despot with a Republic". Another

<sup>1</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 27 January, 1905, pp. 75-77.



Socialist, François de Pressensé, asserted that France should deal only with "popular Russia, with revolutionary Russia"; for, according to Jaurès, the Socialist leader, there would be no objection to an alliance between the French and the Russian peoples.

"The so-called Franco-Russian Alliance is not the alliance of two peoples, but only the accord of tsarism and French reactionaries. This accord, an ignominious and fatal counterfeit of an alliance, is obnoxious to French democracy and repugnant to French socialism. To-morrow, when Russian democracy triumphs over the tsar, grand-dukes, and greedy financiers, when she becomes the government of Russia, no false pretenses will unite the two peoples, and their union, which will not suggest any aggressive after-thought against a third party, will be an admirable guarantee of peace, security, and dignity for both."<sup>1</sup>

Jean Jaurès was a formidable adversary of the Alliance. Since its formation, he had regarded it with apprehension. He feared that it might drag France into war in the Far East.<sup>2</sup> The benefits which France expected to derive from it were a vain dream, he said. On the contrary, he continued, she would soon realize that it would endanger her national integrity and check her "republican and socialist vigor." Moreover he regretted that the rapprochement, which should come from Russia, always proceeded from France. To his mind it was unbecoming for republican France to court autocratic Russia.<sup>3</sup> In his later writings and utterances, he repeatedly declared that the chief obstacle to the friendship and close alliance between France and Russia was autocracy. Charles Rivet, an avowed enemy of the old régime and a close observer of Russian

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 10 June, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> M. Pease, *Jean Jaurès*, p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Jaurès, *Action Socialiste*, p. 443.

conditions, having lived in that country for many years, expressed a similar opinion.

Since 1895, the year in which M. Ribot laid the foundations of a political accord which might have borne good fruit, official France had nothing but smiles and praise for the Ministers of the Emperor, knowing none and desiring to deal with none but the master and his flunkies, without troubling at all about the Russian nation, that great dumb creature hidden by the puppets who pretended that they represented it. The French Foreign Office made a mistake about the initial formula of the Alliance. The public was allowed to believe it was a close understanding between two peoples, but the fact was, France was becoming the humble servant of the Tsar's personal clique. The French took for Russia what was in reality the worst expression of that country.<sup>1</sup>

Charles Rivet emphasized the absurdity of the Alliance on account of the character of the two contracting parties. He insisted that Russia was driven into the Alliance by selfish motives and that France was easily deceived. He wrote:

The Franco-Russian Alliance was a political precaution, nothing more, in the mind of its begetter, the Russian sovereign who prepared it. Alexander III was too reactionary to seek for anything else in a "rapprochement" with the French Republic. His great hand in the hand of Marianne was symbolic only of a marriage of convenience with a touch of condescension on his part which a Russian journalist, influential at the time, Alexis Suvorine, director of the *Novoye Vremya*, did not let us forget.

The Grand Panjandrum was good enough to marry beneath him as a matter of necessity. The Frenchman, always an enthusiast, saw at once in this union a love match which flattered his conceit. He went off his head with joy, and his childishness, the pleasure he took in making himself cheap, gave

<sup>1</sup> Charles Rivet, *The Last of the Romanoffs* (Dutton, New York, 1918), p. 297.

a wrong impression to his new friends as to the respective value to the other of the two contracting parties.

The Frenchman did not realize that. He took delight in unending sentimental demonstrations, even discovered that he had certain features in common with the people of the North. Self-deceiving, intoxicated by the glitter of gala performances, he never tried to find out what there was beneath the tinsel.<sup>1</sup>

The journalist, J. Cornély, characterized the Alliance as unnatural, for neither politically, socially, nor morally were the two peoples alike. An alliance with Germany, he alleged, would be more natural, because of the intellectual affinities between Frenchmen and Germans. But he would prefer an alliance with England, because, in race as well as in spirit, the peoples of the two countries were closely related. He added, however, that in France, the ignorant hated the English and adored the Cossack. "The intellectuals do not, however, detest the Cossack; but it is natural for them to love England and applaud her alliance."<sup>1</sup>

To the long list of the enemies of the Franco-Russian Alliance should be added the Anarchists. They had opposed it at the very beginning. Upon the report of the outbreak of the revolution, they attacked it with renewed vigor. Their advice to the French government was the recall of the French ambassador at Petrograd and the dismissal of the Russian ambassador at Paris, an act which, they alleged, would be in accord with Republican traditions and signify the protest of the French people against the atrocious crimes of the autocratic lord of Russia. They urged the dissolution of the Alliance. "And we, Frenchmen," declared Michel Petit in the Anarchist weekly, *Les Temps Nouveaux* of 10 February, 1905, "who no longer approve of autocrats, who have traced in the world with

<sup>1</sup> Rivet, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-275.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Humanité*, 8 August, 1905, p. 3.

our blood the road to liberty, it is high time that we break the infamous pact which our inertia has allowed a government of capitalists and business men to impose on us." Jean Graves, a well known Anarchist, called attention to the absurdity of the Alliance, "a monstrous and iniquitous alliance which is the most cynical, flat contradiction to good sense and logic."<sup>1</sup> André Girard, another Anarchist journalist, regretted that the French government had formed the Alliance without consulting the people. It had committed a great error, and now was its chance to correct it. The ministerial declaration, already mentioned elsewhere, he regarded as an expression of sympathy with the "sanquinary coward of Tsarskoe-Selo". He concluded from the attitude of the French government that it was in favor of absolutism; otherwise it would have broken diplomatic relations with the autocratic Russian government after its crime of 22 January, 1905.<sup>2</sup>

✓ Despite these diatribes, the partisans of the Alliance stood firm. When Count de Witte stopped at Paris on his way to Portsmouth, Premier Rouvier declared that the Alliance had lost nothing of its force and that it was a propitious moment for France to render political and financial aid to its ally.<sup>3</sup> The *Figaro* of 29 January, 1905, commenting editorially on the fall of the Combes' ministry, asserted that the change of cabinet in no way affected the Alliance with ✓ Russia. It still retained its traditional value, and the wrath of Socialists would not prevail over the sound motives, that is, the common interests of the two states and the friendship between the two peoples, which inspired its formation and

<sup>1</sup> *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 10 February, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Socialists and Anarchists alleged that the Tsar ordered his troops to fire on the workers who joined the grand manifestation on 22 January, 1905, under the leadership of Father Gapon. The general opinion was that the troops had fired to keep order.

<sup>3</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. 28 (1905), p. 719.

continuance. Eugène Lautier, writing on Russian current events, affirmed that the Alliance had survived and would survive all passing accidents.

The defenders of the Alliance reiterated their confidence in its usefulness. For thirteen years, wrote George Villiers in the Catholic monthly, *Revue Politique et Littéraire* of 1 July, 1905, it had given security to France. It was, moreover, a geographical necessity.

The tittle-tattle of the adversaries of the Alliance would find no echo in official France, declared its defenders. The French government would not interfere with the internal politics of its ally; it was the duty of France to respect the domestic affairs of Russia. Those who urged it to break the Alliance should be reminded that "it is not in French nature to turn its back against a 'friend and ally' at the moment when she is exposed to the greatest dangers", said Charles de Larivière, director of the *Revue des Etudes Franco-Russes*.

According to Victor Bérard, author of *L'empire russe et le tsarisme*, much of the hostile criticisms of the Franco-Russian Alliance could be attributed to the Frenchman's ignorance of Russia. During the first ten years of the existence of the Alliance, so-called "la lune de miel" of the union, France had nothing but admiration for her ally, believing that she was invincible, and therefore a reliable friend in time of need. Hence her disillusionment when Russia was defeated in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905. With her shattered military prestige, Russia no longer counted as a European force. France's disappointment showed how little she knew of her ally's capacities and true merits, the possibilities and necessities of her national life. The existing political and economic relations between the two countries should encourage the French to study Russian conditions, her problems and their possible solutions.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Revue de Paris*, vol. 2, p. 202.

Beside the political relations of France and Russia, there were economic ties which might seriously be affected by the internal disturbances. French capital had financed many public and private enterprises in Russia. It had been used to build factories and railways and to develop natural resources. The thrifty French peasant as well as the wealthy banker had money invested in Russian stocks and bonds, for the French capitalists considered Russia a rich field for investment. They had always worked to improve Franco-Russian commercial relations. In 1905, the year of revolutionary agitations, they secured a new commercial treaty which did away with the prohibitive duties levied on French products, especially wine, champagne, and liquors. The negotiation for the new treaty, however, was influenced, not only by the economic advantages it would bring, but also by the renewal of the commercial treaties between the members of the Triple Alliance. Pierre Fauvet, writing in *Le Monde Economique*, called attention to this renewal, alleging that it was a step taken to strengthen the military alliance of the members of the Triple Alliance. France should not overlook the example. He advocated closer economic ties with Russia, the ally of France. A favorable treaty, at any rate, would be an inducement to French business men to engage in Russian trade. Robert Doucet estimated the total value of French business enterprises in Russia at eighty-four million francs distributed as follows:<sup>2</sup>

49,000,000 in commerce  
17,000,000 in immovable property  
18,000,000 in banks

French capital in Russian enterprises amounted to seven hundred ninety-two million francs distributed geographically as follows:

<sup>2</sup> *Le Monde Economique*, vol. i (1905), pp. 385-386.

300,000,000	in South Russia
242,000,000	in Central Russia
180,000,000	in Russian Poland
25,000,000	in North Russia
45,000,000	in other parts

According to Alfred Neymark, an authority on finance, 12,123,000,000 francs was the nominal value of Russian titles actually negotiable in France in 1905.

Tentative as these figures may be, they at least give the reader an insight into Franco-Russian financial relations. They explain to a large extent the lively interest of the French bourgeoisie in the revolutionary movement in Russia. The distinguished economist, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, fittingly remarked that the political and social crisis in Russia had perplexed many Frenchmen, not only because of its alarming effects on the European equilibrium, but also because of its consequences on about ten milliards of francs which had been invested in Russian government bonds and stocks. "Will Russia remain always solvent?" was the question propounded by many Frenchmen. Professor Paul Leroy-Beaulieu believed that Russia could easily avoid the humiliation of being insolvent, and that only in the event of the victory of the revolutionary socialists and "ignorant and impulsive" peasants, which was very remote then, would there be any repudiation of the national debt.

Under the caption, "*La 'pratique' loyale de l'alliance russe*",<sup>1</sup> the distinguished French historian Professor Charles Seignobos endeavored to show how the French government had financed its ally. The tsar like Louis XVI was badly in need of money; but while the French monarch had to count on his own subjects to supply him with funds, the Russian autocrat could depend upon the Alliance, and

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 18 February, 1905, pp. 1-2.

thus he was rendered independent of public opinion. This independence enabled him to pursue his absolutist policy to the great detriment of the people. In the last analysis, therefore, the French government was responsible for the squandering and abuses of the Russian bureaucracy and the Russian imperialistic designs in the Far East which culminated in the disastrous Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905.

Professor Seignobos deplored the use which the tsar had made of French capital. In only one respect, he continued, could it be said that it had been well spent: it was in the development of big industries which in turn gave rise to a proletariat class who would form the necessary bond between the intellectuals and the mass of ignorant peasants. This new social class would help to emancipate Russia; already it was making its influence felt.

A Socialist journalist, who believed that the enormous sum of money which France had lent to Russia should have been employed for social improvements, regretted that, despite these loans, the misery of the masses in the whole empire had not been diminished. "Every year", he observed, "one and a half million children die of hunger, privation, alcoholism, or sickness". "Russia is dying!" he exclaimed. In fact it was Germany who had reaped the benefits of the French loans to Russia. Russia had used French money to pay her debts to Germany and to buy of her war materials and rolling stock.<sup>1</sup>

As early as 1896 Jean Jaurès had pointed out the financial dependence of Russia upon France, in an article in *La Petite République*.<sup>2</sup> He wrote at that time:

The Russian Government has largely exploited the movement of opinion in France for the last three years: it has borrowed

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 27 September, 1906, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Jaurès, *Action Socialiste*, p. 435.



six milliards from us to build its railways, to cover the deficit of its budgets, and to back up its paper currency. It has leaned upon us to carry out political designs in the Far East; it has posed as the arbiter of peace in the world; and it is fully aware that in the final settlement of Balkan questions, its increased prestige will be of great help.

The majority of French Socialists made a distinction between lending money to the tsar and to the people. They opposed the loans to the tsar because they strengthened his autocratic government. But they raised no objection if the loans were made to the Russian people, for they contended that the tsar's government did not represent the people. Their views on this subject were ventilated in the French press in the early part of 1905 when the Russian government was again negotiating for a new loan.

Professor Charles Seignobos pointed out the relation of the new loan to the revolutionary movement in the empire. He asserted that a new loan would spell the indefinite postponement of constitutional reform. If the French government supported this loan without any guarantees from the tsar, it would do a grave injustice to the Russian people. Its duty on this matter, he continued, was apparent. It should advise its citizens not to purchase bonds of the new loan, and to the Russian government, it should say: "As an ally, France has no advice to give you on your internal affairs. But, as lenders, the French people have a right to certain guarantees. If you are determined to hold on to patriarchal autocracy, you have to lead a patriarchal life. You have consented to lead a modern life, you would have a big industry, cuirassés, cannons, railroads at one million per kilometer, and enormous expenditures and loans. You owe it to your creditors to surround yourself with conditions indispensable to modern industrial life; these conditions are publicity of transactions and control of expenditures.

Neither the publicity nor the control is possible with the existing censorship and the bureaucracy. You can establish them only by the liberty of the press and the creation of a representative assembly. You owe these guarantees to your creditors".<sup>1</sup>

Anatole France, speaking before the "Société des Amis du Peuple Russe et des Peuples Annexés", vigorously opposed the new loan. He reminded his compatriots that the tsar's government might fall at any time and the popular government that would take its place would repudiate all debts contracted after 22 January, 1905. The Russian Liberal Party, he added, especially mentioned this in one of its proclamations. For material and moral reasons, France should not subscribe to this loan. To subscribe to it, he continued, "would be to approve the most cruel and foolish of wars; it would be to consent to the oppression of a people; it would be to approve crime and madness. No! The loan for war and repression, the loan for fusillades and massacres, the sanguinary loan, should not be floated in France. To accept it would be a crime. Beware!"<sup>2</sup>

Edgar Milhaud turned his attention to the attitude of the French government toward the loan. While the French nation, he wrote, was on the side of revolutionary Russia, the government of the Republic was drawing closer the ties that bound it with the tsar's government. To prove this, he cited the zeal with which Premier Rouvier and the minister for foreign affairs, Delcassé, were working to make the loan a success. The French government was acting against the interests of its citizens and the Russian people who were struggling for their emancipation from the tsarist yoke.

The French Anarchists were no less emphatic in denouncing the Franco-Russian financial relations. The

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 18 February, 1905, pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 March, 1905, p. 6.

revolutionary agitation in Russia and the floating of a new loan in France furnished them with new pretexts to inveigh against the French government, the bourgeoisie, and the tsar. They expressed surprise at what they chose to call the tsar's boldness in seeking a new loan in France after his policy, both foreign and domestic, had been dealt a severe blow by military defeats abroad and civil strife at home. They thought that after the disasters which the tsar had suffered in the war with Japan, the French financiers would refuse to lend him more funds with polite pretexts, and the French public would show their disapproval with hissings. But, to their great disappointment, such was not the case. The success of the loan showed that the tsar and the French capitalists were still on good terms. The Anarchists then turned to the French workers to inform them of their bitter discovery. They announced that the friend of the French capitalists was an enemy of the French people, and the French capitalists were aiding the tsar with their money to carry out his "bloody" schemes and to put down the Russian revolution, which was a "daughter of the French Revolution". The French workers, said Michel Petit, should do everything in their power to help their Russian confrères in their struggle for liberty so that their victory would not give place to the rise of new tyrants, the bourgeoisie, as in France.

3° Lastly the attitude of the French Socialists, their sympathy with the Russian Socialists, contributed to the interest which the Russian revolution roused in France. Through their press and their leaders they presented before French public opinion the cause of the Russian people as they saw it according to their social and political principles. The malady of their Russian brothers, according to their diagnosis, was political tyranny and rigorous capitalistic exploitation.

The French Socialists not only endeavored to win the French nation to the side of the Russian revolutionaries, but they also worked hard to influence the French government to act in their favor. They advised it to sever diplomatic relations with Russia, and to refuse to subscribe to a new loan except on condition that the tsar grant constitutional reforms. They attacked its foreign policy; they denounced the Alliance. François de Pressensé regretted that the French government had not expressed in the name of the people its sympathy with the Russian nation and its horror at the massacres perpetrated in the allied country. It was humiliating for France, a free country, that its government had not even uttered a single word to greet the dawn of a new era for the Russian people.<sup>1</sup> The Socialist député Vaillant asserted that French Socialists should exert all their efforts to combat the friends of the tsar who were in the government of the Republic.

It was also due to the Socialists' activity that popular meetings were held, not only in Paris, but in the provinces as well, to promote the cause of the revolution. On such occasions the Socialists gave vent to their wrath at the tsar. Of the meetings held at Paris the largest one took place in Tivoli-Vaux Hall on 30 January, 1905. One of the speakers was Anatole France who began his speech by saying "*Le tsar a tué le tsarisme*" and concluded it with a peroration on the crimes and misdeeds of their hated enemy. The meeting ended with cries of "*A bas le tsarisme! Mort au tsar!*" The "Société des Amis du Peuple Russes et des Peuples Annexés," an organization whose purpose was to acquaint the French people with Russian affairs, held periodic public meetings. Among its members were Messieurs Anatole France, Octave Mirbeau, Ch. Seignobos, Pierre Quillard, and Mesdames Emile Zola, Camille Flammarion, and

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 25 November, 1905, pp. 1-2.

Séverine.<sup>1</sup> Representatives of the Confédération Générale du Travail called several popular meetings in Paris and various Socialist groups organized on 18 and 19 February, 1905, twenty-one meetings at Dijon, Saint-Etienne, Clermont-Ferrand, Tours, Dunkerque, Rouen, Le Havre, Périgueux, Cahors, Lille, etc. Among the speakers were Jaurès, Longuet, Allard, Delory, Thivrier, Lucien Rolland, and other stars of the Socialist firmament.

The French Socialists had also taken the initiative at various Socialist congresses in drawing up resolutions of sympathy with the Russian proletariat. At the Congress of Châlons, the French section of the Internationale invited all the other sections of the Internationale to see that their respective governments did not render aid to the tsar to check the revolutionary movement.<sup>2</sup> At the same congress it was Lafargue who read the resolution of sympathy with the Russian proletariat.<sup>3</sup> Later at the International Socialist Congress of Stuttgart, held from 18 to 24 August, 1907, the French Socialist Party again drafted a resolution inviting the socialist parties of every country "to take the necessary steps to assemble their delegates and to give them the means, in case of a threatening international conflict, to decide on the measures to be taken in order to forestall and prevent it".

In these various ways the French Socialists gave considerable publicity to the Russian revolution. Thanks to their efforts, the side of the revolutionaries was ably presented before the French public.

The following chapters will be devoted to the presentation of certain French opinions on various phases of the Russian revolution of 1905 which roused special interest in France.

<sup>1</sup> *Free Russia*, 1 April, 1906, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Revue Socialiste*, vol. 41 (1905), p. 589.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Humanité*, 30 October, 1905, p. 1.

## CHAPTER I

### THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION

It was the spectacular workingmen's manifestation of 22 January, 1905, and its fatal results that diverted the attention of the civilized world from the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905, to the internal situation of Russia. The disastrous foreign war had put the Russian government to a severe test. The defeats of the Russian army and navy revealed the abuses and corruption of the administration, and produced widespread discontent. The workingmen of Petrograd under the leadership of a priest of the Russian Orthodox Church, Gapon by name, took the initiative in voicing the popular discontent by appealing directly to the tsar and respectfully begging him to alleviate their sufferings. It was the response of the tsar's troops to this originally pacific demonstration that led to the designation of 22 January, 1905, as "Red Sunday", and began the prolonged series of disturbances throughout the empire which attracted the attention of foreign nations.

In France, it roused the indignation of the Socialists. They called it the "day of massacres" and they placed the responsibility upon the tsar, alleging that it was premeditated, that he had ordered his troops to fire on the petitioners. At a meeting of the "Société des Amis du Peuple Russe et des Peuples Annexés" held on 27 February in the "Hôtel des Sociétés Savantes" at Paris, the Socialist speakers declared that the tsar's reply to the humble petition of his peaceful and patient subjects was murder. On that day, they announced, tsarism was killed. P. G. La Chesnais remarked that it was merely a "preface" to the

revolution. The 22 January, they claimed, was similar to the 5 October, 1789, at Paris when a procession headed by women marched to Versailles with the naïve hope that the king could alleviate their misery. But, they observed, there was a difference in the attitude assumed by the French monarch and the Russian tsar. The Bourbon king did not reply to his subjects by shooting and letting the blood of innocent men and women flow in the streets. It had not been till two years later that an event similar to the Russian blood-letting of 22 January had occurred in France: the flight to Varennes and the massacre of the Champ-de-Mars.<sup>1</sup>

The wrath of the Anarchists was boundless. Their version of the event of 22 January was similar to that of the Socialists. Nicholas II, "the assassin of his people", was responsible for the "massacre" of 22 January. The "Bête Rouge de Petersbourg" hid in Tsarkoe-Selo and then ordered his troops to massacre the petitioners. A notorious coward, he had no courage to speak to his own subjects, declared Charles Albert. But fire and sword, they sententiously declared, would not put an end to the uprising or pacify the petitioners. A horrible and tragic day like the 22 January does not end in an "émeute"; it begins a revolution. That day would always be memorable in the history of popular movements.

The French conservatives deplored the vituperations of the Socialists and Anarchists. They protested against their exaggerated accounts of "Red Sunday". Georges Bourdon, correspondent of the *Figaro* at Petrograd, wrote that, while the number of the dead did not exceed five hundred and of the wounded, fifteen hundred, the Socialist papers reported ten thousand dead and thirty thousand wounded.<sup>2</sup> Radical opinion in France in respect to the responsibility for

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 28 January, 1905, pp. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Figaro*, 7 February, 1905, p. 3.

the shooting on 22 January was erroneous, he added. The troops were not given orders to fire on the people; they acted in obedience to military rule which prescribed that force could be resorted to if all other means of preserving order had failed.

Father Gapon, that obscure priest of the Russian Orthodox Church, who suddenly came to the public eye as the champion of the proletariat, was admired by some and derided by others in France. His name became indelibly linked with the proletarian movement in Russia, and the Socialists and Anarchists of France extolled him as a hero of the oppressed class. They praised his work, his initiative, his sacrifice. But the French conservatives had an entirely different impression of this "bizarre apostle". To their mind his spectacular and ephemeral career was commonplace. Georges Bourdon held him responsible for the manifestation of 22 January and charged him with the "crime" of transforming the purely economic claims of the workers into political demands. And J. Bourdeau, correspondent of the *Journal des Débats*, accused him of planning to establish a proletarian dictatorship and of resorting to terrorism to gain his end.

In regard to the significance of the workingmen's manifestation of 22 January, 1905, there was a diversity of opinion in France. Was it the beginning of anarchy or revolution? The conservatives would not admit that it marked the first stage of a revolution. To regard it as the beginning of a revolution, said the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, was preposterous. Russia was disorganized and there were local troubles, some of which were alarmingly grave, it was true; but these were merely the symptoms of anarchy and not the incidents of a revolution. That the nation would rise *en masse*, that the true revolution would be inaugurated, and that a republic would be established on the ruins of the old régime—



these things were a chimera! Russia, indeed, was experiencing a violent shock, added *Le Monde Economique*, but it was merely a short-lived, transient agitation.<sup>1</sup>

The French conservative attitude toward the Russian revolutionary movement was influenced partly by their habit of judging by Western standards and partly by their personal interests or those they sought to defend. They were wont to compare the Russian uprising with that in Western Europe.<sup>2</sup> The sudden explosions and the temporary abatement, they observed, were so unlike the course of popular uprisings in the West. In Russia, after a violent outburst, there would be a halt which seemed as if it would end there, as if its energy were exhausted. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* admitted that the Russian movement was disconcerting to Occidentals. In Western Europe, it claimed, a popular uprising proceeded differently: once begun, it would continue on uninterruptedly and rush to its end. Despite this difference, it would not dignify the agitation in Russia with the name "revolution"; it was nothing but anarchy. The local disturbances, though violent and brutal at times, were without unity; they were simply scattered beginnings over a wide area. With the sole exception of the first general strike, which was the only movement revealing a concerted plan, all the other incidents were a manifestation of anarchy rather than a revolution. And the participation of the police in the disorders and the mutinies in the fleet—were these not unmistakable symptoms of anarchy?<sup>3</sup>

René Millet expressed a more sympathetic appreciation of the agitation in Russia. Although he admitted that it was yet too early to judge such a "grand movement", he contradicted many of the assertions of the conservative press

<sup>1</sup> 28 January, 1905, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 29 (1905), p. 237.

<sup>3</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. 30 (1905), pp. 232-233, 480.

in regard to the character of the uprising. It was the first general strike which particularly impressed him. It had been said that the Russians could not organize themselves and were incapable of concerted action; but the general strike disproved this assertion. It had been alleged that they did not know what they wanted and yet from all the four corners of the empire came the demand for political liberties. He denied too that the movement lacked competent leaders. There were committees working in the shadow, he declared. The people's long oppression had given them, so to speak, the genius for conspiracy. The trouble with the Frenchman, he explained, was that he could not conceive of a revolution without a "social contract, an assembly of notables, a tennis court oath, and fine oratorical gestures".<sup>1</sup>

The French Socialists were among those who held the opinion that the 22 January inaugurated the Russian revolution which would finally liberate the people from the tsarist yoke. François de Pressensé declared that it was a political and social revolution: it would give to the proletariat "real rights" which would be guaranteed by a free nation. In a stirring speech, Jean Jaurès stated that "a revolutionary period had opened for Russia, which would not be closed save by the establishment of the power of democracy, political and social". Russian democracy, he continued, had begun to speak to the world and its advent was a certainty.

The French Socialists entertained the brightest hopes for the ultimate victory of the revolution. They were confident that the Russian Socialists, whom they claimed were playing an important rôle in the movement, would carry the struggle to the end. They denied the assertion of the French con-

<sup>1</sup> *Revue politique et parlementaire*, vol. 46 (1905), p. 424.

servatives that it was merely anarchy and not a revolution that existed in Russia. They affirmed that it was a veritable revolution, the logical outcome of a slow evolution of public spirit and it was precipitated by the disasters of the Russo-Japanese War. They denied that it was confined to Petrograd, Moscow, and Warsaw. It was widespread; it embraced the entire Russian people. They declared further that it was well organized with a definite program; that it was under the direction of competent leaders. It was Professor Charles Seignobos who asserted that the Russian revolution had been prepared by the propaganda on social and political questions among the most highly cultured class, and in this respect it resembled the France of 1789. Just as France had her philosophers, Russia had her intelligentia.

The French Anarchists emphatically declared that the agitation in Russia was a formidable uprising of an entire people. The revolution which had commenced inaugurated a new era. It was a force which would aid the Russian workers to conquer and overthrow the last of the Romanovs, "the assassin of his people".<sup>1</sup>

The various estimates of the significance, extent, and character of the Russian revolution outlined above show the diversity of opinions in France in respect to the situation in the allied country. As the revolution progressed, some of the French conservatives, as will be indicated in subsequent chapters, had to revise their opinion of the revolution. The Socialists and Anarchists too, by the end of the year 1905 when the government had regained its lost strength, discovered that their early estimate of the revolution had to be modified.

<sup>1</sup> *Temps Nouveaux*, no. 40.

## CHAPTER II

### TSAR AND BUREAUCRACY

✓ THE discussion of Russian internal affairs which was started by the event of 22 January, 1905, divided French opinion into two camps. In one camp were those who upheld the tsar but assailed the bureaucracy; and in the other, those who condemned both the tsar and the bureaucracy under the common designation of "tsarism" or "tsardom".

To the second camp belonged the French Socialists. They were foremost among those who made dire predictions of the future of tsarism. They proclaimed that they were the enemy of the tsar, and those who loved liberty should follow their example. At a meeting of the "Société des Amis du Peuple Russe et des Peuples Annexés," Anatole France opened the session with the following exhortation: "Citizens, let us open this meeting by proclaiming ourselves the enemy of the tsar and the friend of Russia". The French Socialist writers were quick to make deductions from the reports of the occurrences in Russia. Take for example, François de Pressensé, whose prolific pen was ever at the service of the "cause". Just a few days after "Red Sunday", he published an article in the Socialist weekly, *L'Européen*, under the caption of "*La Fin du Tsarisme*" in which he announced that Imperial Russia, the empire of the tsars, was falling into ruins. "There is no longer any Tsar: Popular Russia, the revolution in progress, alone remains".<sup>1</sup> Another article of his was en-

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 28 January, 1905, pp. 1-3.

titled "*L'Agonie du Tsarisme*" which appeared in the same weekly shortly after the defeat of Rozhdestvensky.<sup>1</sup> This was a disaster, he said, which demonstrated the incapacity and the impotence of the government of the tsar. On 4 November, 1905, just a few days after the proclamation of the October Manifesto, he wrote that whatever hardships and obstacles might be encountered by the Russian revolution, one thing at least was certain: "autocracy is dead, a new era has commenced; they will never return to the monstrous régime which has succumbed under the burden of its own faults, under the crushing responsibility of the war in Manchuria, no less than before the almost unanimous demands of a great people in arms". A writer in the republican socialist daily *La Petite République*<sup>2</sup> pronounced tsarism to be *in extremis*. The mutinies in the fleet, the disasters in the Russo-Japanese war, the massacres of innocent men and women, were but the prolegomena of an inevitable death. Pierre Ouillard called attention to the horrible massacres in Russia and remarked: "In the blood of Russians, Poles, Armenians, Jews, and Finns, the blind tsar is proceeding with rapid strides toward his destiny".<sup>3</sup> The socialist daily *L'Humanité*, under the direction of Jean Jaurès, declared that it was high time that tsarism should be dead and buried.

What should be the attitude of official France toward the tsar? was one of the favorite topics of discussion in socialist circles. Time and again the Socialists had urged the French government to declare publicly that it condemned tsarism. François de Pressensé boldly declared that France would be crushed if she attempted to render either

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 3 June, 1905, pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Humanité*, 2 July, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Européen*, 12 August, 1905, p. 2.

pecuniary or moral assistance to tsarism. In favor of the popular parties only should she exert her entire influence. The Socialists further urged the French government to exert its utmost power to compel the tsar to grant the demands of the revolutionaries. They claimed that France was in a position to do this if she only wished. Then, not content with these exhortations, and, as if appealing to French honor, they endeavored to convince the public in writing as well as in speech that France had been abused by the tsar, that she had been fooled to her great loss, that she had become the obedient and humble servant of autocracy. Russian diplomacy, they further said, was directed by Berlin with such a happy result that William II could well be proud. At any rate, the tsars of Russia, the Romanovs, had not a single drop of Russian blood; they were really of German extraction and had always pursued a German policy.<sup>1</sup> Nicholas II was responsible for all the catastrophes of the Russo-Japanese War, for all the miseries and tragedies within his empire, for the closing of universities and the restrictions on the freedom of the press, for the massacres of Armenians in the Caucasus and the pogroms in Poland. He was "a coward, a liar, a traitor, a murderer". Why should the government of a Republic, they asked, express sympathy with such a monarch?

An avowed enemy of the tsar, Charles Rivet, considered the tsar as an ignorant autocrat. Referring to the attitude of the French conservatives toward the tsar, he said:

The French newspapers had portrayed him as an enlightened despot to whom the war had revealed the dangers of an irresponsible bureaucracy, as one who meant thenceforth to call to his side for the purpose of government the living forces of the nation. That was the purest imagination. The real Nicholas

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 27 September, 1906, p. 1.

II had unfortunately no resemblance to that fictitious creature. He bore the same name, that was all.

The fact is, the Tsar did not understand his people, had no system, no policy, unless it was—quite as much owing to self-infatuation as to the worship he had of autocracy—the intention to maintain intact the rule of absolutism.<sup>1</sup>

One of the tsar's personal weaknesses which particularly incensed his enemies in France was his indecision, his lack of will power. Throughout the course of the revolution, it was this grave personal defect which made him disliked even in circles less hostile to his government. Alexandre Ular dwells on this point in his book, *Russia from Within*.

The Russian Empire has become a chaos, where men and ideas ephemerally set and rise. This chaos is symbolized in the reiterated and monstrous contradictions of Nicholas II; by his indecision; his manifest duplicity; his megalomania, which after the scattering of his fleets and armies, stickles for the notion of honor—the fool's honor, which immolates the rising generation of the country to economize a little money in this disgraceful affair!—the honor of this caricature of a Sovereign who ensconces himself trembling in his Castle, dares not show himself to his people, as yet pacific, and traitorously assassinates them in the streets! The honor of the sick man who brags in the morning that he will save his country, and saves it again at night by undoing what he has just done.<sup>2</sup>

*L'Humanité* complained likewise of the obstinacy of the tsar and his puerile remarks.<sup>3</sup> He had refused to act when the situation of the country demanded it; he had turned a deaf ear to the wise counsels of responsible men. His judg-

<sup>1</sup> Charles Rivet, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Alexandre Ular, *Russia from Within* (London, 1905), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Humanité*, 24 April, 1905, p. 1.

ment could not be trusted and his bad faith had more than once been proved. Alexandre Ular declared that the tsar "has ever been the product and the instigator of moral corruption". He had introduced spiritualists and clairvoyants into his court, and it was through these agents that reactionaries managed their sovereign.<sup>1</sup> Nicholas II, Alexandre Ular continued, was not merely a "sick man"; he was a "nefarious sovereign".

✓ The French Anarchists, on their part, were not outdone in their abhorrence of the Russian autocrat. They had attached to him such uncomplimentary epithets as "Le Bête Rouge de Petersbourg", "assassin of his people", "coward", and "traitor". His vague promises were exasperating to them. If the Russian revolutionaries, they declared, desired the cessation of the horrors of absolutism, they should support their claims by force. They could gain their liberty only by the use of force.

They proclaimed that the downfall of the tsar was inevitable. The tsar was leading a precarious existence, and whatever he might do, his days were already numbered. The bomb of Ivan Kalaiëv, the assassin of Grand Duke Serge, uncle of Nicholas II, was a signal, said the Anarchists, that the "hangman" could expect no pity.<sup>2</sup> His overthrow, said Michel Petit in the *Temps Nouveaux* of 5 August, 1905, "is inevitable, certain, approaching, and like the melting of snow on high summits, there will be terrible avalanches".

The Anarchists assailed the attitude of the French government toward the tsar. M. Delcassé, they declared, had the boldness to announce in the Chamber of Deputies that he would not permit an allied monarch to be insulted in France. The duty of all Frenchmen, they asserted, was to con-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *Temps Nouveaux*, 3 February, 1906, pp. 1-2.



denn unanimously, not merely the "massacre" of 22 January, but the tsar and tsarism.

Despite the vigorous propaganda of Socialists and Anarchists against the tsar, there was a certain section of French opinion which remained friendly to the tsar and condemned the vituperations of the radicals. The *Paris Temps*, the *Matin*, the *Figaro*, the *Petit Journal*, and the *Journal des Débats* were among the pro-tsarist dailies which defended the tsar against the attacks of Socialists and Anarchists. They were organs controlled by big financial corporations, which for powerful economic reasons, desired to preserve the prestige of the Russian government. They were moderate in their appreciation of the disturbances in the empire and they openly expressed regret at the exaggerated and impassioned opinions of their radical compatriots. To the official attitude of the French government toward Russian affairs, they gave their whole-hearted support. The *Figaro* of 29 January, 1905, commended editorially the minister for foreign affairs when he criticized before the Chamber of Deputies the "injurious and unjust" epithets applied to the tsar by the French Socialists. It was his duty, it added, to see that a friend and ally was not abused by Frenchmen. Alcide Ebray, writing in the *Revue politique et parlementaire*, deplored the tendency he had observed in some press comments to exaggerate wilfully the gravity of the situation in Russia. Some did so, actuated by their hostility against the tsar, and others, by their sympathy with the political and general strike movements. The manifestations against the tsar, he regarded as useless, out of place, and imprudent, considering the existing alliance between France and Russia. Such demonstrations were unbecoming to an allied country. It was imperative that the enemies of the tsar should exercise their right to criticise him with prudence and moderation, for nothing better would

serve the purpose of those who sought to embroil France with Russia than the manifestations against tsarism. He hoped that the indignation against the tsar would cease as soon as possible.

✓ The French Catholics expressed their opinion of the tsar with a certain reserve. His persecution of the Catholics was still remembered by them. The *Revue du Monde Catholique* declared that from 1772 to 1905 the tsars of Russia maintained a régime of violence against Catholicism. But the troubles which menaced Nicholas II's throne had compelled him to grant concessions to religious sects. By far the wisest reform he had made in the empire was the granting of the liberty of worship, which was a real blessing to the people.<sup>1</sup>

In regard to the attitude of the Russian people toward the tsar, a writer in *La Réforme Sociale*, whose name is not revealed, expressed very favorable impressions.

The Russian people taken as a whole, in spite of some appearances to the contrary, still love and reverence their tsar; they only ask to be led by him. They complain bitterly of the too numerous intermediaries, inclined to hide the truth, who separate them from their sovereign. The Tsar has lost nothing of his prestige and authority; he is always the "batyushka" or "little father", and they do not hold him responsible for their present unhappiness. But on account of their ignorance, the Russian people are easily misled; and, if care is not taken, the ringleaders, who are agitating terribly, will take advantage of them. At present the Tsar and the people can understand each other and, as it behooves them in moments of trial, draw closer the traditional bonds which unite them. In order to do this, it is necessary to hold together; it remains to find a practical mode of communication between the sovereign and his more than one hundred million subjects.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revue du Monde Catholique*, 15 May, 1905, pp. 602-621.

<sup>2</sup> *La Réforme Sociale*, 16 April, 1905, p. 655.

According to Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, a prominent Catholic layman and economist, one of the greatest hindrances to the solution of Russian problems was the amazing ignorance of the tsar about Russia. Of all the Russians, he observed, the tsar was the least acquainted with the Russian people; and unluckily the majority of the men who had access to him had a personal interest in the maintenance of absolutism and the continuance of abuses.<sup>1</sup>

In expressing their opinions of the tsar the moderate thinkers of France refrained from the use of abusive language which characterized the advanced thinkers. While admitting that he had many shortcomings, they did not entirely place on him the responsibility for all the miseries and sufferings of the people. As has been mentioned above they drew a distinction between the tsar and his official family, the bureaucracy. The tsar, in their opinion, was to a large extent the creature of circumstances.

#### THE BUREAUCRACY

All shades of French opinion were unanimous in their condemnation of the notorious Russian bureaucracy. The misgovernment, which Socialists and Anarchists attributed to the tsar, was regarded by moderate thinkers as the fault of the bureaucracy. The real enemy of the Russian people was the bureaucracy, according to French liberals and conservatives. It was responsible for the disasters of the Russian army in Manchuria and for the corrupt government of the empire. It had proved to be a disastrous form of government, a total failure, observed Eugène Lautier. The people of Russia, asserted René Millet,<sup>2</sup> was rising not against the tsar, but against the all-powerful bureaucracy. Even a Soc-

<sup>1</sup> *Le Petit Journal*, 3 July, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Revue politique et parlementaire*, vol. 45, (1905), p. 207.

ialist, P. G. La Chesnais, was compelled to admit that the enemy of Russia was not the tsar. The real enemy, who was more dangerous and more difficult to overcome, was the centralized bureaucracy. It could exist without the tsar, and the tsar without it would no longer be dangerous. He concluded that any constitutional reform for Russia must decentralize the government, thus removing the power from the much-hated and corrupt bureaucracy. The work of reform should include the disintegration of this system of government, for it was the bureaucracy that hindered the solution of Russian problems. The socialist daily, *L'Humanité*, discovered two aspects of the Russian bureaucracy; namely, the "robber" bureaucracy and the "hypocrite and liar" bureaucracy.<sup>1</sup> The Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905, brought to light these abominable defects of the system; the thefts practised by high bureaucrats, the bribery they exacted, the waste of war materials, the entire lack of discipline in the army and navy. The war revealed these unmistakable proofs of the utter inefficiency of the bureaucracy.

After a visit in Russia about the middle of 1905, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu declared that the bureaucracy had already lost its prestige. Its tyrannical government had exhausted the patience of the people, "perhaps the most patient in the world". The élite of the country were in accord as to the necessity of putting an end to the rule of the bureaucrats which had brought humiliation to the empire. Alexandre Ular expressed the opinion that the bureaucracy had fallen so low in popular esteem as never to be able to rise again. Beside its old abuses and corruptions, its behavior during the course of the revolution had been characterized by a vacillating and treacherous policy and had increased the

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 21 April, 1905, p. 2.

hostility against it. "One thing is certain"—he wrote in his book *Russia from Within*—"Tsardom will not recover from its decadence, for this is natural and fatal. By a more and more rapid, but absolutely logical development, it has evolved to disaster, at once internal and external. Just as the bureaucracy has lost the two great symbols of its mundane power, Port Arthur and Mukden, in this sanguinary war, so in the moral war which it has insolently launched against its clients, it has lost the only two bases of a stable government: popular esteem and its own dignity".<sup>1</sup>

The relation of the tsar with the bureaucracy was ridiculed by French Socialists. François de Pressensé, and Socialist opinion generally, regarded the tsar as the "docile puppet of the bureaucracy", a mere plaything in the hands of selfish and ambitious bureaucrats. Nicholas II had refused to play the traditional rôle of the national tsars. Being an autocrat who did not know how to use his power, he depended solely on the corrupt but powerful bureaucracy; and being weak and cowardly, he had allowed the bureaucracy to commit all kinds of crimes in his name.<sup>2</sup> He was but the "lamentable impresario" of the "political comedy" which was going on in his empire.<sup>3</sup>

Conservative thinkers, while condemning the clique around him, affirmed that he had ignored their counsels and listened to the insistent demands of his subjects. Eugène Lautier expressed the opinion that it was his wisdom which kept the revolution within bounds; that it was his resistance to the counsels of reactionary bureaucrats that made possible the restoration of order and the resumption of normal life. The bureaucrats, more royalist than the tsar, opposed vigorously the concessions he had granted, and because he had

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Européen*, 28 January, 1905, pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Européen*, 11 March, 1905, pp. 5-6.

yielded to the popular demands, they accused him of weakness.

Absolutely nothing which savored of a defence of the Russian bureaucracy could be found in any section of French public opinion. On other Russian problems opinions differed, but there was unanimity in the condemnation of the notorious bureaucratic system.

## CHAPTER III

### CAUSES AND AIMS OF THE REVOLUTION

THE interest which the Russian revolution aroused in France inspired more than one Frenchman to make an inquiry into the causes and origin of the uprising. Not only in magazine and newspaper articles were attempts of this kind made, but also in detailed and more pretentious studies, of which Victor Bérard's *L'empire russe et le tsarisme*, Georges Alfassa's *La crise agraire en Russie*, and Alexandre Ular's *La révolution russe* are well known. Bérard's book is a well written, scholarly study of the causes of the Russian movement; Alfassa attempts to seek the causes of the revolution in the agrarian system; and Ular gives an interesting anti-tsarist account of the general conditions prevailing at the outbreak of the revolution with a view to explaining the causes of the upheaval. The newspapers and magazines contained from time to time monographs on this topic by such eminent writers as Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, member of the Institut de France, Alfred Anspach, professor of French literature at the Ecole St. Pierre at Petrograd, Paul Beauregard, economist, and J. Flach, professor at the Collège de France.

Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu gave four principal causes of the agitation in Russia, two of which were political and the other two, social. He attributed the political and "moral" crises to the régime inaugurated by Sipiaguine and Plehve, and to the arbitrariness of the bureaucracy. The rule of Plehve particularly was most oppressive. It was under him

that conviction without trial for political offenses was officially sanctioned and the enforcement of this regulation filled the state prisons and the wilds of Siberia. Clamor for a change of régime and for administrative, economic, judicial, and religious reforms became so insistent during his régime that in November, 1904, a few months after his assassination an assembly of the members of the local "zemstvos" and municipal "dumas" petitioned the tsar to reform the political system. In December the tsar issued a proclamation promising some vague reforms, which were far from satisfactory. The social causes were the growth of the urban proletariat and the rise of the bourgeoisie. By 1905 the proletariat formed one-half or one-third of the population of Moscow, Warsaw, Lodz, Odessa, Riga, and Kiev. It was the urban proletariat that furnished the material for revolution. Then there was the growing middle class who desired to participate in the government but whose cooperation was never invited by the administration. Russia, he asserted, was traversing the same economic phases as the West. She had reached what the Socialists call, "the capitalistic stage".<sup>1</sup>

An anonymous writer in *La Réforme Sociale*, a Catholic fortnightly publication, attributed the causes of the agitation to the Orthodox Church, the inferior position of the bourgeoisie, and the humiliation of the nobility. The official religion had lost its moral authority over the people. It could not restrain their passions nor comfort them in their misfortunes. It had allowed school children to be brought up in pure atheism, if not in Tolstoyan doctrines. The wealthy bourgeoisie felt humiliated because of their inferior status in the political and social life, and now they wanted to play the rôle of the middle class in Western

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Politique et Littéraire*, 11 February, 1905, pp. 165-167.



Europe. The nobility, who had been deprived of their former privileges and reduced to a position of inferiority in the state, joined the revolution with the hope of regaining their traditional prestige and position.<sup>1</sup>

*Le Petit Journal*, a republican independent daily, reported that a French diplomat in Russia, whose name was not disclosed, attributed the reigning unrest to the existence of three discontented classes, namely, "the nobility which was dispossessed by Peter the Great, the administration which was dispossessed by the police, and the students who could not find positions wherein they could make use of their training".<sup>2</sup>

The *Petit Journal* believed that if the Russo-Japanese War had not broken out, there would have been no revolution in Russia. It was the repercussion of the disasters suffered by the Russian forces that prepared the way for the uprising. The discontent created by the unforeseen defeats abroad aided the agitators to stir up the people. For many years, it was true, students and nobles had surreptitiously been preaching revolutionary doctrines among the peasantry and the proletariat, but if the Russo-Japanese War had not gravely embarrassed the Russian government, the revolution would not have occurred.<sup>3</sup>

The eminent economist, Paul Beauregard, writing on 28 January, 1905, asserted that the Russian revolution was closely related to the international socialist movement which had reached that country and where it had many sympathizers. It was the progress of this international movement that awakened the proletariat to their political and economic needs.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *La Réforme Sociale*, 1 March, 1905, p. 412.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Petit Journal*, 24 January, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 March, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Le Monde Économique*, vol. i, (1905), pp. 97-98.

Professor J. Flach, like Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu and other Catholics, was of the opinion that one of the causes of the unrest in Russia was the growth of a wealthy middle class without political rights and unable to exercise any influence in the government. Instead of calling it to its aid, tsarism regarded it with suspicion. Another cause, he said, was the absolutism of the bureaucracy and the despotism of the rural commune.<sup>1</sup>

G. de Molinari attributed the causes of the domestic troubles of Russia to the poverty, not to say the general misery, of the mass of the population and to the disproportionate burdens of government. The enormous war budget had increased the burden of the taxpayers and consequently the general discontent.

René Millet considered that one of the causes of the widespread disturbance in Russia was the agitation of the numerous subject races. The nationalist movement had been in progress for many years. As it imperiled the unity of the empire, it augmented the importance of the Russian situation to the outside world. The race question was of tremendous import to the government. The antagonism between the various races, as between Armenians and Tartar, the Jews and the Russian official, contributed to increase the magnitude of the revolution.<sup>2</sup>

According to Georges Alfassa, one of the principal causes of the crisis in Russia was to be found in the agrarian system. His study of peasant life in Russia had revealed to him that discontent among the peasants was attributable to the defective rural organization. The "mir", or the rural commune, placed too many restrictions on peasant life but afforded little protection of life and pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Revue politique et parlementaire*, vol. 45, pp. 37-43.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 46, p. 615.

perty. "A study of the 'mir' reveals to us that a régime of collective ownership requires perfect discipline on the part of those who practice it, and absolute authority on the part of those who direct it . . . . Managed by incompetent men, it degenerates almost fatally into tyranny."<sup>1</sup> His conclusion was that the "mir" system of rural government was inadequate and was one of the causes of the agrarian crisis.

Professor Alfred Anspach, in his analysis of the character of the Russian revolution, discovered certain similarities and differences between its causes and those of the French Revolution. He pointed out that in both countries peasant life was similar. In France as in Russia the misery of the peasants was notorious. Their homes were barely furnished and the implements they used in farming were primitive and inadequate. Like the Russian peasants, their landholdings were too small and altogether insufficient to enable them to pay their dues to the State and support their families. The peasants in both countries had to pay heavy taxes on tea, sugar, cotton, and iron.

But the most salient differences between the causes of the French Revolution and the Russian revolution lay in the fact that while Russia in 1905 was a growing industrial country, France in 1789 was not so. France had not yet experienced the Industrial Revolution. The ideas which were agitating Russia were not found in the eighteenth century. Since 1789 social science had advanced remarkably, and Buchez, Louis Blanc, Marx, and Engels had preached their doctrines to the world, so that in the twentieth century it could be said that economic questions occupy the first rank. Socialism had penetrated Russia and its influence was reflected in Russian literature. Tschernichewski was a faithful disciple of French Socialists, and Four-

<sup>1</sup> *Revue d'Economie Politique*, vol. 20, (1905), p. 336.

rier's "new industrial world" idea seemed to have been realized in Russian society. The works of Turgenev, Grigorovitch and Nékrassov were inspired by socialism.<sup>1</sup>

→ Pierre Giffard, correspondent of the *Figaro* at Petrograd, believed that the unrest in Russia was due to the attitude of the government and the press. The government had repeatedly made promises of reform, but it had not shown its good faith by putting them into practice at once. The people had lost confidence in the administration chiefly because its promises remained unfulfilled. It was this attitude of the government that kept popular feeling at high tension. The Russian press too could be held responsible for the continuance of the disorders. He observed that it indulged in printing highly colored accounts of current events and fantastic tales. Among the French, it would only provoke laughter, but the Russians, who were little accustomed to press exaggerations, were easily stirred.<sup>2</sup>

→ Alexandre Ular dwelt on the defects of the administrative system to explain the causes of the revolution. In the administration of justice the arbitrariness of the bureaucracy prevailed. Plehve and Muraviev had elaborated a regulation by which any person suspected of a political offence, could be arrested and thrown into prison without trial. Next there was the general corruption in the army, navy, and public works. He cited several cases to support his assertion.

The mere management of the Commissariat enabled the Generalissimo Kuropatkin to amass a personal fortune of over six million roubles by January, 1905, as is shown by his catalog of depôts and appointments. General Sukhomlinoff, the Governor-General of Kiev, alone has (as was proved by an official

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Études Franco-Russes*, July, 1906, pp. 313-320.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Figaro*, 13 November, 1905, p. 2.

inquiry) laid hands on £24,000, by falsifying his accounts, and diverting the capital to his private balance. . . . In the month of June, 1904, one of the highest personages in Europe assured the author that of £320,000 which the war was then costing daily, a fifth part must be reckoned as lost in the pockets of the officials.

The war had exposed this moral depravity and the people realized that political administration was responsible for the economic crisis; so that in their desire to remedy their economic distress, they asked for changes in the system of government.<sup>1</sup>

Another cause of the agitation was the defective peasant administration. The local "zemstvos", which were elective organs of local administration, enjoyed originally a certain degree of autonomy; but by 1904 the bureaucracy had usurped almost all their powers, thus reducing them to simple registration offices. Their deliberations were strictly supervised and their decisions were subject to the government's veto. It was the "zemstvos" who perceived that the enemy of the nation was the bureaucracy, and that it should be replaced by a constitutional régime. In December, 1904, their members together with those of the municipal "dumas" petitioned the tsar to introduce changes in the system of administration. But the "mir" was "fundamentally the whole problem of the peasant problem in Great Russia". The "mir" involved collective responsibility, and so far, it had proved disastrous. Its members held small and scattered parcels of land and were subject to the rules and regulations of the "mir." This system proved so unsatisfactory that it had forced many peasants to move to the cities. "The peasants have become conscious, if we may venture to put it so, of what they no

<sup>1</sup> Alexandre Ular, *op. cit.*, pp. 257-260.

longer want; but they have not yet become aware of what they do want. And if in the majority of cases, orthodoxy and custom, conjoined with the responsibility of obtaining instruction, prevents them from conceiving an Empire without a Tsar; they have on the other hand a clear conception of the iniquity of great landed property, of the immorality of the advantages accruing to the bureaucrats who are attached to the defense of the Government—they can finally conceive the Constitution, which is the essential matter:—an immense ‘mir’, a ‘district delegation’ including the entire country;—in brief, National Autonomy”.<sup>1</sup>

→ The enemies of tsardom within the empire were another cause of the revolution, according to Ular. They were the White Russians, Esthonians and Livonians of Finnish extraction, Letts and Lithuanians, Georgians, Armenians, and Ruthenians or Ukrainians. The Socialist parties of the White Russians, Esthonians, Livonians, Letts, Lithuanians, and Jews were fused for the revolutionary movement. The Jews, in the opinion of Ular, played an important rôle in the revolution. “In reality, there is not a single great political organization in the Empire that is not directed, or at any rate markedly influenced, by the Jews. Even the ‘Liberals’, constitutional monarchists who are recruited from the highest classes of society, and among the officials themselves, wherever opportunism has not stifled their independence of opinion, would be lost without the Jews . . . . Marxian Social-Democrats, the Terrorist Social-Revolutionists, the Socialists of Poland, the Jewish artisan party, the ‘Bund’ are directed by Jews, and are necessarily influenced by the Jewish radicalism of the alien.” The Jews’ aspiration was to acquire the same rights and privileges as those enjoyed by the nationalities among which

<sup>1</sup> Alexandre Ular, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

they lived, but the Russian government had constantly refused to grant them the liberties they desired and had put many restrictions on their freedom of movement.<sup>1</sup>

→ Alexandre Ular recognized too that the rise of a capitalist bourgeoisie and an artisan proletariat, which were "a moral danger for the bureaucratic system", were other causes of the Russian agitation.

→ The majority of Socialists attributed the Russian revolution to the character of the Russian government. Jean Jaurès, the Socialist leader, declared that an uprising under such a régime was further made inevitable by the Industrial Revolution and the subsequent rise of a proletarian class.<sup>2</sup> However, he, and Socialist opinion generally, emphasized that it was a revolt against the system of administration, against "a permanent régime of savagery and barbarity which refuses the most elementary guarantees of life to human beings: a rain of blood, falling in the silence of darkness which is penetrated intermittently by a ray of light, revealing its savage splendor".<sup>3</sup>

In regard to the aims of the revolutionary agitation in Russia, there was a diversity of opinions. The republican independent daily, *Le Petit Journal*, declared that the aim of the movement was to show to the sovereign that the Russian people desired to be governed with more equity.<sup>4</sup> But Eugène Lautier was inclined to believe that its aim was merely to thwart the mobilization of troops to be sent to the Far East, that the agitation, in brief, was a protest against the continuance of the war.<sup>5</sup> Later, in October, 1905, he

<sup>1</sup> Alexandre Ular, *op. cit.*, pp. 213, 224, 235-236.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Humanité*, 4 November, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Free Russia*, 1 June, 1905, p. 83.

<sup>4</sup> *Le Petit Journal*, 23 January, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Le Figaro*, 6 July, 1905, p. 2.

wrote that the revolutionaries seemed to have for an object the overthrow of the social order. They had no program and their aimless agitation had led to the spread of anarchy.<sup>1</sup> Moderate opinion in general was that the Russian revolutionaries did not know just what they wanted. They had risen against the established government merely because they were suffering from its misrule.

To the French Socialists, on the other hand, the revolution had clearly formulated aims. These were, namely, a constituent assembly, universal suffrage, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of association. In short they were agitating for the very same liberties which the people of Western Europe enjoyed. The movement in Russia, to their minds, was essentially a political revolution. Its aims, if accomplished, would mean the disappearance of autocracy and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.<sup>2</sup> The French Socialists contended that the Russian proletariat had been so educated by propagandists, who were followers of Kropotkin and disciples of Karl Marx, that they had become masters of themselves and were fully aware of their needs.

The French Anarchists considered the chief aims of the revolution to be freedom of the individual and the complete overthrow of the autocratic government. They could see no better object of the movement than the destruction of the established order and the attainment of "freedom".

Opinions thus varied according to the viewpoints of the groups which held them. The Conservatives, who were not in sympathy with the anarchical methods employed by the agitators, could see only an aimless, incoherent agitation. A few of them admitted that the revolutionists were

<sup>1</sup> *Le Figaro*, 29 October, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Humanité*, 28 October, 1905, p. 3.



demanding political reforms, although they had no definite program. The Socialists, bitter enemies of the autocratic Russian government as they were, discovered most laudable purposes in the revolution. Finally the Anarchists, true to their doctrine, believed that the objects of the Russian movement were the overthrow of the established system of government and complete freedom from governments of any kind.

## CHAPTER IV

### PROGRESS OF THE REVOLUTION

AFTER the workingmen's demonstration of 22 January, 1905, which resulted fatally for both the government and the participants, French public opinion watched with keen interest the further developments in the Russian situation. The press reports of the occurrences in Russia were copious and detailed. Besides the general situation which caused alarm in many quarters and created much speculation as to the effect on France of the prevailing condition in Russia, each event of apparent dramatic or political interest was discussed with much enthusiasm in the press.

One of the events in the Russian upheaval which attracted considerable attention in France was the mutiny of the crew of the *Kniaz-Potemkin*, a war vessel. The French Socialists never failed to refer to it in their condemnation of the régime in Russia. The socialist paper *L'Humanité* of 30 June, 1905, considered the occurrence of tremendous importance. It broke to pieces military servitude; it was a signal that tsardom would fall by the blows of those who, heretofore, had been its most formidable support. Jaurès could not let the event fade from the memory of the French without letting them know the entire significance of it as seen by a distinguished Socialist leader. So on 1 July, 1905, in his paper, *L'Humanité*, he set forth his conclusions under the caption "*La Révolution Russe*". The mutiny, he said, was the expression of the exasperation of the Russian people under the rule of the bureaucrats, "thieves

and ignorant men" as they were. The sailors had raised on board the vessel the red flag which is "the flag of the *Révolution Sociale*, the flag of the proletarians of June and of 1871, of the heroes of Lodz and Moscow". By this act the true character of the Russian revolution displayed itself. It was to be a revolution for liberty and justice, inspired by republican and socialist ideas. Furthermore, the fact that the army on which the tsar had relied in upholding his authority had risen against him, showed the extreme gravity of the situation in Russia. The cause of the mutiny was not the bad food as reported by the French liberal press; the real grievance was the entire governmental system.

The Anarchist weekly *Temps Nouveaux* of 8 July, 1905, commenting on this mutiny, declared that it was the most serious event which had occurred since the beginning of the troubles in Russia. It showed that the revolution in Russia was entering an acute stage. The French Anarchists rejoiced at the news that the officers and men of the Russian navy were participating in the revolution.

The republican socialist daily *La Petite République* of 30 June, 1905, declared that the mutiny signified a new era for Russia. Those who had suffered silently under the yoke of the bureaucracy were now raising their voices. This in itself was significant.

The French conservatives were alarmed too at the report of the mutiny. Eugène Lautier, writing in the *Figaro* of 1 July, 1905, would not believe that the cause of the mutiny was the poor food. There must be something else behind this event which was only one of many which were agitating the Russian empire. The crew, without doubt, had been prepared by the revolutionary propaganda. "They were prepared for anything, except to do their duty!" he exclaimed. The seat of the mutiny, he continued, seemed to have been chosen for the moral effect it would exert on

Europe. Odessa was a vast commercial and industrial center with its four hundred factories and where 100,000 foreigners and 100,000 Jews, mingling with the Russians, gave it an international aspect like the other cities of the Mediterranean — Marseilles, Barcelona, Algiers, Alexandria, Smyrna. It was among this cosmopolitan agglomeration that the crew of the *Kniaz-Potemkin* had revolted. "A serious blunder of the revolutionaries who venture to stir and alarm international interests in their desire to overthrow the autocracy!" He expressed further regret in the following passage:

The friends of Russia and the true friends of civilization have more than one motive for deploring the frightful scenes of Odessa. It is not good either for Russia or for civilization that the question be put—like an absurd and brutal dilemma—between absolutism and anarchy. We cannot accept this alternative. It is true that absolutism provokes anarchical explosions but it is still more true that anarchy gives absolutism an excuse which is always appealed to. The next day after the Tsar has announced his intention to allow the people to participate in the government, a mutiny broke out. And what a mutiny! complicated with military revolt, violation of private property, incendiarism and pillage.

René Millet declared, in reviewing foreign politics in the *Revue politique et parlementaire*,<sup>1</sup> that it was difficult to foresee to what lengths the military sedition would go, for the army, like the nation, was subject to the same raptures and the same temptations.

The republican independent daily *Petit Journal*, of 30 June, 1905, regarded with apprehension the mutiny. "The revolt of the crew of a war vessel marks the formidable progress of revolutionary ideas in a sphere where one

<sup>1</sup> Vol. 46, (1905), p. 615.

would least expect to find them. The army and navy, firm support of the dynasty and the government, seemed, until the present, to be sheltered from contagion. This optimistic opinion is unfortunately contradicted by the facts". The next day it reiterated its suspicion that the mutiny of Odessa had a distinctly revolutionary character and what was worse young officers had taken part in it.

Another incident of the Russian revolution which received much space in the French press was the assassination of Grand Duke Serge, uncle of the tsar, and champion of autocracy. His tragic end, however, did not surprise that section of French public opinion which was well versed in the current events in Russia; for Grand Duke Serge had been the long-sought-for target of the anarchist's bomb. For years he had been identified with the extreme reactionary court clique. Nevertheless the conservatives in France condemned this bloody achievement of the Russian revolutionaries. Alcide Ebray, writing in the *Journal des Débats* of 19 February, 1905, called it the tragedy of Moscow. "However reasonable or justified the political demands of a party, even of a nation, may be, assassination appears to be, not only censurable from the moral point of view, but also injurious to the end which it pretends to serve. In most cases, in fact, its only result is to strengthen its adversaries and to provoke them to new reprisals". He added further that the tragedy signified that the revolutionary party would resort to the worst measures to attain its ends. He advised the tsar, however, not to abandon his plan of reforms on account of the tragedy.

The *France Illustrée* of 25 February, 1905, commented on the effect of the assassination on Russia. It complicated the grave situation in the empire; it increased the uneasiness, distrust, and discouragement which were paralyzing the vital forces of the country, and it tended to encourage the agitators.

Georges Bourdon, writing in the *Figaro* of 18 February, 1905, was of the opinion that the whole civilized world should be filled with indignation at the "abominable" crime perpetrated at Moscow.

The French Socialists were content to learn that with the death of Grand Duke Serge, one of the most formidable pillars of autocracy was removed from the scene. The bomb of Kalaïev was an eloquent warning to the régime that it could no longer ignore the demands of the revolutionists. It should accede to the popular wishes, otherwise more blood would be spilt for the people's cause.

The strikes, which figured conspicuously in the Russian revolution of 1905, formed an absorbing topic for discussion in the press. Their economic effects, to be sure, were felt beyond the confines of the empire, and French publicists many times reiterated that of all the European nations France suffered most from the disorders in Russia, which was her ally.

Just a few days after the demonstration of 22 January, 1905, the pro-tsarist French daily *Le Figaro* accused the enemies of Russia and of public order of financing the workers' movement. Great sums of money, it alleged, had been sent to Russia to encourage civil war and bribe the workingmen to abandon their work. It was rumored in Paris that the Japanese, then engaged in war against Russia, were secretly engineering the strikes of the workers which were reported to be fast spreading throughout the empire.<sup>1</sup>

By February, 1905, the anarchist newspaper *Temps Nouveaux* triumphantly declared that the strikes, far from being on the decline or localized in Petrograd, Moscow, or Warsaw, had spread to the four corners of Russia. The triumph of the revolution was assured.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 30 January, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Temps Nouveaux*, 3 March, 1905, p. 4.

The character of the strikes soon became evident to the French. Georges Bourdon in the *Figaro* of 13 October, 1905, admitted that the strike movement in Moscow, at least, had more of a political than an economic character. On 26 October, 1905, the *Figaro* commented editorially that the strikers were not asking for economic amelioration; the strike was being employed to exert pressure on the government to grant more complete political reforms. "The railways have stopped, not because the machinists demand fewer hours of work and higher wages, but because they ask for freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of religion, and the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. And not only workers are on strike, but also students and subordinate government employes". The political character of the strike movement was admitted by all sections of French opinion.

The disastrous economic effects of the disturbances in Russia preoccupied French economists. With the report of each new strike the prices of Russian stocks fell correspondingly at the Bourse de Paris. The republican daily *Le Temps* of 2 June, 1905, expressed the fear of French financiers when it observed that the continued riots and strikes in the allied country imperiled French interests, which were considerable. The collapse of Russian stocks would indirectly deal a blow to French public credit. And what was more to be regretted, wrote Pierre Giffard in the *Figaro* of 11 December, 1905, the Russians did not seem to comprehend the effects of the strike—an economic crisis which was fast approaching.

The strikes had created a state of anarchy which was detrimental to the country's foreign and domestic trade. In Paris it was feared that if the conditions of anarchy existing in Russia should be prolonged for some time, that country's productiveness would be suspended, and it would

be plunged into insolvency. Apprehensions of this kind, remarked the eminent French economist and professor at the Collège de France, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, might in part, though not wholly, be justified if the actual state of anarchy produced by the strikes should be prolonged for a year or even for seven or eight months.<sup>1</sup> Another distinguished economist, Paul Beauregard, professor of political economy in the Law Faculty at Paris, expressed a similar opinion on the possible fatal consequences of the strikes to Europe as a whole and to France in particular.<sup>2</sup>

The Catholic weekly *La France Illustrée* of 16 September, 1905, observed that the fires at Baku alone, which were the work of the strikers, meant the loss of a great source of revenue for the Russian government, because of the destruction of the petroleum wells. This was only one of the many instances where strikers not only had ceased working, but also had destroyed machinery, entire factories even, and numerous other means of production. If the strikers, it observed, should continue their work of destruction, the whole country would be devastated and the people would be starved. Exports would cease, and many European banks would suffer immense losses.

The political aspects of the strike movement had already become manifest at its very commencement. The demands of the strikers, it has been outlined elsewhere, were of a political rather than of an economic character, and the general strike movement was the instrument by which the revolutionaries hoped to realize their aims. But, said Alfred Anspach, professor at the Ecole St. Pierre in Petrograd, the workers could not ameliorate their situation by means of the strike. He advised them rather to form what he termed "associations de crédit et de production". The

<sup>1</sup> *L'Économiste Français*, vol. 332, (1905), p. 843.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Monde Économique*, vol. i, (1905), pp. 97-98.



greatest difficulty, he continued, was to stop the antagonism between capital and labor.<sup>1</sup> Here he ignored altogether the political needs of the workers. On the other hand the Socialist P. G. La Chesnais declared that the general strike meant for Russia the beginning of a new era.<sup>2</sup>

→ The social crisis produced by the general strike rendered the situation in Russia particularly grave, according to French publicists. The disorganization of public utilities, the low morale of the police force who joined in the massacring of Jews and in pillaging, the general state of anarchy, constituted the gravest problem which confronted the government. G. de Molinari, writing in the *Journal des Economistes* about the Russian crises, asked if the first duty of the ministry of the tsar was not to remedy the disorganized public service which no longer assured personal security and protection of private property.<sup>3</sup> By the latter part of the year the French pro-tsarist sympathizers were already tired of the seemingly endless disorders in Russia. Pierre Giffard in the *Figaro* of 20 November, 1905, called it a "ridiculous situation which everyone desires to have ended", and he deplored the inability of the government to restore order. In the failure of the constituted authorities to perform this task, he proposed that the intelligent and well-to-do classes who were particularly menaced by the pillages and incendiarism should organize for their own protection as the bourgeoisie of London did at the time of the Chartist agitation. "Unfortunately the Russians are not much used to 'self-help'. Instead of facing the danger and organizing for resistance, nobles and bourgeois prefer to flee; at Moscow and Petrograd from two to three hundred passports are issued daily to them. Emigration is un-

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Études Franco-Russes*, January, 1906, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Européen*, 13 January, 1906, pp. 17-19.

<sup>3</sup> 1905, vol. 8, p. 308.

doubtedly an easy means to safety, but upon emigrating, do they not give a free hand to the revolutionaries?"<sup>1</sup>

The French financiers and business men expressed openly their disgust with Russian troubles and their exasperation at the methods of the Russian revolutionaries. The "ridiculous" situation of Russia, as the *Figaro* termed it, was annoying. The revolutionary party, declared Professor Alfred Anspach, was composed of "sectarians who, blinded by a doctrine of undigested, fanatical ideas, would stop at nothing to accomplish their aim". Their motto was that the end justified the means.

Yesterday they [the Russian revolutionaries] exaggerated the rights of the governed up to suppressing all those of the rulers; today they exaggerate the rights of the governors even to suppressing those of the governed. According to them the people is the only sovereign, and yet they treat the people like slaves; according to them, the government should only be a valet, and yet they give it the prerogatives of a despot. Everything which emanates from the legal authority is a crime; and they punish like a criminal everybody who resists their authority. They proclaim the sovereignty of the people and yet they alone exercise it. Public property belongs to them, and public property, in their opinion, consists of all private property, persons and property, souls and conscience. They do not support their authority by suffrage; but it does not matter much, they govern. They believe that they are the only patriots, the only ones capable of command; for, they say, their authority has been conferred by Truth, Reason, and Virtue.<sup>2</sup>

Such was the opinion of a Frenchman who was an eye-witness of the revolution. He had no sympathy whatever with the Russian revolutionaries. Just as he ridiculed their

<sup>1</sup> *Journal des Économistes*, vol. 8, 1905, pp. 486-487.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Anspach, "Le Parti de la Révolution en Russie," *Revue des Études Franco-Russes*, February, 1906, pp. 85-89.

doctrine, so he condemned their methods. He made a distinction between the revolutionaries and the people. The latter, ignorant as they were, became a mere tool in the hands of the revolutionaries. These demagogues, as he called them, working in their own self-interest, had persuaded the proletarians to join them, promising them a bright and prosperous future. They deceived the people; they published proclamations exaggerating their success, they lied when they proclaimed that the people would rise en masse against the tsar. They deceived the peasants, for they would go out in uniform to the country with manifestoes, telling the peasants that the "good tsar" was giving them all their lands which they could take away from their lords. They also deceived soldiers and sailors by persuading them to believe that the tsar desired the revolution as the only means to deliver them from the mighty hand of the bureaucrats and the nobles. They spread the news that the government was bankrupt and induced the people to withdraw their deposits from the savings banks. They called the people to arms and they stopped railways, telegraphs and telephones. By means of terrorizing, they had stirred up the passions and excited the temper of the populace. But what had they accomplished? asked Professor Anspach.

Professor Anspach saw only the destructive activities of the revolutionaries. To his mind they had accomplished nothing in the way of ameliorating the condition of either the workingman or the peasant. His opinion was shared by French conservatives at home. Pierre Giffard called the activities of the revolutionaries sterile manifestations which merely increased misery and benefited no one. They were flirting with liberty, he said, and exclaimed: "Des enfants, ces Russes, des enfants!"<sup>1</sup> Commenting on the situation

<sup>1</sup> *Figaro*, 13 December, 1905, p. 2.

in Russia in the *Journal des Débats* of November, 1905, Robert de Caix observed that the revolutionaries had revealed their incapacity for organization. The disorders, which remained spasmodic and local, showed that they had not been able to coordinate revolutionary action.

But the French Socialists had a different story to tell. After the general strike of 22 October, 1905, Jean Jaurès, the formidable socialist leader, under the bold caption of "La Révolution Européenne" lauded the methods of the revolutionaries in Russia. The movement was vast and methodical and designed to demoralize the forces of resistance. The general strike had proven its worth. It was the best weapon against tsarism.<sup>1</sup> On the use of the deadly weapon, the bomb, he expressed his regret that it had been resorted to; but, he continued, the fault lay solely with the government. The bomb throwers were the exact expression of the "cruelty, barbarism, injustice, and bloody violence of the government. Each bomb pulls away a piece from the edifice of autocracy. The task is long."<sup>2</sup> The republican independent paper *Le Petit Journal* remarked that the leader of French Socialists did not protest against the employment of terrorism, pillage, and bombs.

Georges Clemenceau, writing in *L'Aurore*, found the march of the revolution in Russia too slow in comparison with that in France. "Russia continues to be in revolution. The characteristic of the Russian mind is delay. The autocrat and the people seem equally incapable of bringing about a definitive revolution. With us, that is not the way. The Napoleons made their coup-d'état in the twinkling of an eye, or the people, their Revolution in three days at most. After which governors and governed,

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 28 October, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Humanité*, 26 May, 1905, p. 1.

after making new detours, turned to the road of their old propensities".<sup>1</sup>

P. G. La Chesnais criticized the procedure of the Russian constitutionalists. Instead of merely demanding reforms they should have made a revolution, which in their case would consist in seizing the bureaucratic machinery. Had they done this, there would have been a change in the directing personnel of the administrative machinery after the fashion in the West. The activities of the revolutionaries, he considered to be directed to one end: destruction of the bureaucratic machinery.

In the French Chamber of Deputies, the Socialist deputy Marcel Sembat, in a speech, expressed approval of the methods of the Russian revolutionaries. He was joined in his declaration by the Socialist deputies of the Extreme Left, Allard, Vallan, Rouanet, and Meslier. Upon his declaration that all Republicans were on the side of the Russian revolutionaries, which would signify that they approved of their methods—anarchy, mutiny, incendiarism, assassination—the prime minister, Rouvier, rose and protested. The French government, which represented the majority of the people, was faithful to its ally and could not interfere in its internal affairs. This government, he declared, could merely sympathize with its ally in its hour of trial and wish it speedy recovery from its present troubles.<sup>2</sup>

The Anarchists, on their part, could not conceal their immense satisfaction with the revolutionary movements that paralyzed the Russian government. Any action that would render the government impotent was hailed by them as a step forward.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 27 October, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal des Débats*, 6 December, 1905.

<sup>3</sup> *Temps Nouveaux*, 2 January, 1906, p. 2.

→ Who made the Russian revolution of 1905 possible? The French Socialists propounded this question and they claimed that the whole distinction belonged to their Russian confrères. When the hour to rise against tsardom came, the socialist parties, laying aside all their petty differences, fused together for more effective action. The different socialist organizations—the Social-Democratic party, the Revolutionary Socialist party, the Bund, the Polish Socialist party, the Socialist-Democratic party of Russian Poland and of Lithuania, the Proletariat (Polish Socialist party), and the Lettish Social Democratic Labor party—had formed a close alliance to fight Russian absolutism.<sup>1</sup> After the general strike of 22 October, 1905, Jean Jaurès pointed out that the Russian Socialists had a well conceived plan of action. By means of the general strike, they would carry the revolution to a successful conclusion.<sup>2</sup>

Jean Longuet, another well known Socialist, declared that the Russian Socialists were making their power felt by the method of the general strike. He rejoiced at the important rôle of the Socialists in the Russian revolution. Through their heroic effort, he asserted, Russia would be liberated from the hated tsarism. The Socialists were called upon to perform the task.<sup>3</sup>

→ Paul Louis, writing in the Catholic periodical *Revue Politique et Littéraire* of 4 March, 1905, expressed the opinion that the revolution in Russia was the work of the proletarians of the big cities. Due to the construction of a network of railroads and the pouring in of foreign capital, there had been a remarkable growth of industry within a very short period of time. The industrial development led to the rise of a proletarian class which was so numerous

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Socialiste*, vol. 41, (1905), p. 433.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Humanité*, 28 October, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 November, 1905, p. 1.

that it had at once become an important social factor. In the coal mines alone, 90,000 workers were employed at the beginning of the year 1905, and in the textile industry, about 800,000. E. F. de Montussaint, director of the Ecoles Françaises at Moscow, was greatly impressed, after the general strike of 22 October, 1905, by the strength of the Russian proletarians. Heretofore, he said, the Russian proletarians were looked down upon by their brothers of the West. But at a single stroke, they had come to the first rank with a new force that every government could no longer ignore.<sup>1</sup>

By the latter part of 1905 the French conservatives, who wanted the revolution to come to an end as soon as possible, began to show their disappointment. The tsar had made concessions, but the disturbances had not ceased. "We thought that a freed people would appear calm and satisfied as soon as they acquired their first liberties. On the contrary, we still witness the brutal expression of ill-feeling. . . . After the general strike, occur the massacre of the Jews and the mutiny at Cronstadt". Thus wrote Pierre Giffard in the *Figaro* of 12 November, 1905. The massacre of the Jews, the mutiny at Cronstadt, and the fires in the mines and factories—all these happenings late in the year 1905 exasperated the French conservatives. Eugène Lautier advised the Russian liberals to put an end to the disorder, which, if prolonged, might deprive them of their gains. If they were wise and patriotic, they should understand that it would be to their interest not to prolong the revolution. Professor Alfred Anspach was of the opinion that if the revolution were well directed and not too premature nor too violent it would emancipate the poorer classes and would bestow incalculable benefits upon humanity. From his ad-

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Etudes Franco-Russes*, December, 1905, p. 491.

verse criticism of the Russian revolution, which has been mentioned elsewhere, it could be deduced that, in his opinion, the revolution could yield no good result.

The Socialists held the view that the revolution should continue until all the demands of the revolutionaries were obtained. Said Léon Remy in *L'Humanité* of 1 November, 1905: "The struggle had just commenced and with the formidable weapon, the general strike, the revolutionaries should not be contented with illusory promises and half-measures, but should prosecute with vigor the fight against tsarism".

The Anarchists would have the revolutionaries continue their agitation until the tsar's government was utterly overthrown. Michel Petit observed that the revolutionaries were making rapid progress toward their emancipation. He believed that they should continue their march despite all obstacles.<sup>1</sup>

In the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to present the different opinions voiced in France on the progress of the revolution in Russia. It is worth noticing the hopeful view of Socialists and Anarchists, in striking contrast with the pessimism of the conservatives. This could be attributed to the fact that the various events cited were all unfavorable to the tsar, which were just what Socialists and Anarchists desired, for in their appreciation of Russian events, they had foremost in their minds the undermining of the established régime, while French conservatives were more concerned with the effects of the revolutionary movement on Europe in general and on France in particular.

<sup>1</sup> *Temps Nouveaux*, no. 40, p. 1.



## CHAPTER V

## REFORMS FOR RUSSIA

THERE was a consensus of opinion in France that reforms were the panacea for Russian troubles. The friends of Russia and of peace desired the restoration of order at the earliest time, but of a new order of things that would insure not only immediate but lasting peace. Eugène Lautier expressed the opinion that the tsar should no longer postpone the granting of reforms. It would be to his advantage as well as to that of his subjects to undertake this task without further delay. By so doing he would win the confidence of his people.<sup>1</sup> The French financiers similarly counseled the Russian government to introduce reforms. From the financial viewpoint such a step would be highly beneficial to Russian credit, which had suffered from her reverses in the war with Japan and from the strikes and riots at home, said E. Guilmard, financial chronicler of the *Grande Revue*. Alcide Ebray, greatly impressed by the gravity of the situation in Russia, concluded that the succession of terrorist acts was sufficient warning to the tsar not to delay the granting of reforms.<sup>2</sup>

## THE TSAR AND REFORMS

A French politician, whose name was not disclosed, was reported to have said after the tragic event of 22 January,

<sup>1</sup> *Le Figaro*, 28 October, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Revue politique et parlementaire*, vol. 43, (1905), p. 650.

1905, that the Russian émeutiers, in their desire to imitate the French Revolution, pointed out to the tsar what he should do: exactly the opposite of what Louis XVI did. The friends of the tsar in France had followed closely this observation. They had invariably urged him to take the initiative in the work of reforms. Some had asserted that in view of the conditions in that empire, reforms could not be introduced except through government initiative.<sup>1</sup> The *Journal des Débats* of January, 1905, declared editorially that in order to prevent the recurrence of the event of 22 January, the tsar must grant reforms. A repressive government, it added, was no solution to Russian problems.

By the middle of the year 1905 criticisms of the tsar's conduct began to be heard from moderate thinkers in France. Eugène Lautier accused the tsar of delay in granting reforms. The tardiness of his concessions, he declared in the *Figaro* of 27 October, 1905, tended to encourage the agitators and to make them more exacting. Its effects were detrimental. His hesitation emboldened the leaders of the general strike not only in Russia, but also in other countries. It was equally unfortunate that his concessions should appear the day after an outbreak. They created the impression that the government was surrendering to anarchy. Moreover they lost their value as a voluntary gift, as a *Charte Octroyée*. The continual promises which were published long before they were put in force were regrettable, and should have been avoided for the prestige of the government. The disturbances in the empire should not prevent the tsar from introducing the necessary reforms. Repress firmly the disorders and engage resolutely in effecting reforms—these were the two ways

<sup>1</sup> *L'Année Politique*, 1904-1905, p. 413.

which could assure harmony in a good government. After the publication of the October Manifesto, he declared that the task of the government was simply to keep its promises and to observe the provisions of the manifesto. It should proceed to purge the government of its dishonest and unworthy servants.

The *Revue des Deux Mondes* was among those who, though friendly to the tsar, criticized him for his hesitating policy. It could find no justification for the government's delay in introducing reforms and in winning the cooperation and confidence of the people. Immediate governmental action would yield incalculable advantage both to the tsar and to his subjects.<sup>1</sup> It said further:

It is dangerous to show a people a constitution, or even the semblance of a constitution, and then not give it to them immediately. Immediate realization might at least have the advantage of keeping them busy, while a mere promise for an uncertain, if not improbable future, will lead them to speculate. . . . The government does not seem to understand that in time of revolution, it is necessary to keep the minds of the people occupied with something and to keep them alert in order to guide them; in default of which, they go astray or they are misled, and, all of a sudden, they murmur and revolt. Then comes the formidable alternative of concession or repression. Repression is of no use, and there is no end to it. To yield, under the menace of a riot, would have the same effect.<sup>2</sup>

#### THE CONGRESS OF ZEMSTVOS

Of the various organizations which voiced the popular demand for reforms and which excited the interest of the French, the Congress of Zemstvos, held at Moscow in June, 1905, stood foremost. High hopes were attached to the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. 29, 1905, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 30, 1905, pp. 233-234.

congress by both moderates and radical thinkers. The *Journal des Débats* in its issue of 23 July, 1905, lauded its membership and aims. The members of the congress were persons who could be relied upon and with whom one could discuss calmly the perplexing problems of Russia. With the bureaucracy, the tsar would not accomplish anything; but with the Congress of Zemstvos, he would be able to carry out his reforms. His best helper was the Zemstvos and he should take advantage of their collaboration. The aims of the congress, it continued, were most gratifying to the friends of Russia. Its members would cooperate with the tsar in instituting reforms and in condemning the use of violence.

On 25 September, 1905, when the congress announced its intention to take part in the election of the *duma* under the provisions of the August Manifesto, its action was favorably received in France by the moderates. *L'Année Politique* for the year 1904-1905 recorded its resolution as the most correct step to take under the circumstances. It was better to make use of the liberties already accorded in order to obtain new ones, it added.<sup>1</sup> René Millet expressed his satisfaction at the conciliatory disposition of the congress. It was gratifying, he added, to see the bourgeoisie and enlightened persons rally to the government's side against the excesses of workers and peasants.<sup>2</sup> Robert de Caix, who had been observing the revolutionary movement in Russia very closely, believed that the congress had a most reasonable view of the Russian situation. It was highly desirable that Count Witte should welcome its cooperation.<sup>3</sup> Georges Clemenceau declared that if the

<sup>1</sup> *L'Année Politique*, 1904-1905, pp. 445-446.

<sup>2</sup> *Revue politique et parlementaire*, vol. 46, (1905), p. 612.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal des Débats*, 28 November, 1905, p. 1.

nobles in the congress could gather around them men with "more composure, method, and perseverance than their French forefathers of 1789" and make common cause with the Intelligentsia, they were destined to be the brains and soul of their future government.<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité* editorially paid a tribute to the congress:

The representatives of the zemstvos and dumas in congress assembled at Moscow have just written the first page of the history of an emancipated people. All the events which, since the sinister fusillade of January at Petrograd, have marked the stages of the Revolution, are connected with the bloody and shameful agony of the autocratic régime. They belonged to that period of the Revolution when violence and massacres were the order of the day. After the Revolution, which awoke with a cry of pain, comes the Revolution which is organized with all the strength of hope. The point in question is no longer rioting, military ferocities, monstrous exploits of Cossacks, avenging bombs, judicial executions, but the new right which is being elaborated in an assembly, which, by its very composition, dominates the tsar.<sup>2</sup>

After six months of violence and bloodshed it was not surprising that the advent of a body of earnest and intelligent Russians should be welcomed by every sound-thinking man. Frenchmen, as well as the Russian nobility and bourgeoisie, were already tired of the seemingly endless strikes and pillaging of laborers and peasants. The peasants too suffered no less from the chaotic state of the country. As the internal disturbances created an unfavorable condition for trade and caused great financial losses and widespread misery, the end of the disorders was highly desirable to every one concerned.

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 22 July, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

The Congress of Zemstvos found many sympathizers in France, because of its composition and aims, which presaged a better understanding between the tsar and his subjects. To the French it represented the "best minds" in Russia who would likely succeed in cooperating with the government in the work of reforms and reconstruction.

#### PREPAREDNESS FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

✓ The insistent demands of Russian revolutionists for political reforms which, if granted, would convert the autocratic government into a constitutional monarchy, brought up the question as to whether Russia was prepared for a representative form of government after the Western style. There was a divergence of opinion in France. The advanced thinkers, the Socialists, believed that she was; the moderate thinkers and the conservatives answered in the negative.

The French Socialists reiterated again and again the readiness of Russia for democratic reforms. In an article in *L'Européen* of 3 June, 1905, François de Pressensé declared that "Peace and Constitution were the two words which could avert a terrible crisis." The "agonizing tsarism" could only be saved by peace with Japan and the drawing up of a constitution. In a subsequent article he reiterated his conviction that only a democratic constitutional government could save Russia and that she was ready for the change as France was in 1789 and England in 1688.<sup>1</sup>

Jean Jaurès said, replying to the contention of the conservative French papers that, as Russia had not had any political experience, she should not venture into full democratic government:

It is in vain that theorists of passiveness and servitude try

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 29 July, 1905, pp. 1-3.

to prove that Russia in virtue of its ethical and moral constitution is not ripe for liberty. In 1789, when there was not one germ of a representative institution in France, a superficial observer might have asked himself how this country, destitute of all initiative, of liberty, could bring forth a democratic republic, and how a year later, the revolution could shake the earth.

It is true that it had been prepared by the philosophic movement, as you know.

But look at Russia. If she has a classic tradition less ancient than our own, the Russian intellectual classes have a deeper communication with the suffering people; and if the Russian bourgeoisie is not that of France of 1789, the Russian proletariat, moulded, secretly educated in mysterious hiding-places by the propagandists, by the theorists from Kropotkin to disciples of Karl Marx, is more conscious, more master of itself, more alive to the mission of liberation which it has to accomplish over the heads of an insufficient bourgeoisie.

And if you remember that the democratic and representative régime has known how to accommodate itself to the most diverse circumstances, you will conclude that Russia will know how to find the form of representation suitable to it and to its ethic and moral constitution.

What is necessary is to let it speak, to tear away the muzzle which the people have upon their mouths, the bandage which is drawn over their eyes.

And it is Tsarism which is occupied today in binding these eyes, which are opening.

And supposing that the Russian people are incapable of governing, there is one who is still more incapable, more unworthy than they, for if he knows the crimes which are being committed on his behalf or in his name, there is nothing for it but to wait until the hand of destiny shall stop him.<sup>1</sup>

From another quarter of French public opinion came

<sup>1</sup> *Free Russia*, 1 June, 1905, p. 83.

the other view that the Russian people were still unprepared for democratic government. The Catholic fortnightly *La Quinzaine* of 1 August, 1905, was of the opinion that the Russian people could not as yet be entrusted with the direction of its own destinies. To compare the internal condition of Russia to that of France of 1789 was a great error, it declared. In France there was a bourgeoisie who had long been initiated in public affairs; in Russia the most highly cultured class had no experience whatever in the management of big business, and as to politics, their knowledge was utterly deficient. *Le Petit Journal* favored reforms for Russia, but believed that they should be accorded with great prudence, for the majority of the people, having only a very rudimentary education, were not ready for a representative government and still less for liberty.<sup>1</sup> Alexandre Ular emphasized the ignorance of the mass of the people as the most serious objection to the introduction of democratic reforms. He wrote:

Such is the intellectual condition of the Tsar's subjects that even if "patriarchal autocracy," as represented by the bureaucratic oligarchy, were able to introduce reforms which could sweep away the economic, political, and judicial abuses without destroying itself; even if every man obtained absolute liberty of movement, the possibility of working freely for himself, and further the judicial weapons which could render him capable of defending himself by personal initiative against the bureaucratic arbitrament, nothing would thereby be altered. For nine-tenths of the nation, more than 120 millions of Russian subjects, would be totally prevented from profiting by such advantages, ignorant, unlettered, unconscious of their indignity as they are—unconscious of their new rights and privileges as they will long remain.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 16 February, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 277.



## UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE

On the question of universal suffrage, which was one of the significant demands of the Russian revolutionaries, conservative opinion in France doubted the capacity of the Russian people to exercise this most sacred prerogative. Eugène Lautier denied its efficacy to solve the Russian problem, as claimed by the revolutionary leaders. "There never has been", he wrote in *Le Figaro* of 29 October, 1905, "a country where the immediate introduction of universal suffrage would be more dangerous and fruitless. Oh! undoubtedly they will get it sooner or later; but how could men of some intelligence seriously conceive the thought of calling to the ballot-box without preparation the immense crowd of illiterate moujiks?" Thomas Grimm was also of the opinion that Russia was too backward a country for the exercise of universal suffrage. He favored the introduction of restricted suffrage. "Initiation is necessary", he declared in the *Petit Journal* of 17 August, 1905. "To implant our constitutional and parliamentary régime in Russia, at a single stroke, would be as foolish as to admit a child who could hardly read to a class in philosophy or higher mathematics." A similar view was held by Paul Beauregard. "There is nothing better for Russia than to escape from autocracy; but to attempt to convert her into a fullfledged Republic would be sheer folly. Examples are only too numerous of peoples who, in their haste, overlook transitions and fall into anarchy and misery." Russia, he continued, was not ready for a democratic régime. She lacked the indispensable middle class.<sup>1</sup> It would take many years, centuries perhaps, before the Russian people would be capable of living in prosperity under a political régime analogous to that of France, he as-

<sup>1</sup> *Le Monde Économique*, vol. ii, (1905), p. 578.

serted in a previous article.<sup>1</sup> The distinguished Roman Catholic professor Paul Leroy-Beaulieu expressed the opinion that it would be inadvisable to grant universal suffrage and to establish a parliamentary government like that of France in a country like Russia.<sup>2</sup> Georges Clemenceau was reported to have said that it would be impossible to introduce universal suffrage in Russia.<sup>3</sup>

The Socialist leader Jean Jaurès held an entirely opposite view. He considered universal suffrage as one of the essential guarantees of the liberty of the Russian people. He characterized the objection of French "reactionaries and moderates" as "strangely naïve" and "terribly hypocritical." It was his firm belief that once the Russian nation possessed the right to vote, their march toward progress would be uninterrupted. To his mind the first reform should endow them with universal suffrage.

#### CONSTITUTION

The dispatches which appeared almost daily in the French press reported with singular monotony the clamor for a "constitution" in Russia. Alcide Ebray observed that there were two classes of agitators in Russia. One of them he called "Révolutionnaires" or those who stood for the organization of a Western form of government, laying aside national traditions, and whose method of action was violence and disorder. The other class he termed "Evolutionists" or "Reformists", or those who advocated reforms but would respect established institutions and national traditions. In France, it might be added, the advanced thinkers sympathized with the former class, while the moderates were on the side of the latter.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i, (1905), p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Économiste Français*, vol. 33<sup>2</sup>, (1905), p. 843.

*Le Figaro*, 31 October, 1905, pp. 1-2.

The revolutionaries had fixed their heart on a constitution. They reiterated many times that only a "constitution" could put an end to the disturbances in the empire. The French conservative thinkers, however, disagreed with them. Vicomte Combes de Lastrade, corresponding member of the "Institut de France", asserted that very many Russians clamored for a "constitution" without knowing what kind of a constitution they desired. An "elective constitution", such as the revolutionaries seemed to demand, presupposed an electorate. Was there an electorate in Russia? he asked. "The nobles are mostly officeholders, the *Intelligentzia* or professional class are few and too much imbued with Western ideas; there is no bourgeoisie; and the peasants and laborers are still incapable of judging public questions. In such a society, who will form the electorate? And without an electorate, there could not be a constitution. Of the numerous reforms demanded for Russia, those designed to please the advocates of a Western form of government should be eliminated."<sup>1</sup>

G. de Molinari shared this view. He had only a feeble confidence in the curative virtue of constitutions. Besides the unpreparedness of the people to enjoy a democratic government after the Western style, a constitution would not rid Russia of the bureaucracy, but would simply add politicians to bureaucrats. Far better would it be for Russia to simplify the work of the bureaucracy and to permit the people to move from place to place without the required passports, to form associations, and to speak and write fearlessly. Such reforms, he added, "not only have the merit of costing nothing, but also of lightening expenses and taxes, a merit which no constitution, however perfect, possesses".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Études Franco-Russes*, March, 1905, pp. 91-92.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal des Economistes*, vol. 7, (1905), p. 466.

An anonymous writer in the Catholic fortnightly *Là Réforme Sociale* of 1 March, 1905, asserted that only the advanced intellectuals demanded a constitution. The moujiks, composing about 95% of the population, still looked up to the tsar as their father and protector against the tyranny of the nobles. "A Constitution! A magic word which seems to be the salvation of all these big children who cannot understand that words cannot save people, and that before dreaming of introducing into the heavy Russian organism which is already cracked, this new mechanism which might kill it, it is necessary above all to fortify public life by purifying the administration and public morals." He believed that the government should be purged of all its dishonest servants before any attempt at new and radical changes in the political system should be made.

The French Socialists and Radicals sympathized with the Russian "Révolutionnaires". They held the opinion that the immediate need of Russia was a constitution. *La Petite République* declared that the troubles in Russia would not cease until the people held in their hands a constitution.<sup>1</sup> Jean Longuet, under the caption "Situation Critique", wrote in *L'Humanité* of 14 November, 1905, that "peace and a democratic constitution" were indispensable for Russia's existence. Let the people's voice be heard in the government, he suggested. If this was denied them, the revolutionary crisis would end fatally; but if the people obtained a constitution which would guarantee their liberties and protect them against the possibility of any reaction, their troubles would end and they would prosper.

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 28 October, 1905, p. 3.

## SUGGESTED REFORMS

Various sections of French public opinion championed several reforms for Russia. The Catholics suggested religious, economic, social, and political reforms. Inasmuch as the tsar had already granted liberty of worship in the early days of the revolution, the Catholics now proposed the education of the clergy whose immorality and ignorance they severely condemned. They declared that the clergy of the Russian church were notoriously uneducated and utterly unscrupulous about the sources of their income. A reform of the seminaries was sorely needed. As to the peasants, they should be taught better methods of cultivating the land and should be allowed to own or enjoy long lease of their holdings. Another reform demanded by trade conditions of the country was the improvement of commercial courts and the prevention of usury. A law imposing heavy penalty on those convicted of usury should be enacted.<sup>1</sup> The workers should also be supervised by the government so as to promote their welfare. A committee, a sort of consultative body, should be created to look after workingmen's institutions. In order to correct the abuses committed by government officials, a law severely punishing bribery should be enacted, giving each government<sup>2</sup> jurisdiction over the enforcement of the law. As the form of central government the Catholics were opposed to the establishment of a representative government as found in the Western Europe. A parliament patterned after Western models would only become a sort of "Tower of Babel" on account of the extreme diversity of races which would be represented. Such a parliament was doomed to

<sup>1</sup> This proposed law was aimed at the Jews. The Catholic Church has always condemned usury.

<sup>2</sup> A government was a principal political division of the Russian Empire.

failure in a country like Russia. The Catholics would prefer a "good tyrant", a benevolent despot, surrounded by competent and enlightened counselors, who would rule over such a motley crowd as the Russian people.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Paul Leroy-Beaulieu advanced the opinion that a government of the Prussian type was the best solution of the problem of a representative government for Russia.<sup>2</sup>

A French economist, G. de Molinari, emphasized Russia's need of economic reforms. The most urgent reform, he declared, was one which would reduce government expenditure and the heavy taxation. The enormous war budget and navy appropriations were already a heavy burden upon the taxpayers. He protested against the protective tariff instituted by Count de Witte, which had seriously affected French exports to Russia. He asserted that Witte's protective policy was detrimental to Russia's economic progress. He recommended the suppression of passports which hindered the people from moving from one place to another within the empire. Such reforms, to his mind, would be more efficacious in the restoration of order than constitutions and parliaments.<sup>3</sup>

Educational reforms were suggested by Thomas Grimm in an article in *Le Petit Journal* of 23 June, 1905. He urged the education of the moujiks, that vast mass of the Russian populace, in order to prepare them for a new life. According to him 64% of the population was illiterate, which indicated that about two-thirds of the children received no instruction. There was no compulsory attendance at schools, and many of those who did attend school remained there only one or two years. Primary instruction was very inadequate, altogether insufficient to combat the

<sup>1</sup> *La Réforme Sociale*, 16 April, 1905, pp. 649-668.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Économiste Français*, vol. 33, (1905), p. 843.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal des Économistes*, vol. 8, (1905), pp. 308-309.

ignorance of the peasants or to prepare them for a civilized and progressive life. He suggested the following remedies: (1) Prolong school attendance. (2) Enlarge the curriculum. The elements of natural science should be taught. History, which was not included in the old curriculum, should be added in order to develop national consciousness. (3) Establish schools for adults, providing for evening and Sunday classes. (4) Public lectures should be given. (5) Public libraries should be founded. (6) Relief funds for poor children should be created. In addition to these educational reforms, he advocated the convocation as soon as possible of a national assembly, however imperfect it might be. It should be the duty of this body to perfect gradually the governmental machinery and to exercise a certain amount of control over the acts of the bureaucracy.

Another sore spot in the Russian organism which demanded immediate remedy was the agrarian system. Many a French publicist devoted special attention to the agrarian crisis which involved many perplexing problems. As Professor Alfred Anspach said, the agrarian problem was intimately connected with the "constitutional regeneration" of Russia. The bulk of her population was composed of peasants, who in a representative government would have to participate in the conduct of public affairs. But they were amazingly ignorant; in fact, they were the most serious hindrance to the conversion of Russia into a democratic country after the Western standard. On account of their ignorance they had been exploited by the bureaucracy and the result was their deplorable misery. They were easy victims of the corrupt bureaucrats, because the Russian peasant was a "good, docile creature not lacking in shrewdness but childish and ingenuous as any half-wit".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Charles Rivet, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

Professor Anspach was one of the opponents of the agrarian system prevailing in Russia. The communal system, the village administration, and the courts were inadequate to protect the property and the work of the peasant. To this fact he attributed the exodus of the peasants to the cities. He cited the reports of committees investigating rural conditions, which were adverse to the maintenance of the existing communal government. His conclusion was that the first reform needed by Russia, which was essentially an agricultural country, was a drastic change in the prevailing agrarian system. He recommended (1) the abolition of the "mir", (2) the granting of civil and personal rights to the peasants, (3) the reorganization of local administration and local tribunals in conformity with the institutions of the empire, (4) the increase of peasant landholdings, and (5) governmental encouragement of emigration. The "mir", he declared, was chiefly responsible for the misery, backwardness, and discontent of the rural population. With this view Vicomte Combes de Lastrade, another student of the Russian agrarian system, heartily agreed. He, too, found so many disadvantages in the "mir" government that he advocated its abolition as one of the needed changes in Russia.

The rural administration needed a complete reorganization to render it useful and to assure the peasant protection of person and property, according to Professor Anspach. He observed too that the local tribunals were very slow in trying cases brought before them and in general very deficient. They must be reorganized. It was highly necessary, in addition, to endow the peasants with civil and personal rights. The prevailing restrictions on the exercise of these rights increased the general discontent and were a hindrance to the progress of the rural class.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Études Franco-Russes*, January, 1905, pp. 1-18.



In regard to peasant holdings, Professor Anspach asserted that the amount of land allotted to each peasant was ridiculously small and composed of strips of land very often widely separated. He suggested the granting of more land to each peasant so that he could increase his production and have enough to support himself and his family. One way of solving this problem was to encourage emigration to Siberia and to other parts of European Russia. The government should render energetic help to emigrants to Siberia in order to induce the peasants to move. It should stimulate the movement of the peasants to the vast uncultivated lands belonging to the monastic and ecclesiastical orders and laymen. It would be justified in expropriating these lands for public use. If the peasants were given more lands, Professor Anspach believed, Russia would experience a tremendous development. He cited the successful experiment in the United States with the Homestead Law enacted in 1861. On account of this law, he said, the United States had not had any revolutionary crisis. Therefore, he concluded, if the Russian government should purchase the vast private estates in European Russia and divide them among peasants, Russia would be saved from revolutionary crises and her strength and power would be considerably increased. The government would be fully compensated for the enormous sums that it would invest in this enterprise.<sup>1</sup> He cited the tremendous losses suffered by Russia through the agrarian crisis. The peasants pillaged and burned their lords' property and they took possession of the land. They stopped working, and the cessation of rural work meant a deficit of several millions of roubles to the national revenues and inevitable famine. The agrarian movement resulted in the decrease of the people's purchasing power and the consequent failure of merchants and industries; it delayed the

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Etudes Franco-Russes*, June, 1905, pp. 276-282.

collection of taxes; it caused enormous losses to the state bank and the banks of the cities and the zemstvos; and it increased the number of unemployed.

#### MANIFESTO OF 19 AUGUST

One of the tsar's manifestoes which caused considerable comment in the French press was that published on 19 August, 1905, which announced that a representative assembly or "duma" would be summoned. Georges Clemenceau summarized it in one sentence: "Conservation de l'autocratie tsarienne, pas de liberté, et de discours entre quatre murs: voilà, d'un mot, la grande 'Constitution' de Nicolas II." The liberties it conceded to the people were fallacious, he added. Its effect would be to stir inordinate convulsions and precipitate the "révolution démocratique de liberté".<sup>1</sup> René Viviani in an article under the caption "Dupeur Dupé" in *L'Humanité* of 24 August, 1905, expressed the opinion that the futility of the Russian "Constitution" was self-evident. "This charter, granted not by the kindness of the tsar but by the terror which the marvelous revolutionary effervescence inspires in him, yields only to take back, creates only to destroy, affirms only to deny. It is a trap, it is a *duperie*—and the gloomy indifference, the preface of an explosion always possible with much repressed wrath, has been the only reply made by the bourgeoisie and by the people to the liberal ukase which an executioner has drawn up." Nevertheless, he continued, the manifesto marked an important date in the history of Russia. The absolute régime of the autocracy without any restraint, gave way to a weakened government with an uncertain amount of control, which, however limited, might yield some formidable results in the future. He observed further that there was some resemblance between the Rus-

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 23 August, 1905, p. 3.

sian "Constitution" and the charter granted by Louis XVIII in 1814. That the charter would some day be enlarged was possible, he asserted; but for men to come together and refrain from discussion was impossible. In the manifesto, discussion of the measures in the *duma* was forbidden. But if the *duma* by a formidable majority demanded other changes, the clash between tsar and people would be inevitable. And if the tsar attempted to resort to repression he would drive to the opposite camp those who had hitherto placed confidence in him. "*Le dupeur sera dupé*". Then would occur the "*Révolution*", in which the representatives of the people would openly disobey their sovereign.

Jean Jaurès' most outstanding objections to the Russian "Constitution" were the restricted suffrage which was granted to a very small minority, and a conservative minority at that, and the character of the "*duma*" or assembly which was to be a mere consultative body. Despite this restriction, however, he considered it a great victory for the cause of liberty, for the emperor and his officials would no longer remain irresponsible and arbitrary but would be obliged to give an account of their conduct to the elected representatives of the nation. The *duma* had immense opportunities. By controlling the budget it could defend the rights of the people and demand necessary liberties. If it could not directly transform or enlarge the "constitution", it could accomplish this end indirectly by refusing to assent to measures of which it did not approve. According to this view the hope of the people lay in the capacity of the *duma* to avail itself of its opportunities.<sup>1</sup> The first impression created by the August Manifesto in Socialist circles was that it affirmed the intangibility of autocracy. This

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 27 August, 1905, p. 1.

principle was adhered to throughout the manifesto, and it was against this very principle that the Russian people had been protesting vigorously, declared *L'Humanité* of 20 August, 1905. The Council of the Empire, which possessed the right to initiate legislation, it continued, and the tsar's right to fix the length of the sessions of the *duma* and to dissolve it at any time, preserved the autocratic principle.

*La Petite République*, a republican socialist daily, commented that the manifesto took back with one hand what it gave with the other. "Autocracy has made concessions to its subjects but preserves for itself the real and absolute power. The tsar's rescript is inaccurate where it says that it will call the entire nation to make laws for the empire. In reality only a very restricted number is benefited by the new political régime." However, it admitted that the manifesto was an historic act. It remained for the deputies that would sit in the *duma* to act, and they would inevitably come into conflict with the autocracy as the Estates General did with the divine-right monarchy.<sup>1</sup>

*La République Française*, a progressive daily, advised the Russian people to accept without protest the imperial rescript, and then later, they should endeavor to modify it through legal means.<sup>2</sup>

*L'Année Politique* for the year 1905 observed that the manifesto did not establish a constitutional régime in the ordinary sense of the word. It adulterated, however, the essence of tsarism by requiring that any measure must be submitted to an elected assembly before it could be promulgated by the tsar. It was easy to foresee, it continued, that the working of this new elective machinery would change the character of the Russian government. It con-

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 20 August, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

cluded that the Nineteenth of August marked the end of the autocratic and bureaucratic régime and was an important date in the history of Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The *Revue des Etudes Franco-Russes* considered the *duma*, provided for in the manifesto, as the germ of Russia's moral and social renaissance. Though its members were to be elected under rigorous and restricted conditions, the *duma* was an important step for Russia.<sup>2</sup> The *Petit Journal* declared in its issue of 20 August, 1905, that the tsar's manifesto was for Russia a "*véritable révolution pacifique*".

The anarchist daily *Temps Nouveaux* ridiculed the favorable comments of its French contemporaries on the tsar's rescript. It was fallacious to consider it as the beginning of a new era. It was only the French pacifists who could entertain such ideas.<sup>3</sup>

The friends of the tsar in France rejoiced that at last the emperor had decided to call a national assembly which they thought would calm the excited spirit of the people. Thomas Grimm it was who sounded the current view that the most essential thing for Russia was the convocation as soon as possible of a national assembly, however imperfect it might be. Such a body should limit the "ungodliness" of the bureaucracy and control its acts, and perfect the governmental machinery little by little.<sup>4</sup> The rescript was referred to in the French press as the "Russian Constitution" though the word "constitution" was not mentioned in the rescript. "Charter" would perhaps be more applicable, for the word "constitution" was ordinarily used in its Western sense. The objections advanced came from

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 416-417.

<sup>2</sup> October, 1905, pp. 401-404.

<sup>3</sup> 9 September, 1905.

<sup>4</sup> *Petit Journal*, 17 August, 1905, p. 1.

the usual habit of radical thinkers of judging Russian questions by Western standards. The Russian charter would indeed suffer from comparison with the constitution of a limited monarchy as found in Western Europe.

#### MANIFESTO OF 30 OCTOBER

The manifesto of 19 August soon proved futile in pacifying the nation. On 25 September, 1905, the Congress of Zemstvos declared for a broader basis of representation, and a general strike compelled the tsar to grant new concessions in a manifesto published on 30 October. Georges Clemenceau said that a reconciliation between tsar and nation was still possible if the tsar would renounce his pretension to preserve his autocratic power through his "ridiculous *duma*" and abide by his word.<sup>1</sup> The manifesto, like its predecessor of the Nineteenth August, was discussed for several days in the French press. A hostile comment was heard from the socialist daily *L'Humanité* the day after its publication. The author was Léon Remy, who said in part: "The last attempt of dying tsarism resembles those preceding. The manifesto contains only promises and it comes too late." *La Petite République* asked if the assembly to be summoned under the new rescript would have legislative prerogatives. Would it have control over the budget? Would it have the right of initiating laws? If the assembly should exercise these powers, then the new régime in Russia would resemble constitutional monarchies such as Germany where the ministers were responsible to the emperor and at the same time would resemble England and France where their tenure depended upon Parliament. The republican socialist daily doubted the sincerity of the tsar on account of the vagueness of his rescript. Was the tsar planning to cheat the people when their agitation should cease? Con-

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 30 October, 1905, p. 3.

temporary history, it added, contained examples of such double-dealing.<sup>1</sup> Jean Jaurès denounced the manifesto as insufficient. He asserted that half-measures and semi-concessions were of no avail. There was only one means left for the tsar and that was to summon a truly representative assembly, endowed with full legislative powers and to give sufficient guarantees against every possibility of reaction. "Now," he continued, "autocracy is dead. After the recent experience of the Russian people, a return to the ancient régime is impossible."<sup>2</sup> Another Socialist, François de Pressensé, expressed the opinion that the manifesto lacked the "straight-forward formulas and loyal and firm language" which were the proofs of good faith. "Interpreted in the light of innumerable ukases and proclamations which have preceded it, the manifesto justifies doubt and suspicion."<sup>3</sup>

Besides the Socialists, a Catholic, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, found the "constitution" unsatisfactory. Dubbing it as a "quasi-Constitution", he wrote on 19 November, 1905, that the tsar aimed to preserve autocracy along with constitutional government. The word "constitution" was not mentioned in the rescript nor in any other official document. He still signed as "Emperor Autocrat". His attitude in fact left much room for doubt.<sup>4</sup>

From another quarter of French opinion, however, there came words of commendation for this new proof of the tsar's good will toward his subjects. The manifesto indeed lacked that clearness and precision to which Latin peoples were so accustomed, asserted Charles de Larivière, but it assured Russia a new era and transformed it into the rank

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 1 November, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 November, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Européen*, 4 November, 1905, pp. 1-3.

<sup>4</sup> *Journal des Débats*, 19 November, 1905, p. 1.

of parliamentary powers. "In fact such phrases as these; to unite the activity of the superior organs of the government, to give guarantees of civic liberty on the bases of inviolability of person, freedom of conscience, speech, association, and meeting; and so to establish matters that no law could be put in force without having been approved by the *duma* of the empire—are these not assurances which admit of no doubt as to the intentions of the sovereign?" He read into the manifesto that the tsar had accorded the *duma* complete legislative powers and no power could prevent it from exercising them if it so desired. He added that in the manifesto was a declaration that the *duma* could extend the franchise. This, he concluded, was a step toward universal suffrage which was the popular demand. Charles de Larivière, always pro-tsarist in his view, could see in the tsar's rescript the promise of a bright future for his empire.<sup>1</sup>

In substantial agreement with this view was that expressed by Eugène Lautier in the *Figaro* of 31 October, 1905. A new era was opening for Russia, he announced. The manifesto was a real "Constitution." It would mean for the people, if they wished, the return of prosperity and peace. It was the end of the revolution, or rather it was the revolution accomplished through the "wisdom and good will" of the sovereign. Henceforth, he concluded, there could not be any more pretext for the continuation of disturbances in Russia.<sup>2</sup>

Moderate thinkers in France, in their great desire to see the restoration of Russia's internal peace and the resumption of her normal life, seemed to be content with any concession the tsar made. On the other hand, the Socialists, sticking to their principles and conviction that the time was

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Études Franco-Russes*, December, 1905, pp. 485-487.

<sup>2</sup> *Figaro*, 31 October, 1905, pp. 1-2.



ripe for the establishment of a real democratic government, and driven on by their hatred of the tsar, were not satisfied with the October Manifesto and continued to distrust him.

#### REFORMS IN POLAND AND FINLAND

Another Russian problem which was of great importance to the empire and to the outside world as well was the question of nationality. According to the prevailing opinion in France this problem was closely connected with the political reforms in Russia. The different nationalities were so numerous and widely scattered over a vast area that no change in the political system would be advisable if it did not take account of this question. Plehve had rightly said that "the revolutionary question is a national question, and in order to resolve the one, it would be necessary to suppress the other."<sup>1</sup> But the policy of "russification" had totally failed to suppress the nationalities in the Russian Empire.

To solve the general problem of nationalities the French Socialists suggested decentralization. They claimed that in a country like Russia, which was composed of so many diverse races, only a decentralized government would be satisfactory. P. G. La Chesnais believed that a federalized Russia with autonomous provinces would be a highly desirable political system. The central government under such a scheme should have just enough powers for international relations and the provincial governments should possess extensive legislative powers.<sup>2</sup>

The two nationalities which attracted particular attention abroad during the revolution of 1905 were the Poles and the Finns.

<sup>1</sup> Alexandre Ular, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Européen*, 13 May, 1905, pp. 5-7.

The Polish aspirations found many sympathizers in France. Both radical and conservative French thinkers favored an autonomous Poland. Eugène Lautier commended the soundness of Polish claims. The Polish movement, he said, was not a separatist movement. The demand of the Poles was in the realm of the possible. They asked for a little liberty; they asked to be delivered from the bickerings of the bureaucracy like all the other peoples of Russia. The program of Polish autonomy left the direction of general affairs to the government at Petrograd and to the imperial duma. It did not go as far as Gladstone's Irish Home Rule. Why should not the Poles be given a little justice?<sup>1</sup>

In an editorial the *Figaro* of 30 November, 1905, stated the causes of the tsar's hesitation in granting Poland's demands. The Polish cause had many sympathizers in Russia among whom was the Congress of Zemstvos held at Moscow, and the tsar would not refuse to listen to it had it not been for the Kaiser. The German emperor was apprehensive of the effects the concessions to Poland might have upon German Poland and had counseled the tsar to make no further concessions. Eugène Lautier on this question remarked: "Russia has long been the conservator of autocracy in Europe. Now the spirit of absolutism has changed its capital."

Charles de Larivière, a defender of the tsar, offered a similar explanation of the tsar's attitude toward Polish autonomy. Should the tsar grant Poland's demand, Germany might intervene and thus create an embarrassing situation for Russia. In this respect the Polish agitation was a peril to Russia.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Figaro*, 28 November, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Revue des Études Franco-Russes*, December, 1905, pp. 485-487.

Robert de Caix wrote in the *Journal des Débats* of 20 November, 1905, that it was really the German emperor who disapproved of Poland's autonomy and he prevailed over the tsar. Nevertheless he believed that the Poles should refrain from excesses for their own good. As Poland was a highly industrialized country and its products could be sent to the Russian market only on account of tariff barriers, its reformers had the more reason to exercise moderation in their agitation.

The condemnation of the kaiser's influence over the tsar was not surprising in France. Ever since the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, hatred of Germany had become commonplace in that country. And the trend of opinion in favor of Poland's aspirations for national autonomy was traditional in France. The two peoples had professed mutual admiration for centuries. Their culture and religion were alike and their friendly relations were historic.

The other nationalist movement which was widely commented upon in France was that of Finland. The Finnish agitation was distinct from the revolutionary movement of the rest of the empire. Alexandre Ular called it "the flies on the wheel of the Russian Revolution." "The Finns", he said, "have been singularly indifferent to the question of Tsardom in Russia. Highly conservative, highly opinionated, above all highly 'virtuous' in the Protestant sense, they have constantly made their stand upon their historical rights a pure fiction in a political world where the law is to the strong exclusively. And what they have claimed continuously, is not the stamping out of Tsardom, nor even the practical reforms which would politically be of the greatest importance to them, but solely the restitution of the rights guaranteed them by Alexander I."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alexandre Ular, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

Sympathy with the Finns was general in France. Not a single dissenting voice was raised as to the justice of their demands. The Socialists characterized their aspiration as legitimate and just, and their demands, as firm and clear but respectful to the tsar. What they asked was the restoration of the reign of law which had been laid aside since the policy of "russification" was inaugurated in their country. They simply asked that their autonomy be respected as formerly.<sup>1</sup>

The *Journal des Débats* lauded the Finnish aspiration. Their culture, it asserted, was far superior to that of the Russian masses and they had every conceivable right to enjoy their previous autonomy. Of all the concessions granted by the tsar, those given to Finland would be the least he would regret.<sup>2</sup>

On 4 November, 1905, the tsar restored Finland's constitution as it had existed prior to 1899. The readiness with which the tsar granted the demands of Finland was explained by French publicists to be due to the absence of German interest involved, unlike the case of Poland where Germany had to be considered. The granting of Finnish demands, it was alleged, confirmed the suspicion that the German emperor was responsible for the tsar's refusal to make concessions in Poland.

#### COUNT SERGE DE WITTE

Of the Russian reformers who commanded unusual attention in France, Count de Witte stood foremost. His previous service to the government and the important rôle he played as minister of finance in the economic development of Russia were still fresh in the memory of many people. He had, in the eyes of the French bourgeoisie, a splendid

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 28 January, 1905, pp. 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal des Débats*, 6 November, 1905, p. 1.

record back of him. But the attention he attracted in 1905 was due to the difficult task which he was called upon to perform at one of the most critical periods in the history of the Russian people. He was regarded as the most capable man in the whole empire who could assist the tsar in pacifying his tumultuous subjects by liberal methods. His appointment as prime minister on 30 October, 1905, was considered by the majority of Frenchmen as a good omen and a proof of the conciliatory attitude of the tsar. Foreign financiers, said Eugène Lautier, had confidence in Count de Witte, because he himself was a great financier with a very practical mind. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* joined in the chorus of approval of the choice of Count de Witte. It recalled the important services he had rendered and the soundness of his judgment which he had already revealed on many occasions. He was equal to the task to which he was called.<sup>1</sup> René Fillet declared that all the good wishes of France were with Count de Witte, for his success would mean the re-establishment of Europe's equilibrium — the consolidation of the Franco-Russian Alliance. The economist Paul Beauregard recalled the inestimable service rendered by Witte as minister of finance when he restored the gold standard in Russia which replaced that country in the rank of those nations that enjoyed irreproachable finances. In addition to his financial farsightedness, he had always shown liberal tendencies throughout his career, and to the new task before him he would be able to apply them. For the sake of Russia and France, Beauregard concluded, Count de Witte should succeed in his work.<sup>2</sup>

An exception to the favorable views mentioned above deserves to be noted in this connection. The French Socialists and some of the Radicals showed a marked dis-

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. 30, (1905), p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Monde Économique*, vol. 2, (1905), p. 578.

trust of Count de Witte. Georges Clemenceau called him a defender of autocracy, the "factotum" of autocracy whose faults and crimes he attempted to cover. He was absolutely ignorant of the movement of public opinion which had just conquered the tsar's resistance. How could he become the leader at the hour of decisions?<sup>1</sup> Jean Longuet distrusted him and would not be persuaded to give credence to his liberal promises. He said that "the Russian reactionaries hate him, but the liberals, not to mention the revolutionaries, have no confidence in him".<sup>2</sup>

Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, a prominent Catholic layman, concurred in this view. The distrust was due, he said, to the fact that he had been minister under the autocratic régime for eleven years. His unpopularity at home was demonstrated when he was trying to form his cabinet. The Russian liberals refused to join it, alleging that they would serve their country better by staying out and remaining as leaders of their party.<sup>3</sup>

The great problem of the day with which Count de Witte was chiefly concerned was reform. Eugène Lautier hoped that upon his entrance into office he would immediately put into practice a workable constitution in order to gain the people's confidence. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* recognized the heavy burden and responsibility resting on his shoulders. He was working against odds, it declared. There were the strikers who insisted that the government listen to their extravagant demands despite Count de Witte's warning, that, if they persisted in their hostile attitude and their

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 17 November, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 November, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal des Débats*, 19 November, 1905, p. 1. This conduct of the Russian Liberals was condemned by French Conservatives. "They have committed a great error," declared Eugène Lautier. "They would lose nothing by sitting in his cabinet; on the contrary, they would be able to observe things at close range."

destructive activities, they would be exposed to rigorous repression or to the anger of the suffering populace. Then there was the tsar whose lamentable lack of independence and firmness of mind was a fatal drawback to any well-intentioned reformer. It was under these forbidding circumstances that Count de Witte had to work.<sup>1</sup>

The French Socialists and Radicals began to criticize his policy after he had been in office a few months. Georges Clemenceau declared that despite his promises of liberal reform, he had put not a single one into practice. "To every petition, M. Witte has only one response: 'I will study it'. He 'studies' the guarantees of individual liberty, justice, and common right. During that time the violence of the despot continues to rage. He 'studies' the conditions for internal peace. During that time, civil war causes great havoc. Why did he not study to act from the very start once he was master of the government?"<sup>2</sup>

The *Petite République* joined in the hostile criticism of Count de Witte's policy. All his splendid promises were of no avail; they would lure no one. The nation wanted realities, it declared, and the disorder, which was ruining the country, would not cease until the people held in their hands a "Constitution" which, judging from daily reports of the condition in Russia, the revolutionaries were determined to snatch from the powers that be at any price. It concluded that despite his versatility and composure, Count de Witte could not escape the exigency of the situation.<sup>3</sup>

The adverse criticism of French Socialists and Radicals was due to their impatience to see positive results of his work. To their minds, Count de Witte was too slow to

Vol. 30, (1905), pp. 234-235.

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 17 November, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 October, 1905, p. 3.

act. They wanted him to effect a reconciliation between the government and the revolutionaries at the earliest possible date but the settlement must be in favor of the revolutionaries.

The French moderate thinkers regretted that the disturbances in Russia had not ceased despite the appointment of Count de Witte and his liberal policy. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* expressed the opinion that after Count de Witte had promised to introduce reforms, the Russian Liberals, if not the revolutionaries, should show confidence in his government. The effect of his promises was deplorable, it observed. There still existed throughout the empire what Taine called "anarchie spontanée" during the French Revolution. Terrorist acts were prevalent and their end seemed remote.

✓ Toward the close of the year 1905 Count de Witte as a reformer no longer figure conspicuously in the French press. The revolutionaries were already losing ground, and repression by the government, which had regained its lost strength, became the order of the day. The change of opinion of many a supporter of Count de Witte as a reformer was ably expressed by an advanced thinker, Charles Rivet: "Count de Witte, the father of the Constitution of 1905, after having hesitated for a moment before the insurrection, soon became again the obedient servant of the sovereign whom he ironically called his 'august master', but whose too servile Minister he none the less showed himself too happy to be." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Charles Rivet, *op. cit.*, p. 124.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE END OF THE REVOLUTION

#### THE DISSOLUTION OF THE FIRST DUMA

SINCE the proclamation of the famous October Manifesto the French public had been looking forward to the time when, under its provisions, the first representative assembly or *duma* should come into being. On 10 May, 1906, the much longed-for *duma* met.

Upon the publication of the October Manifesto there was speculation in France as to what rôle the future *duma* would actually play in the government. Some French conservatives had gloomy forebodings. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* predicted that a rupture between the tsar and the *duma* was certain. The clash of the two forces would be inevitable, for neither one would be willing to submit to the other; but they were so unequal in strength that it would be easy to foresee who would remain master of the situation. "The duel will not be long; the tsar will be the master".<sup>1</sup> And the prediction came true.

Charles de Larivière, a friend of the tsar, outlined the duties the *duma* should perform. The first duty of the *duma* should be to denounce and correct the abuses of the bureaucracy which were so flagrant that they offended even the least sensitive individual. If they undertook this work they would win the people's confidence and create a public opinion favorable to their projects. In this way, with the

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. 29, (1905), p. 237.

people back of them, they could enlarge gradually their prerogatives and, as a result, the *duma* would assume the rôle of a lower house beside the council of the empire erected as an upper house. He recognized the limited powers of the *duma* as provided in the manifesto and, like other moderate French thinkers, he advised the Russian people to make the most of what they had in hand. He believed that the only way to create a *duma* with preponderant powers rested on the ability and wisdom of the members elected to the first *duma*. If they behaved wisely and refrained from excessive demands, they could convert the *duma* into a veritable force in the governmental machinery. It remained then to the members of the first *duma* to raise this new political institution into the dignified position which it should occupy in the state.

The tsar's attitude toward the *duma* was criticized by the Catholic fortnightly, *La Quinzaine*. It questioned the wisdom of the tsar's proclamation of the "Fundamental Laws of the Empire" precisely on the eve of the convocation of the *duma*. The tsar, it asserted, was not playing fair. He had granted a charter when the people were clamoring for a "Constitution". His "Fundamental Laws" aroused distrust and increased the hostility of his subjects toward his government and his meagre concessions. If the *duma* so desired, it continued, no "Fundamental Laws" could prevent it from discussing matters that the tsar had forbidden it to touch. The tsar had committed a grave error by proclaiming the fundamental laws of the empire. It was far better, it concluded, that he should not attempt to prevent the inevitable.<sup>1</sup>

When the first *duma* finally met on 10 May, 1906, its composition as well as its behavior evoked diverse opinions in France. The membership of the *duma*, wrote Baron

<sup>1</sup> *La Quinzaine*, 16 May, 1906, p. 283.

M. de Berwick in the *Revue des Etudes Franco-Russes* for June, 1906, left much to be desired. The elements composing it were as incoherent and incongruous as if they had been elected by direct suffrage. The true interests, the fundamental interests of the country, were but feebly represented. Beside a few men worthy to figure in any parliament there sat a "crowd of rebels" of all descriptions and a small group of timid conservatives or ultra-republicans. The "rebels" and the peasants were "idealists without talent" and altogether unconscious as much of the good that they could do for their country as of the evil they would undoubtedly do her.

The majority of the members of the *duma*, recorded the *Annuaire du Parlement* for the year 1905, were without experience in parliamentary procedure and were novices in politics. For this reason the by-laws of the *duma* were full of details and very clear. The president of the *duma*, it observed, played a very modest rôle. His own powers were reduced to such unimportant details as fixing the hours of a meeting. For all other measures of discipline the assent of the *duma* was necessary.

The behavior of the *duma* was the subject of various comments. That it desired to convert itself into a real parliamentary body was the prevailing opinion in France. Baron M. de Berwick said that the *duma* pretended to assume all the powers of government; it encroached on the powers of the council of the empire and the tsar. It insisted on a general amnesty, responsible ministers, and compulsory expropriation of land for the benefit of the peasants. This was asking too much at one time, he declared. It should bear in mind that "Every concession obtained by force is destined to remain sterile, if it does not turn loose worse evils than those it pretends to cure".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Etudes Franco-Russes*, June, 1906, p. 275.

*La Vie Politique dans les Deux Mondes* for the year 1906 noted that neither the council of the empire nor the duma would tolerate each other and on neither side was there any attempt at conciliation. The council expected the duma to be docile and disposed to register the bills brought to it without any discussion. The duma insisted, on the other hand, on participating fully in the elaboration of the laws like a real legislative body. With such an aspiration and the council's resistance it inevitably came into conflict with the government.<sup>1</sup>

Charles Rivet stated that the first duma became "a safety valve for public discontent". It denounced the public system and the corrupt practices in the government; it became the mouthpiece and ardent advocate of popular opinion. But, to his mind, it lacked moderation and it was openly radical and revolutionary.<sup>2</sup> It was dissolved by the tsar and a second duma was summoned.

In summarizing its work, Professor Alfred Anspach called attention to the poor showing it made. It spent its time in futile discussion. It accomplished nothing, and by overstepping its powers, it committed a fatal mistake.

The dissolution of the first duma was regarded by French Socialists as one of the most convincing proofs of the tsarist government's determination not to share its power with the representatives of the people. It confirmed their earlier suspicion that the tsar was not sincere when he proclaimed the famous October Manifesto, and that he still adhered to the principle of the intangibility of autocracy. With the dissolution of the first duma the revolution of 1905 came to an end.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 659.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Rivet, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

## REPRESSION

About the end of the year 1905, when the tsar's government was already recovering from its recent disasters, it took up the work of suppressing the revolution and getting back again from the country "the semi-liberties which had been granted under revolutionary pressure".

The French Socialists were among the first to denounce the reactionary policy of the government. Bitterly disappointed at the outcome of the revolutionary agitation, they became fault-finding. On Count de Witte they put the blame for the government's repressive measures. They dubbed him the accomplice of the tsar. The Socialist Pierre Quillard openly accused him of organizing or allowing to be organized the outrageous repression, the "white terror". He said that before the people Count de Witte posed as an ardent reformer who would concede whatever was compatible with the actual social life in Russia. He was profuse with promises. At court he was the firm supporter of the tsar and reaction. Hypocrisy was his personal characteristic and in no way did he differ from the absolutists.<sup>1</sup> Jean Longuet added that Count de Witte's aim was to suppress the revolution by extreme reactionary measures.

The French Socialists blamed the Russian people, too, for having allowed their revolutionary ardor to wane before they had reached their goal, for surrendering too soon to the wiles of tsarism. They denounced their conciliatory attitude toward the tsar; they scorned their sudden change of mind.<sup>2</sup>

The reactionary minister of the interior and later prime minister Peter Stolypin was another target of Socialist

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 25 November, 1905, pp. 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Humanité*, 13 December, 1905, p. 2.

attacks. His policy, the French Socialists declared, was to restore absolute autocracy with the help of the ultra-conservatives and the "Black Hundred", a reactionary organization. What made him so much hated, according to *L'Humanité* of 10 September, 1906, was his maintenance of martial law. For the slightest offense anyone could be summoned before the war council. The law produced a depressing impression and was one of the principal causes of the general effervescence. Stolypin had inaugurated a "régime of massacres". "A frightful régime has been inaugurated by the 'premier bourreau'. The troops reply with volleys at the slightest provocation; massacres follow massacres. The black bands are busy". Even foreigners, the Socialists declared, were not safe. The terrorist régime endangered their lives. But Stolypin would be greatly deceived if he ever thought for a moment that he could curb the revolutionary agitation by his reactionary measures. On the contrary he had increased the terror and confusion in the country by the license and excesses of the government officials. The horrible crimes that were being committed for the tsar and the orthodox faith were unparalleled. Jean Longuet expressed the opinion that the horrors of the repression in Russia surpassed the atrocities of the Versailles repression in the month of May, 1871. Another French Socialist who was an eyewitness described the methods of repression employed by the police in Moscow.<sup>1</sup> He described the "organized massacres of peaceful citizens", assaults made on private houses, and the "foolish hunt for inoffensive peasants who carried on their persons arms solely for self-defense." All these atrocities, he added, were committed under the pretext of curbing an armed insurrection, referring to the Moscow insurrection of December, 1905. The tsar's troops used cannons and machine guns to put down

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 6 January, 1906, pp. 1-2.

a petty, but madly heroic, outburst of some groups of men, practically unarmed.

The suppression of the Moscow insurrection, because of the summary way with which the government coped with it, was repeatedly cited by Socialists as typical of the methods of pacification employed by the Russian police. The violence of Anarchists, they concluded, would suffer from comparison with the actual massacres and bombardments carried on by the agents of the Russian government.

The disillusionment of the French Socialists was natural. The prophecies they had pronounced at the beginning of the revolution—the advent of Russian democracy, the inevitable death of tsarism, the victory of the oppressed classes, and the triumph of the proletariat—all these were not yet realized at the beginning of the year 1906 when the tsar's government again could make its regained strength felt and was effectively putting down the revolutionary movement. The "agonizing tsarism" had recovered from its illness and no longer was in the throes of death as the French Socialists had foreseen. For some years more the tsar remained on his throne and was able to maintain peace and order within his empire.

For this recovery of the tsar the French Socialists held the French government responsible. To their minds the tsar was enabled to suppress the revolution by the help of French capital. This was also the opinion of Charles Rivet, an advanced French thinker. He said that "tsarist Russia has been clever enough—in order to help in the repression of its awakening people—to borrow from France a matter of fifteen milliards of francs". What a paradox, he exclaimed, for French democracy to support Russian despotism by its gold!<sup>1</sup> Jean Longuet attributed the strength of the reaction to French and German capital. Assured of

<sup>1</sup> Charles Rivet, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

the support of European financiers through the co-operation of the chief French and German banks, the tsar was able to put down the revolution by repressive measures worthy of his fame.

The French government's hearty support of the Russian loan, declared Professor Charles Seignobos, was not dictated by financial motives, as for example, to prevent the fall in the value of the rouble. M. Rouvier's reason was rather political. He considered it the duty of France to help the Russian government restore order. But in so doing "he should have explained as the representative of France that in French opinion 'to restore order' does not mean to restore the absolutism of the bureaucracy and the régime of embezzlements and persecutions, and that if France aids Russia, her ally, it is to enable her to recover her credit and prosperity and ultimately to establish a constitutional régime, individual liberty, and freedom of the press".<sup>1</sup>

For the suppression of the revolution the French Socialists blamed the reactionary ministers of the tsar, the Russian people in general, and the French government. Their only hope remaining was the Russian Socialists to whom they gave the credit of starting the revolution and who were the tireless leaders of the agitation. Jean Longuet asserted that their conduct during the heat of the struggle between tsarism and the people indicated that they would in the near future triumph over their hated enemy, autocracy. They had demonstrated heroism and devotion to the cause. Citing the suppression of the Moscow insurrection, he declared that the admirable resistance offered by the proletariat of the city was a splendid example of the perseverance and everlasting courage which could be expected from the Russian Socialists.

In regard to the suppression of the revolution by the tsar

<sup>1</sup> *L'Européen*, 20 January, 1906, p. 36.



the French Socialists believed that his victory would be short-lived. Tsarism had merely deferred its inevitable downfall and stayed for some years more the progress of the "socialist conscience of the masses". Jean Longuet admitted that tsarism would come out triumphant in the present struggle with the revolutionaries but it would find itself more than ever in "a situation without an issue". Despite the success of the reaction, the French Socialists still hoped that through the effort of their Russian confrères, Russia would be delivered some day from autocracy.

The French Anarchists were in the same frame of mind as the Socialists. When it was reported how successful the government was in extinguishing every lingering spark of the revolutionary fire, they became indignant and blamed the Russian revolutionaries for having forgotten too soon their vows to fight tsarism to the end. They found fault with their methods of action. Although they upheld the general strike as the best means of accomplishing the revolution, they criticised severely the third general strike, which was a dismal failure. The government's success in checking this strike demonstrated the impotence of the revolutionary organization and its lack of preparation to direct the strike. Under the caption "Memento Mori" Lucien Descaves wrote in the *Temps Nouveaux* of 13 January, 1906, that the failure of the third general strike marked a pause in the movement toward liberty, and it tranquilized the "trembling" autocratic régime.

The Anarchists drew a lesson from the failure of the third general strike, which should be heeded by the revolutionaries of other countries. A general strike, they declared, succeeded remarkably when it was a spontaneous movement, but failed when directed by a committee as in the case of the third general strike. The revolution in Russia illustrated the efficacy of a spontaneous general strike

which spread rapidly over the country by the sheer contagion of example. But to assure the success of an uprising, they added, armed insurrection and the general strike must go hand in hand.<sup>1</sup>

The Anarchists concurred in the Socialist opinion that the French government was the tsar's accomplice in the suppression of the revolution. The tsar could not have pursued a reactionary policy had it not been for French money. He was in pressing need of money when France came to his rescue. With the aid of the money of the French bourgeoisie the success of the reaction was assured.

They protested too against the repressive measures of the Russian government. As an instance of the "barbarous" methods used, they cited the suppression of the Moscow uprising of December, 1905. "The crushing of the Moscow insurrection was the signal of a general reaction. Arrests by the hundreds and thousands, martial law in almost all the provinces, summary judgments, fustillades"—these were the means of "pacification" employed by the reactionaries.

The possible consequences of either repression or the revolution's victory were a matter of grave concern to the tsar's friends in France. "A triumphant repression", thought the progressive paper *La République Française*, "would leave incurable hatreds. A victory of the revolutionaries would drive the emperor to flight rather than to submission, and would perhaps bring foreign intervention or surely a dreadful anarchy. The actual government is indisputable. To replace it, there is nothing but a chasm, there is neither a leading class sufficiently intelligent and numerous, nor leaders, nor precise ideas, nor political education, but dreams, excuses, insubordination, covetousness, foolish and destructive pillage, revolt of subject races—in

<sup>1</sup> *Temps Nouveaux*, 20 January, 1906, pp. 2-3.

a word, a frightful anarchy which only an enemy of Russia can wish for".<sup>1</sup> To the peace-loving bourgeois Frenchmen the consequence of the triumph of the revolution such as pictured here would be detestable. A return to tsarist government tempered with royal and reluctantly granted concession was far more desirable.

The *Figaro* of 28 October, 1905, feared that if repression did not at once put down the revolt, it might unchain more violently the people's passions and precipitate worse happenings. What was expedient then was to take vigorous measures of pacification. Any half-measure or uncertain step on the part of the government was futile, if not dangerous.

While the Socialist papers mostly printed reports of the horrible persecutions of the reactionaries, the moderate French newspapers, guided by their desire to calm the French public, published less highly colored tales.

According to the French moderate and conservative opinion, the days following the proclamation of the October Manifesto were calm. The Russian people had acquiesced in the tsar's concessions and were already resuming the activities of normal life. The terrorist acts and massacres which figured conspicuously in the reports to the Socialist press, they asserted, were merely local and were easily suppressed by the government. In November, 1905, Eugène Lautier was already telling his readers of the *Figaro* about the restoration of order throughout Russia and the resumption of normal life in the chief cities such as Moscow and Petrograd. In the latter city, he said, the workers themselves aided the government in the difficult task of pacification. They gave up their plan for a great demonstration on the occasion of the funeral of the victims of the recent collisions when the gov-

<sup>1</sup> *L'Humanité*, 29 October, 1905, p. 3.

ernment requested the inhabitants of the city to refrain from any act that might render the situation more critical and endanger the safety of peaceful subjects. This, he concluded, was indicative of the conciliatory attitude of the revolutionaries.

In regard to the massacres of Jews the French moderate and conservative thinkers counseled the tsar to forbid them and in that way he would become the protector of all his subjects without distinction of religion or race. He should apply the liberal principles which he had recognized in his concessions. This was a propitious time for him to play the rôle of an arbiter between the political parties and the various races in his empire.

In the opinion of Eugène Lautier the Russian government was confronted with three difficulties in the work of pacification. First there was the general strike which French Socialists had pronounced the most effective weapon by which the revolution could be won. Secondly the Russian liberals were still defiant. A majority of them had not ceased agitating in the hope of wringing more concessions from the tsar. Finally there was the Polish agitation which had not subsided and which might involve Russia in international complications on account of the threat of Germany to intervene should the tsar be unable to restore order in his Polish provinces. Despite all these obstacles the Russian government was able to pacify the immense empire, and by the middle of the year 1906 the revolution of 1905 was generally regarded as ended.

The result of the revolution was summarized by Charles Rivet as follows:

The reforms introduced as the result of the pressure of opinion, the convocation of a Duma which in theory was to

constitute a national representation, did not in fact make any alteration at all in the old state of affairs. The system remained the same: the Russian bureaucracy, more royalist than the king, more autocratic than the monarch, gave up no iota of its power or of its prerogatives.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Charles Rivet, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

## CONCLUSION

IN the foregoing survey of French contemporary opinion of the Russian revolution of 1905 it has been said that the interest which the revolutionary movement created in France could be explained by the political relations existing between the countries as parties to the Franco-Russian Alliance, by their financial relations represented by French capital in Russia, and by the ardent sympathy of the French Socialists. For these reasons the outbreak of the revolution caused much comment in France and divers opinions were expressed as to the significance, character, and extent of the incipient movement. At the outset the tsar became the target of the diatribes of French extremists, the Socialists and Anarchists; at the same time he was defended by the conservatives or moderate French thinkers. But the notorious Russian bureaucracy found no partisans in France; it was vehemently denounced by both extremists and moderates.

Many distinguished French writers, among whom were Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, Paul Beauregard, René Millet, and Victor Bérard, contributed many articles to current periodicals, analyzing the causes of the revolution. Although they did not belittle the political causes of the upheaval, in general they laid emphasis on the social and economic causes. It was the Socialists who affirmed that cardinal causes of the agitation were political. As to the aims of the revolution there was a divergence of opinion. The majority of French conservatives contended that it was aimless or else the end in view of the agitators was sheer destruction.

The Socialists, on the other hand, held the opinion that the revolution had very laudable aims, such as the overthrow of the rule of the corrupt bureaucracy and the establishment of a constitutional government. They claimed that the Russian revolutionaries had a definite program.

The progress of the revolution preoccupied the French, and comments on the tragic and spectacular events were profuse. The mutiny of the crew of the "*Kniaz-Potemkin*", the assassination of Grand Duke Serge, the general strike, and the rôle of the Socialists in the movement evoked diverse opinions and copious comments in the press.

There was a consensus of opinion on the urgent need of reforms in Russia, but opinions differed in regard to the kind of reforms that should be introduced. The majority of French Socialists advocated the complete transformation of Russia into a democratic country with universal suffrage and a constitution patterned after those in vogue in Western Europe. The French conservatives and moderates, however, stood for less drastic reform, alleging that the Russian people were not prepared for a truly democratic and representative government. They suggested such political reforms as would do away with the arbitrariness of the bureaucracy, and certain economic, religious, and social reforms.

Toward the end of the year 1905 the Russian government gave undivided attention to its domestic affairs. French moderate thinkers rallied to its side, justifying the suppression of the revolt, which they preferred to call "pacification" rather than by the harsh term "repression," and rejoicing at the restoration of order which meant the return of peace and prosperity to the afflicted ally who had been weakened by foreign disasters and internal dissensions. The French Socialists continued their denunciation of the governmental policy of repression, and, though disappointed at the

outcome of the revolutionary agitation, they still hoped for better times when the lofty aspiration of their Russian confrères would be realized. At the time of writing it can be safely asserted that there was a great deal of truth in their pronouncement that the triumph of tsarism in 1905 was merely temporary, that it had simply postponed for a few more years its final downfall. They declared that the tsarist edifice rested on crumbling foundations to which another shock might prove fatal. Full well did they realize that the political and social evils which were undermining the autocratic régime still remained after that brief but highly significant revolutionary movement, a portentous prelude to the greater and more decisive Revolution of March, 1917.



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