

REPORT NO. 83

HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)

ARMY HEADQUARTERS

20 Oct 59

Allied Intervention in Siberia

1911-1919

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1. The area of the White Sea was not the only sphere of Allied intervention in Russia. Before the war with the Central Powers had ended, Allied contingents of American, British, Canadian, French, Italian and Japanese troops had entered Siberia. Late in November other landings at Baku on the Caspian, and at Batum on the Black Sea, gave the British a firm grip on the Trans-Caucasus. In December, the French disembarked at Odessa and entered the Crimea and the Ukraine. (William Henry Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution 1917-1921, Vol. 2, (New York, 1935), 154. Winston S. Churchill, The Aftermath, (New York, 1929), 168-9.) Because of the presence of

· See [Report No. 82](#), Historical Section (G.S.), Army Headquarters.

Canadians in Siberia, the story of developments there now requires attention, of which this Report is a preliminary account.

REASONS FOR INTERVENTION

2. Hostilities between Russia and the Central Powers were suspended on 2 December 1917. The Treaty of Brest Litovsk which followed offered Russia to German domination. There can be no doubt that throughout 1918, the Germans looked confidently to Russia, not only for substantial territorial gains as a reward for their war effort, but also as a vitally important source of foodstuffs, oil, and minerals. The Ukraine, the Caucasus and the Caspian were all within their grasp; through this, and by penetrating into Siberia, they hoped to defeat the Allied blockade. At the Siberian port of Vladivostok moreover, as at Archangel, there were reports of very considerable military stores originally intended for Russian use against the Central Powers; the danger now was that these would fall into German hands and be turned against the Allies to prolong the slaughter. Now was this all; a prostrate Russia enabled the Germans to

transport men and ammunition from the Eastern to the Western front at a time when the weight of the American entry into the war had not been appreciably felt, and all was in the balance. (Lloyd George, War Memoirs, Vol. 6. (London, 1936), 3157-8. Churchill, Aftermath, 78, 80-1.)

3. On the other hand there were some grounds for optimism: the Bolshevik truce and later peace treaty had produced widespread reaction in Russia, which was now in a state of turmoil; counter-revolutionary standards had been raised by the Cossacks on the Don; the mass of the Siberian people, who desired order, had little leaning towards the Bolshevik regime; Murmansk and Archangel were open to Allied shipping; and in the Caucasus movements were afoot to bar entry by the Central Powers to the Caspian. Finally, the pro-Allied Czech Corps, widely dispersed, lay along the line of the middle Volga and at Vladivostok; though the country between was still in Bolshevik hands. (Aftermath, 78. John Buchan, A History of the Great War, Vol. 4, (London, 1922), 288.)

4. The plain task of the Allies was to reconstitute the Eastern front and to withhold Russian supplies from

Germany. The Military Representatives of the Supreme War Council accordingly recommended as 23 December 1917 that all national troops in Russia who were determined to continue the war should be fully supported. (Aftermath, 81-2, Buchan, Great War, 289.) There appeared to be two approaches through which such help could be supplied - the northern ports of Russia in Europe, and the eastern frontiers of Siberia. Of these, the Siberian one was undoubtedly the more important, especially as Japan - an Allied Power and the only one with troops available for intervention in force - was close at hand, ready and willing to oppose her armies to incursions by the Central Powers in Eastern Russia. To counter-balance this was the possibility that a Japanese invasion might cause the Bolsheviks, with the support of the Russian people, to throw in their lot openly with the enemy. (Lloyd George, War Memoirs,_3176. Aftermath, 82.) For this reason, intervention by more than one of the Allied Powers was deemed essential.

5. In December, the views of Japan and the United States were sought. Japan favoured intervention, but said that American participation would be unpopular in Japan.

The United States favoured neither joint intervention with Japan nor action by the Japanese alone. Valuable months elapsed - the issue undecided despite appeals from the Supreme War Council - until Bolshevik efforts to disarm the Czechs in Russia, at German instigation, provided the incentive for the landing of troops. This treachery by the Bolsheviks, who had guaranteed safe passage for the Czech Corps through Russia, resulted in violent counter-attacks by the troops they tried to disarm. These were extraordinarily successful. By 6 June 1918 the Czechs were in possession of the Trans-Siberian Railway from a hundred miles west of the Ural Mountains eastwards to Krasnoyarsk. On the 28th, one of their detachments seized Vladivostok, and on 13 July their advance had progressed from Krasnoyarsk to Irkutsk in the direction of the Pacific. No link had as yet been established between Irkutsk and Vladivostok, and it was not until the middle of September - aided by the Allies - that they succeeded in this, thus restoring railway communication along the whole Trans-Siberian route.

(Lloyd George, War Memoirs, 3172. Aftermath, 82, 84-87.)

6. On 2 July 1918 a further appeal from the War Council

to President Wilson, again for intervention, met with success. It was feared that the Czechs were in imminent danger of being annihilated by hordes of German and Austrian former prisoners of war, and this stirred the President into action. He proposed the dispatch of an international force "to restore and preserve the communications of the Czechs." On the 5th, the United States announced its decision of a limited intervention in Siberia "for the purpose of rendering protection to the Czecho-Slovaks against the Germans and to assist in the efforts at self-government or self-defence in which the Russians themselves may be ready to accept assistance." (Aftermath, 88.)

7. The arrangement to which Wilson finally consented was that the British and Americans should each send 700 troops, and that the Japanese should provide a force capable of advancing to the aid of the Czech Corps, then at Lake Baikal (Irkutsk). He envisaged a Japanese contingent roughly equal in size to each of the others. The French and British recognized that a far larger

" Churchill is here quoting from an unidentified source.

Japanese force would be required. In the end, the Japanese landed more than 70,000 men, using as an excuse the fact that the Americans had exceeded their stated total by the addition of some 2000 administrative troops. (Lloyd George, War Memoirs, 3192).

8. Active intervention began early in August. British and French detachments were the first to arrive at Vladivostok. The former consisted of the 25th Middlesex, from Hong Kong, later reinforced by another battalion. On the 12th the Japanese disembarked, their commander, General Kikuzo Otani, assuming command of all the Allied forces six days later. Americans from the Philippines landed on the 15th and 16th, followed by a further American force, on 4 September, under the contingent commander, Major-General W.S. Greves. A small body of Italians followed. At the time of the armistice in Europe, this miscellany of troops, together with Czechs and White Russians, was strung across the route of the Trans-Siberian Railway from the Pacific coast as far as the Ural mountains, and a hundred miles beyond. (Aftermath, 88. Lloyd George, War Memoirs, 3193. W.E. Playfair, Official Correspondent with Canadian Forces in Siberia, Letter 1, Series 1, 5 Dec 1918, H.Q., C.H.F. (Siberia) File 49.)

CANADIAN PARTICIPATION

9. A week after the American decision had been announced, the War Office sought the

views of the Canadian Prime Minister on the availability of Canadian troops for Siberia. The British had been given to understand, unofficially, that two battalions of discharged soldiers could be raised in Canada – quite in keeping with the policy “not to divert any appreciable body of troops from the Western front.” (letter from Dir. Nil. Ops. War office, to President Privy Council, (Newton W. Rowell) 9 Jul 18, Borden Paper, P.C. file CC 518(1).) Sir Robert Borden and the Minister of Militia (General Newburn), being in London at the time, were able to examine the British suggestion on the spot. Borden, for reasons not wholly military, was favourably disposed to the dispatch of Canadian troops. Discussions, the considerations which, in his view, justified the sending of a small force to Siberia, he said: “Intimate relations with that rapidly developing country will be a great advantage to Canada in the future. Other nations will make very vigorous and determined efforts to obtain a foothold and our interposition with a small military force would tend to bring Canada into favourable notice by the strongest elements in that great community.” (*Ibid.*, Letter from Borden to Newburn, 13 Aug 19.) On 12 July the C.G.S. in Ottawa was advised to organize a brigade headquarters, two battalions of infantry, a battery of field artillery; a machine gun company, and certain other troops. The British battallion in Siberia would join this force, coming under Canadian command. (*Ibid.*, Tel. M.M.D. to C.G.S., 12 Jul 18.) The force, including the British unit, would be known as the Canadian Siberian Expeditionary Force, and would represent the British Empire in the Allied Force

Major-General de Blaquiere Radcliffe, formerly D.G.C.S. Canadian Corps.

operating in Siberia. (C.I.G.S. to Elmsley, 10 Sep 18, Siberian E.F. 1919.” folder 17, file 1.)

The Privy Council approved the principle of sending the expedition, and on 12 August A.C. Instruction 1988 was signed authorizing the dispatch of the troops. (Tel., Minister of Justice to Prime Minister, 28 Jul 18, Borden Papers, P.A.C. file 00 518 (1). “Mobilisation generally. C.E.F. in Siberia,” C.E.F. (S) File 762-12-7, Vol. 1.) Thus a month had intervened between the British request and the final Canadian approval of participation. During this period the War Office had grown impatient. An attempt was made to expedite the matter through the Governor-General, causing Borden, who had thus been circumvented, to cable angrily “...no reply shall be sent to the British Government’s message except through me.” (Tel., Borden to White, 25 Jul 18, Borden Papers, P.A.C. file OG 518(1).)

10. The approved contingent, 5000 strong, consisted of Headquarters Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia), H.Q. 16th Infantry Brigade, a base headquarters, and the following major units:

“B” Squadron H.C.N.N.N.A. (Cavalry)

85th Battery C.F.A.

16th Field Company C.E.

6th Signal Company

260th Infantry Battalion

20th Machine Gun Company

No. 1 Company Divisional Train

16th Field Ambulance

No. 11 Stationary Hospital

No. 9 Ordnance Detachment

(Establishments – C.E.F.

(SIBERIA), D.A.A.G. 3 File.)

It was hoped that men would be raised by voluntary enlistment. This was not found possible. (Letter, M.M.D. to P.M., 15 Aug 18. Borden Papers, P.A.C. file OC 518(2).) Persons under the Military Service Act were taken and concentrated on the West Coast in readiness for Vladivostok (Tel. C.G.S. to C.O.C. Mil. Dist. No. 11, 28 Nov 18, Reorganisation Rolls, C.E.F. Siberia,” D.A.A.G. 3 File.) But it was not until 11 October that an advance party of 680 all ranks actually sailed from Vancouver to join the force commander, Major-General J.H. Elmsley (appointed 10 September), already in Siberia. (Letter from C.C.G. Mil. Dist. No. 11 to Secretary, Militia Council, Ottawa, 11 Oct 18, D.A.A.G. 3 File.) Canadian troops were to be under the control of the Allied Commander-in-chief (General Otani) but Elmsley had the right to appeal to the War Office, with a copy to the Canadian Government, against any order which appeared to him to imperil the safety of his force. Further, no appeal could be decided against Elmsley without the approval of the Canadian Government. In addition, the Canadian commander was authorized to correspond directly with Canada without reference to the War Office or any outside body. (C.I.G.S. to Elmsley, 10 Sep 18, “Siberian E.F. 1919,” folder 17,

file 1.)

THE GENERAL ARMISTICE – REACTION IN CANADA

11. Meanwhile British, French, and Italian units had proceeded west from Vladivostok to the vicinity of Omsk, where they acted as a stabilizing influence on the anti-Bolshevik Forces in West Siberia. The Americans, still in Eastern Siberia were doing no more than guarding military stores and forwarding supplies to the Czechs. The Japanese had advanced to Lake Baikal, but refused to have anything to do with operations west of it. (British General Staff appreciation of Siberian situation, 22 Nov 18, Borden Papers, P.A.C. file 00 518(1).) What was to be the Canadian relief? Borden was wisely of the opinion that the disposition of Canadian troops should be left to the judgement of General Elmsley, but on 11 November, before further Canadian troops could be sent, the General Armistice was signed. In its wake a wave of resentment against any further participation in Russian affairs swept through Canada. (Ibid. Letter, P.M. to M.M.D., 13 Aug 18.)

12. After he had tested the temper of this, the Acting Prime Minister in Canada (Sir Thomas White) addressed Sir Robert Borden in England through the overseas Minister (Sir Edward Kemp) on the subject the Siberian expedition: “All our colleagues are of opinion that public opinion here will not sustain us in continuing to send troops many of whom are draftees under Military Service Act and Order in Council now that the war is ended. We are all of

opinion that no further troops should be sent and that Canadian forces in Siberia should, as soon as situation will permit, be returned to Canada. Consider matter of serious importance.”

(Ibid., Tel. White to Kemp, 14 Nov 18.)

12. Indeed, with the collapse of Germany, every argument which had led to intervention had disappeared; but in the face of militant Bolshevism, anti-Bolshevik armies and administrations which had grown up under the shelter of Allied forces required support and protection. Now was the time for a concerted statement of Allied policy but none was made until 12 June 1919, when the Allied and Associated Powers signified their support of the Kolchak Government which had been established on 18 November, convinced that this would satisfactorily assure the freedom and self-government of the Russian people. But none was made until 12 June 1919, when the Allied and Associated Powers signified their support of the Kolchak Government which has been established on 18 November, convinced that this would satisfactorily assure the freedom and self-government of the Russian people. By then the position of the Allies, insurmountable in 1918, had been largely relinquished, whereas the Bolsheviks had raised armies and consolidated themselves. What was perfectly possible, even at the beginning of 1919, was no longer so in June. (Aftermath, 165, 186.)

13. Borden's reply was made on 20 November. In the meantime he had conferred at the War Office and found out that it was not the intention to commit British or Canadian forces in an offensive campaign. Their presence in Siberia, it was believed, would have an important

influence in stabilizing the situation, and they would assist in training the armies of the new Kolchak government. The British, despite equally strong public opinion, were adding to their force the 1/9 Hampshires -- originally intended to relieve the Middlesex battalion -- and intended to employ both units at Omsk. They urged that General Elmsley should immediately go forward with his staff to command these two battalions. The British appreciated that the main object was to prevent Siberia from lapsing into anarchy; the new government required a breathing space assured by armed force, and thus a first consideration would be to render the new Russian troops efficient. "Experience has shown... that Russian troops will melt away if they have not the moral support and example of no matter how small an Allied contingent... The presence of the small British, French and Italian forces has already had considerable effect. The advent of General Elmsley's force will still further strengthen French and British plans and hearten the Russians...." (Tel. Borden to White, 20 Nov 18, Borden Papers, B.A.C. file 00 518(1). British G.S. Appreciation, 22 Nov 18, (ibid.)

15. In his reply, Borden advocated the retention of Canadian troops in Siberia until the spring and "the additional force originally arranged for should proceed to Siberia for the purposes indicated, as well as for economic considerations which are manifest". Sir Thomas White again demurred: many members of the Privy Council were opposed to any continuation; and it was not practicable to send only volunteers, as this would involve the breaking up of units ready to sail. The Minister of Militia who had returned to Canada, delayed the departure of further ships (Ibid., White to Borden 22 Nov 18); but Borden stood firm in his opinion that the

expedition should continue, especially as a definite undertaking had been made with the British Government. He pointed out that “Canada’s present position and prestige would be singularly impaired by deliberate withdrawal from definite arrangement under these conditions...”

However, he left the matter to the judgement of the Council. (Ibid., Borden to White, 24 Nov 18.) Meanwhile, the C.G.S. in Ottawa advised the War Office of these developments in Canada, concluding with the ominous news that two ships now in readiness would not sail for Vladivostok unless and until further direction was received from the Government. (Ibid., Paraphrase of telegram, m.d., C.G.S. to War Office)

16. The matter was considered by the Privy Council on the 27th. On that day Borden advised the Acting Prime Minister that he had discussed the whole question with the Director of Military Operations (Major-General P. de B. Radcliffe) at the War Office. The British attitude was reasonable. If the force must be withdrawn, it was hoped that General Elmsley, his staff, and fifty or a hundred instructors, would be permitted to remain. The question was now up to Council to decide, which it did in favour of proceeding with the expedition as originally planned, save that members would be permitted to return to Canada within one year of the signing of the Armistice if they so desired. Borden was advised that the matter was now closed. (Ibid., White to Borden, 27 Nov 19: and reply, same date. White to Borden, 29 Nov 18.)

17. But there were afterthoughts in Canada. Though Borden had not changed his mind the cabinet could at least place restraints on the use of Canadian troops in Siberia. A week later,

the Prime Minister was advised by White of a telegram which had been addressed by the C.G.S. to the War Office with the knowledge of General Newburn. The general situation in Siberia was reported to be disturbed: among the Allies there was no general agreement; the Americans were inactive; and the Japanese, bent on commercial penetration, were said to be subsidizing insurgent elements. Indeed, as early as August, the President of the Privy Council had requested Borden to define the exact relationship of the Canadian force to the Americans and the Japanese. Conflict between the last two was not unlikely, and Canadian sentiment would almost certainly align itself on the side of the Americans. The British, on the other hand, bound by the Anglo-Japanese alliance and traditionally more friendly to Japan than either America or Canada might request Canadian neutrality. It was therefore stated that, though the dispatch of troops would continue, these would not move inland pending clarification of British policy. Further, it might be necessary to withdraw them altogether unless their mission was made clear. (Ibid., Tel. Rowell to Borden, 9 Aug 18, White to Borden, 6 Dec 18.).

18. Borden was justifiably exasperated at this vacillation. In his reply he explained that some few days before the British had practically understood that Canadians would be withdrawn, and then had come the decision of the Council to proceed. He went on to say that the Council was armed with details of political and economic conditions. They were aware of the military situation. They, then, should judge, and with that he virtually washed his hands of the matter. (Ibid., Borden to White, 9 Dec 18). White, seizing the opportunity afforded by this

communication, wrote General Newburn without delay... “He should at once cancel further sailings, and arrange for the return of our forces at as early a date as possible...” It was, however, decided by the Council that troops would remain until the spring. The War Office was notified, and, at the same time, informed of restrictions as to the employment of Canadians “... Meanwhile Dominion Government cannot permit them to engage in military operations, nor, without its express consent, to move up country; and Elmsley should not leave Base until [Brig.-General H.C.] Bickford his infantry brigadier reaches Vladivostok...”(Ibid., C.G.S. to War Office, 22 Dec, 18.). The communications addressed to the War Office, and the restrictions imposed on General Elmsley and the C.E.F. (Siberia), prompted a forthright telegram from the War Office to the C.C.S.:

...We note that 1800 other ranks for Vladivostok have now sailed. In view, however, of decision of Canadian Government not to allow their troops to proceed inland and other factors, we have been obliged to recommend to War Cabinet:

- (1) That the two British battalions should be withdrawn to Vladivostok.
- (2) That the Canadian forces should be returned to Canada...

We suggest therefore:

- (1) That at any rate no more troops should be sent.
- (2) That if there is no chance of Canadian Government reconsidering decision even

those on route mentioned above might be recalled by wireless...

(Ibid., War Office to C.C.S., 4 Jan 19; repeated to Gen. Elmsley).

19. The Canadian force -- now numbering 1100 in Siberia -- was not returned at this juncture, nor were the ships carrying 2700 men recalled: (Ibid., C.G.S. to War; Office, 10 Jan 19.) General Elmeley had vigorously protested against the withdrawal on the 8th. (Ibid., Elmsley to War Office, 8 Jan 19.) Hamstrung as he was, Elmsley could do little with the troops -- "Home or Fight:" became their oft-expressed sentiment -- and there was friction between the Canadian commander and General Alfred Knox who was head of the British Military Mission in Siberia. The latter, who advocated "a tangible Allied force at the front" (Knox to Elmsley, "Notes on the present military situation in Siberia", 27 Nov 18, "Siberian E.F. 1919, folder 17, file 2.) to hearten the Russians was anxious to have the Canadian Force at Omsk. This Elmsley could in no-wise do. There was much exasperated correspondence between the two, of which the following excerpt from one of Knox's letters is an example: "I still hope they [the Canadian Government] will send troops to go the whole hog. If they only think of playing the American-Japanese sitting game in the Far West, I honestly don't see much use in their coming at all." (Knox to Elmsley, 27 Dec 18, "Siberian E.F., 1919", folder 17, file 3.) But the climate at Vladivostok, where all Canadians were concentrated (with the exception of a small staff at Omsk) was reminiscent of Eastern Canada and not unpleasant; voluntary societies, working with the Canadian Red Cross, provided some amenities. (Reports by W.E. Playfair, Official Correspondent in Siberia, H.Q., C.E.F. (Siberia) file 49).

WITHDRAWAL OF CANADIAN TROOPS

20. Meanwhile, it had become obvious to Borden that the economic motives which has been a major reason for the dispatch of the force were no longer valid. Canada could reap no advantages under the chaotic conditions which prevailed in Siberia. On 30 December, 1918, at a meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, he broke the long impasse which had existed between himself and the cabinet in Ottawa by recommending a new departure in Russian policy. He suggested, instead of keeping troops in Russia, an invitation to the Russian Governments, both White and Red, to send representatives to Paris for a conference with the Allied and associated nations. Pressure could then be brought to bear to control aggression in Russia and to bring ahead conditions of stable government. (Minutes of Imperial War Cabinet, 30 Dec 18. P.A.C, Borden, Box 333). Borden's unrealistic suggestion has been described as "a futile, almost childish, attempt to stop one of the bloodiest and most determined of civil wars ever fought' (Leonid I. Strakhovaky, Intervention at Archangel (Princeton, 1944), 139) but Lloyd George at any rate welcomed the idea, and made it the basis of a formal proposal to the United States, France, Italy and Japan. On 23 January, a message drafted by President Wilson was sent out to the different governments and groups, including the Bolsheviks, then fighting on the territory of the former Russian Empire, inviting them to attend a conference to be hold 15 February 1919 on the island of Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmore. (Ibid, 139-140). Borden was to be the chief British delegate (Robert Laird Borden, Memoirs, Toronto, 1938) Vol. 2, 904) The proposal foundered when the Russian Whites unanimously and indulgently rejected the

invitation. Moral considerations did not permit them “to confer on an equal basis with traiters, murderers and robbers” (Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution*, Vol. 2, 158).

21. Borden, however, noted in the spirit of his proposal. At the end of January, the Canadian Government decided to demobilize troops awaiting shipment in British Columbia. This was done quietly, as it was thought desirable not to encourage the Bolshevik Government unduly. Early in February, Borden informed Lloyd George of an intention to withdraw troops from Siberia about April; there was no protest. The Russian situation was discussed at the Peace conference between 13 and 17 February, when the Canadian Prime Minister “adhered absolutely to [his] determination that Canadian troops must be withdrawn in April”, despite considerations of the consequences of a general withdrawal placed before him by Lord Balfour and Mr. Churchill. These were firstly the Bolsheviks would overrun and control all Russia; secondly, if the present Allied Forces were to Remain in Russia for some months, Bolshevik power would probably crumble. Borden replied that such considerations “would not carry the judgement of Canadian people in favour of further military effort.” (Borden to White, 17 Feb 19, Borden Papers, P.A.C. file OC 518(2).) The British Government had no option but to acquiesce as it was felt “impossible to continue to urge the Dominion Government to share against its will, in a task of much difficulty and anxiety.” (Ibid., letter Churchill to Borden, 17 Mar 19.)

22. In Siberia, events had not awaited the outcome of the disposition of the Canadian force.

The seizure of power by Kolchak in November 1918 did not accord with the ideas of the democratic Czechs. However much they hated the Bolshevik regime, they were not inclined to take part in a new outburst of civil strife in support of a dictatorship. They remained passive and were soon withdrawn from the front for the task of guarding the Trans-Siberian Railway. An exception was one of their leaders, Gaida, who threw in his lot with Kolchak's armies.

American policy was confused, because the commander of their force, General Graves, did not share the benevolent attitude of the American State Department toward the Kolchak regime.

Kolchak's relations with Japan were also unsatisfactory. Primarily interested in obtaining a permanent foothold in Russian territory east of Lake Baikal, the Japanese refused to send their troops west of the lake and took little interest in promoting Kolchak's military success.

Consistent support of Kolchak was left to the British, French and Italians, who saw in him the only means of helping the Russian people to achieve freedom, self-government, and peace, (Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution*, 161-4, 182.)

23. The actual fighting was left to the Russians. In December, an advance by the northern wing of Kolchak's Siberian Army was counter-balanced by a Bolshevik advance from the Volga to the approaches of the Ural mountains. There was substantial anti-Bolshevik success during March and April, when Gaida, in the north, had reached a point only four hundred miles from Archangel. In the south, an advance which reached the important towns of Kazan and Samara on the Volga continued until the end of April. The successes of the Siberian Army were matched by the armed forces of South Russia, under General A.I. Denikin, which smashed four

Bolshevik armies during May, causing Lenin to tell his Revolutionary Military Council, "If we don't conquer the Urals before winter I think the destruction of the Revolution is inevitable" (The Russian Revolution, 188-191, 242-44). By the end of June, less than a sixth of Russia remained in Bolshevik hands.

24. It was during this successful period that Canadian troops returned to Canada from Vladivostok. The first party embarked 21 April 1919 and the last went on board on 5 June. ("Canadian, expeditionary Force-Siberia, G.H.C. file 4-18.). There was one last appeal from the British Secretary of State for War to the Canadian Prime Minister. Churchill, on 1 May, reviewed the successes of Kolchak's forces and appealed for volunteers in these terms:

I cannot help being angry that Canada has not been able a little to help us in bringing about these good results. I of course agreed to your wish to withdraw the Canadians from Vladivostock, there was not much use in their taking up the limited accommodation available. But is it not possible for us to have a few volunteers from the Canadian Forces to co-operate with the volunteer detachments which compose our various missions to the legal Russian armies? ... I am sure there would be a good response. More men have volunteered exclusively for service in Russia during the last three weeks than for the whole of the rest of the Regular army to other... (Letter, Churchill to Borden, 1 May 19, Borden Papers, P.A.C. file 66 518(2).)

25. A few volunteers from Canadian units in Siberia remained with the British, (Siberian Records, Folder 11, “ Applications for transfer to British Military Mission.”) but there is no record of any major contribution. Indeed, by the autumn of 1919 the British contingent of approximately 2,000, having lost Canadian support, and without hope of reinforcements, was also withdrawn (Aftermath, 256.)

CONCLUSION

26. The final phase of intervention must now be described. During July, Kolchak lost the Ural mountains to the Bolsheviks. Denikin, during the same month, rejected a drive up the Volga to join up with the Siberian forces in favour of an advance on Moscow. This reached a high-water mark when the southern army was within 250 miles of the Russian capital in mid-October, but thereafter the fortunes of the White armies were on the wane. Omsk fell on November 16; and on 7 February 1920, at Irkutsk, Kolchak was shot by Russian Socialists. Denikin’s army collapsed in March 1920; British warships now assisted and covered the evacuation of troops to the Crimea, the only part of Russia still in White Russian hands. (The Russian Revolution, 192, 200, 203, 242-244).

27. All Allied contingents, save one, were withdrawn from Siberia during the winter of

1919-20, when it was clear that the anti-Bolshevik cause was doomed. The Japanese remained in Vladivostek and the adjacent coastal region for two more years, when the territory passed into the hands of the Soviet Union. The Czechs were safely withdrawn and crossed Canada on route to Europe in June, 1920. (The Russian Revolution, 164. Letter from Secretary Immigration and Colonisation to M.M.'s Office, 4 Jun 20, Borden Papers, P.A.C. file 00 518(2).)

28. As an aggressive enterprise, intervention in Siberia was an unmitigated failure. Allied policy was singularly lacking and no concerted measures materialized. Yet far-reaching results were achieved indirectly.

29. Had there been no intervention the Bolsheviks would undoubtedly have been victorious far sooner, able to divert men and munitions to support political, social, and economic disorders in countries other than their own. What might have happened then is pure conjecture; but it was lack of strength, not lack of will, that prevented them from aiding Soviet movements in Hungary and Bavaria. As it was, energy was directed to the internal struggle. It was their preoccupation with the White Russian armies which resulted in the independence of Finland, the Baltic States and Poland. The frontier of Bolshevism was thus pushed farther east until after the Second World War. (The Russian Revolution, 171-2. Aftermath, 288).

30. This Report was compiled by Capt. J.A. Swettenham R.C.E.

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