

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES
AND RUSSIA DURING THE YEAR 1933

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PREFACE

In order to understand the relations between the United States and Russia during the latter part of 1933, it is necessary to give a brief survey to the early part of President Roosevelt's Administration. From the beginning of his administration he had a desire to carry out the good neighbor policy with all countries, including Russia. President Roosevelt took every step to see that this was done.

An endeavor to give all the essential steps leading to the establishment of normal diplomatic relations has been made. The points discussed and agreements made have been given, also the date of the establishment of normal diplomatic relations and the appointment of the new American ambassador, William Bullitt, to Russia.

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Dorothea Grubbs.

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CHAPTER I

EARLY RELATIONS

In 1790 the Continental Congress sought Russian recognition and appointed Francis Dana as Minister. He was not received in Russia and after spending two years in St. Petersburg returned disappointed and disgusted to the United States. While the Russian Vice Chancellor assigned various reasons for the attitude of his Government it is known that back of all was the extreme dislike of the Empress Catherine for the representative popular system that had been set up in the United States.

The theory of refusal to recognize any government faded out with the development of international law and precedents. In 1809 when Alexander the First was on the Russian throne, the relations between the two countries became normal. John Quincy Adams appointed by President Madison became the first American Minister to St. Petersburg. The relations thus established were maintained from 1809 to 1917 when President Wilson became president and decided to change the United States Foreign Policy.

To understand this we must review the Foreign Policy of Russia and the United States noticing in what respect there is a difference, and just what is meant by a Foreign Policy of a nation.

The Foreign Policy of any country is a function of domestic policy. It solves problems which result from the development of a given society, a given state, under definite historical conditions.¹

¹Foster Rhea Dulles, The Road to Teheran, p. 1.

The foreign policy of the Soviet Government differs as much from the foreign policy of the other great powers as the domestic policy of this first socialist state differs from the domestic policy of the states belonging to the capitalist system. The main thought in the Soviet Foreign Policy is Peace.

Why is the struggle for peace the central object of Soviet Policy? Primarily because the Soviet Union—to use the expression of Lenin—has everything necessary for the building up of a socialist society.²

This was for the purpose of building up socialism in Russia, which Lenin began and continued by Stalin. This policy was followed because peace was the best condition for building up a socialist society which was the chief aim of the new Government in Russia.

Fighting for the maintenance of peace, accepting obligations of neutrality toward the struggling camps of the imperialists, the Soviet Union has at the same time raised the military preparedness of the country to a level which answers the demands of national defense and the requirement of modern warfare.³

The desire of the Soviet Union in 1933 to cooperate in the most friendly manner with the United States was based primarily on the conviction that the Soviet Union desired world peace as sincerely as the United States desired peace; "the Russian also has a genuine admiration for our technical progress, for our ability to grapple with the physical difficulties of life and overcome them."⁴

²Karl Radek, "For Council on Foreign Relations," The Foreign Policy of the Powers, p. 120.

³Ibid., p. 141.

⁴William C. Bullitt, "The Establishment of Normal Relation Between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," State Department, Eastern European Series 3, Publication 553, p. 5.

All through the years an argument bearing much weight was that of recognizing the Soviet Government in order to secure a more effective co-operation for world peace.

The United States Foreign Policy for more than a century after the foundation of the Republic was to recognize established governments without regard to their political forms and economic institutions. Before 1917 the Government of the United States in deciding upon questions of recognition proceeded on the principal that it was under no obligation to reform the institutions, manners and morals of any government seeking recognition or already recognized as long as that government was willing to live at peace with the United States and fulfill the ordinary obligations of international intercourse.

In 1913 after Wilson became president there was a change in the attitude toward the United States Foreign Policy. Some thought this policy meant not recognizing any Government whose political forms and economic institutions were not in accord with American conception of peace, morality and propriety, in other words political isolation. If it was to mean political isolation it would be against the doctrine of Washington and Jefferson. But President Wilson didn't challenge the general doctrine but said,

I shall never myself consent to any entangling alliance, but I would gladly assent to a disentangling alliance--an alliance which would disentangle the people of the world to preserve the peace of the world upon a basis of common right and justice. There is liberty there, not limitation. There is freedom, not entanglement.⁵

The fundamental objection of both the United States' and Russia's

⁵John Davis, "Council on Foreign Relations," The Foreign Policy of the Powers, p. 27.

Foreign Policy was the maintenance of peace.

Only twice in the history of the United States has she departed from the traditional practice to invoke doctrines of legitimacy and attempt disguised dictation to other countries, these two being in 1913 when Wilson failed to recognize the government of Huerto in Mexico and in 1917 when he failed to recognize the Bolshevik Government of the Soviet Union.⁶

As long as the Provisional Government under Kerensky was in power Wilson fully recognized their type of Government. As a result of the war the Bolshevik Government took over and began radical changes in its system. With the Bolshevik came the withdrawal of the diplomatic mission and as a result a state of war between the United States and the Soviet regime virtually issued.

The United States Ambassador to Russia in 1917 was David R. Francis. When the Bolsheviks seized Petrograd on November 17, 1917 D. R. Francis the United States Ambassador to Russia notified Secretary of State Lansing, who replied that the United States would not recognize the Soviets and took steps to prevent any further shipment of supplies to Russia until a more stable government was established. The refusal to recognize the new Soviet Government was due to the hostility toward the Bolsheviks and to the general belief that such a step would end the possibility of some other government which might come into power by being willing to prosecute the war.

On the last of December of 1917 Ambassador Francis suggested entering into relation with the Bolshevik regime in an attempt to keep Russia at least neutral but Secretary Lansing refused to consider any such change of policy.

⁶E. D. Dickenson, "The Recognition of Russia," Senate Document No. 49, 72nd Congress 1st. Session, p. 4.

The three specific reasons given by President Wilson for the United States decision to withdraw diplomatic relations with Russia were as follows:

(1) the Soviet authorities had refused to compensate American American citizen for property confiscated during the revolution of 1917 (2) she had declined to acknowledge the debts of the Czarist and Kerensky government and (3) they had encouraged Communist propaganda in other countries in cooperation with the Third International.⁷

In an address by Calvin Coolidge on December 6, 1923 these reasons were reviewed, prompting Commissor Chicherin to cable ten days later requesting a conference to discuss and remove these obstacles to recognition. But Secretary Hughes replied that there could be no negotiation of any type until the Soviet Government had first compensated American citizens for confiscated properties, had acknowledged its obligations for the Kerensky debts and had discontinued Communist propaganda in the United States territory. In 1928 Secretary Kellogg repeated these same conditions and as late as December 1930 Secretary Stimson announced there had been no changes in the United States policy or in the requirement it placed on the Soviet Regime.

During the period of non-recognition there was much discussion pro and con as to the advisability of the United States recognizing the Soviet Government. By some it was argued that to withhold recognition was to

deny that capitalistic and communistic system could coexist in the same world and that until recognition was granted there could be no assurance of diplomatic protection for the persons or property of nationals of either state who may travel or trade in the other.⁸

Those opposing recognition held to the argument that the Bolshevist

⁷Vera M. Dean, "America's Policy toward Russia," Current History, Vol. XXXVIII (1933), p. 429.

⁸Dickenson, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

Government in Russia failed to reach the requirements of international law and failed to fulfill its obligations with other nations.

Our diplomatic relations with Russia were not consistent. The United States allowed Russia to adhere to the Anti-War Pact, the United States sent representatives to the League of Nations meeting in regard to disarmament and economic matters along with Soviet representatives, the United States sent back-door messages to the Soviets not to go to war and the United States allowed American merchants to enter into daily commercial relations with representatives of the Soviet Foreign Trade Monopoly and yet the United States Government officially denied that the Soviet Government was a legal act and refused to recognize the Soviet Government. What America was actually doing was trading under cover with Russia.

CHAPTER II

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S ADMINISTRATION

With the inauguration on March 4, 1933 of President Roosevelt the recognition of the Soviet Government appeared more probable than at any time since 1917. President Roosevelt had no intentions of continuing nonrecognition of governments whose political forms and economic institutions were not in complete accord with America's conceptions of peace, morality and propriety as did Wilson in his Administration. Roosevelt's policy was in harmony with the example given by George Washington.

President Roosevelt in his Inaugural Address of March 4 declared

In the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of good neighbor—the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreement ... with the world of neighbors.⁹

At the World Economic Conference M. Litvinoff conferred with members of the American delegation and shortly afterward the American Government approved a loan of \$4,000,000 to American exporters by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to finance Soviet purchases of American cotton. This act by both countries was the first important step in weakening the opposition the United States had toward dealings with the Soviet Government.

The second step paving the way for full recognition of the Soviet Government was on May 16, 1933 when President Roosevelt included President Kalinin of Russia among the heads of fifty-four nations to whom he

⁹Charles Beard, American Foreign Policy in the Making 1932-40, p. 147.

addressed a letter urging the limitation of armaments and to be a part of a disarmament conference to meet at Geneva in early summer.

The third step and the one that confirmed President Roosevelt's intentions was on October 10, 1933 when he addressed a message to President Kalinin indicating the United States desire to end the present abnormal relation between the 125 million people of the United States and the 160 million people of Russia. President Roosevelt made every effort in his power to carry out to the fullest the good neighbor policy that he said he wanted in his inaugural address.

As soon as notification from President Kalinin reached the White House that the Soviet Government was sending Litvinoff, official of the State Department under the direction of Secretary Hull, embarked on the task of surveying the entire situation, and gathering the data relative to the matters which certainly or conceivably might be a subject of discussion. In performing this task they drew upon the mass of material in the Department series of Eastern European Division, which was so complete as to exclude the risk of any fact or argument being overlooked. The officials who made the survey knew all that had occurred when twenty-six other governments, including Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany had granted unconditional recognition. At this time the Russian refused to make any definite negotiations and didn't carry out their agreement. This survey group were well aware however that this was not what the president contemplated and that it was their duty to ascertain and enumerate all of the matters concerning the points which the president might require agreements concurrent with and as a basis for recognition.

On October 17, 1933, Maxim Litvinoff, was appointed by the Russian Government with authority to negotiate any agreeable terms about any

issues dead or pasted as well as the rich future of the America-Soviet relations, that might arise at the conference. Litvinoff assured newspaper reporters in Europe that so far as his government was concerned a half-hour talk between himself and President Roosevelt would be sufficient to bring about recognition of Russia by the United States. He assumed this attitude because, "the Soviet authorities assumed the formula acquiesced in by other nations, 'that recognition should precede discussion,' would receive the president's acquiescence."¹⁰ But it was soon understood that the negotiations were to be conducted by President Roosevelt's wise formula of agreement on outstanding questions first and recognition second. This shows that the democracy in the United States does not settle important international affairs as quickly as the dictatorship in Russia.

¹⁰W. R. Moore, "Recognition of Soviet Government of Russia," Press Release, Vol. IX, p. 287.

CHAPTER III

CONFERENCES

On November 7, 1933 the Soviet Commissar, Maxim Litvinoff an exceedingly able and well-informed statesman arrived in Washington to start negotiations with Roosevelt to settle the long struggle for normal diplomatic relations between the two countries. On November 8, 1933 negotiations for recognition were started in the State Department under the direction of Secretary Hull and were completed by Acting Secretary Phillips when Hull had to leave for South America. There were no stenographers present and no reports were made, so as far as the conferences are concerned there will be a bare outline of the actual happenings given to the public and future historians.

Between November 8, 1933 and November 16, 1933, Secretary Hull, Foreign Commissar, Litvinoff and President Roosevelt conducted a number of private meetings at the State Department and at the White House. In these private meetings all points at issue between The Soviet Government and the United States were thoroughly discussed. Only the brief and uncommunication announcements of these meetings were made to the press. When President Roosevelt and Litvinoff concluded their negotiation which lasted from November 10 to November 16, the State Department released an official exchange of notes between Foreign Commissar Litvinoff and President Roosevelt which marked the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between the two governments and gave in general terms the common understanding that had been reached upon the issues that had for so long

barred recognition. These discussions between President Roosevelt and Litvinoff at the White House were vastly more important and pivotal than the discussions between Litvinoff and the officials of the State Department during the first three days after Litvinoff's arrival.

Since there were to be no reports nor stenographers present President Roosevelt and Litvinoff the Russian Representative wrote in forms of letters or notes all the important decisions made so they could be published in documents for release to future historians. Dr. Malbone Graham said that the Soviet-American settlement was almost unique in that there were no political treaties. The agreement made into a non-treaty form, actually embodied stipulations lifted from all well known Soviet treaties.

The primary motive of President Roosevelt in deciding to change the policy established by President Wilson in 1919 to that of recognizing the Russian Government was to promote trade with Russia and establish world peace.

Up until 1932 our trade with Russia had been good but in 1932 it took a tremendous drop—a drop to one-eighth its previous peak. It is true that world conditions in the early 30's played a part but those in favor of recognition could prove that the United States exports to Russia were about one-third the total of those of Great Britain and approximately one-tenth of Germany's.

Early in 1933 at the London Economic Conference Litvinoff made it known that Russia was ready to purchase \$1,000,000,000 worth of machinery, equipment, raw materials and livestock provided satisfactory credit terms and normal conditions for Soviet exports could be arranged. The importance of recognition in this connection was at once apparent.

All the United States trade rivals had officially recognized the

Soviet Government, it was felt that unless the United States recognized the Soviet Government these rivals would be in a position to freeze the trade with Russia and would cut off this outlet for American machinery, and any products that the United States might have to offer to Russia.

When we stopped normal diplomatic relations with Russia this caused a domestic crisis to develop causing a peril to arise in the Far East. Many countries were not able to meet their debts and banks went bankrupt. Moreover after the Wall Street crash in October 1929 Europe stopped buying from the United States. Russia not only continued but increased its purchases in the United States making it one of the six best markets for the United States foreign trade.

Russia continued to carry on trade relations with the United States on long-term credit bases but this was next to impossible when there were no stable political relations between the two countries and the banks were confronted with great difficulties when attempting to arrange a long-term credit for their transactions.

Although there had not been any official dealings between Russia and the United States, trading between the two countries had continued with few interruptions since the establishment of the new Soviet Government. The trade had been carried on between American individual and corporations in their private capacity and Russian Government, since Foreign trade is a government monopoly in Russia. The Soviet Government can thus adjust its exports and imports plans with a rapidity and accuracy impossible for private traders. This in fact is one reason that the business men of America were in favor of recognition. They believed by dealing directly with the government it would enable them to gauge more accurately the needs of the Soviet industry and to avoid some of the risks which

are involved in transaction with trade delegations.

Because American business men needed to know something about the Russian business technique and language the Russian government established several Russian trading agencies to furnish trade information to American exporters and importers and to transact business directly on behalf of Russia.

The four leading agencies established to conduct trade between the United States and Russia are located in New York. The leading one is the Amtorg Trading Corporation, representing in the United States the principal trusts, syndicates, trading agencies and other economic organizations of the Soviet Union. "The Amtorg Trading Corporation of New York has since 1924 represented the principal Soviet Trading and industrial enterprise."¹¹ The second important agency was the All-Russian Textile Syndicate which represented the Soviet All-Union Textile Syndicate and purchased American cotton for shipment to the Soviet Union.

The third leading agency was the Centrosoyuz-American which represented the Union of Consumers Cooperatives of the Soviet Union. The fourth agency was the Selskosoyuz-America which represented the agricultural producers, and cooperatives of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union is a continent filled with mineral riches as great or even greater than those of the United States. Russia had a demand for most of the products that the United States had to place on the market. But Russia did not have the finances to pay for the products she bought. During the 1920's Russia bought from the United States and was unable to pay; this caused a debt to accumulate and became one of the arguing points

¹¹Vera M. Dean, "Recognition of Soviet Russia," Current History, Vol. XXXIX, p. 160.

for non-recognition of Russia.

In January of 1934 in an address he was giving American Ambassador Bullitt declared,

We all know that international payments can be made only in goods, services or gold. The Soviet Union has, to be sure, a large production of gold. It is now (1933-34) more than \$50,000,000 a year; but that \$50,000,000 cannot all be used for the payment of balances in the United States, and if we desire to sell large quantities of goods to the Soviet Union, we must take large quantities of goods from the Soviet Union in exchange.¹²

There were no valid reasons why we should single out Soviet Russia as the only debt defaulter with whom we would refuse to have economic and political relations. Russia as the other countries had wealth as well as an abundance of natural resources and if she was given an opportunity she would be able to develop her foreign trade and home industry and be able to meet her obligations.

As a result of the establishment of diplomatic relations there was no doubt but what there would be a tremendous increase in Russo-American trade. The only sound basis for international trade is barter direct or triangular. Everyone knows that the United States and Russia should not make loans so large and under such conditions that they could not be repaid. For trade between the two to succeed there must be equal cooperation, the United States must exchange goods with Russia for the goods Russia has to offer. Russia's greatest need during 1933 was for heavy machinery; this was the one department of our economy which was lagging most seriously. There were no logical reasons why trade should not be developed which would permit a tremendous volume of goods to go from the United States and at the same time permit a tremendous volume of goods to

¹²Bullitt, op. cit., p. 5.

go from the United States and at the same time permit the imports from the Union of Soviet Socialist Russia which would serve to cover both a reasonable interest rate and amortization of the loans.

The fundamental fact is that Russia with one-sixth of the worlds area and 160 million active and resourceful inhabitants has again resumed normal relations with the country which is strongest today in economic resources and potential technological achievement.¹³

Trade was an immediate influence for the action taken toward the re-establishment of diplomatic relations but other factors entered into the relations also. The world situation of the early 1930's was a strong point for the desire to enter into normal relation with the Soviet Union. World peace was needed, this situation could be helped by clearing up the angle of Soviet American relation.

Events in the Far East had once again underscored the natural identity of American and Russian interests in the face of Japanese imperialism. The Manchuria incident of 1931 marked the collapse of the whole fabric of international accords reached at the Washington Conference a few years earlier. The expansion of Japan's political power on the Asiatic mainland was an imminent and dangerous threat both to American Far Eastern policy and to the security of the immediately adjacent territories of the Societ Union. Senator Johnson stated in 1933, "some move in the direction of normal relationships with Russia at this time would do more to remove perils from the Far East, and therefore from the world in general than any other single act."¹⁴

When Japan took Manchuria at once a peril arose and it was feared by

¹³See Editorial, "Russia and America Strikes Hands," The New Republic, Vol. LXXVII (Nov. 29, 1933), p. 162.

¹⁴Foster Rhea Dulles, The Road to Teheran, p. 190.

many if the United States didn't recognize Russia she would join with Japan and the United States would be in serious trouble, and the chance for world peace would be small.

"Recognition makes for understanding and peace in the solution of the problems of the Far East--it is the best guarantee for the development and maintenance of world peace."¹⁵

Right along with the question of the Far East came the discussion of claims and counter claims including the Siberia question. Mr. Litvinoff stated that by examination of documents relating to the period of 1918 to 1920 when America entered Siberia that the Soviet Government had decided to waive all claims arising out of intervention in Siberia but this didn't immediately cover Soviet claims concerning the American expedition to Archangel.

The Soviet government intended to press counter claims with respect to American occupation of Siberia during World War I, but instead by an agreement they were eliminated. The Soviet Government recognized that both in the course of intervention and at the Washington Conference in 1921 the United States not only made no attempt to appropriate Russian territory but vigorously opposed Japanese encroachments in Siberia.

... the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees that it will waive any and all claims of whatsoever character arising out of activities of military forces of the United States in Siberia, or assistance to military forces in Siberia subsequent to Jan. 1, 1918, and that such claims shall be regarded as finally settled and disposed of by this agreement.¹⁶

The United States Government in order to agree to such a thing had

¹⁵Colonel Robins, The Commercial and Financial Chronicle, Vol. XXXVIII (Dec. 2, 1933), p. 3917.

¹⁶Cong. Records, daily ed., Jan. 11, 1934, p. 466.

to abandon its original position of demanding complete settlement of all claims and debts before recognition.

The claims of the United States against Russia amounted to \$800,000,000. Of this amount \$332,519,891 represented the principal and interest of the Kerensky debt and \$441,000,000 the claims of private firms and individuals for property confiscated during the revolution.

The Soviet Government also had a large amount of claims against the United States because of American intervention in Archangel. But both Governments agreed to set these claims off against each other.

On November 22, 1933 Assistant Secretary Moore in a radio address in which he was speaking of the recognition of Soviet Government reviewed all the points agreed upon by Roosevelt and Litvinoff, and quoted from the congressional records the following paragraph that the two had signed:

... there has taken place an exchange of views with regard to methods of settling all outstanding questions of indebtedness and claims that permits us to hope for a speedy and satisfactory solution of these questions which both our governments desire to have out of the way as soon as possible.¹⁷

In the agreement of claims and counter claims the Soviet Government agreed not to take steps to enforce decisions of courts or to start new litigation about amounts due Russia from American nationals as the successor of previous Government of Russia and it was also agreed that the Soviet Government would not make claims in respect to judgment rendered by American courts in relation to property rights or interest in which the Soviet or its national may have had an interest. Litvinoff also agreed not to make any claims with respect to acts done or settlement

¹⁷Cong. Record, daily ed., January 11, 1934, p. 465.

made by or with the Government of the United States or public officials in the United States or its nationals, relating to property credits or obligations of any governments of Russia or nationals.

Besides the claims waived concerning the judgments rendered by American courts insofar as they related to property, rights or interest of one part of the Soviet Union and acts done or settlements made with the U. S. Government. President Roosevelt went further to agree that the United States Government would notify the Soviet Union Government in each case of any amount realized by the United States Government from the release and assignment to it of the amounts due, the Soviet Government and the amount due on the claim of the Russian Volunteer Fleet.

... Recognition will waive any and all claims of whatsoever character arising out of activities of military forces of the United States in Siberia, or assistance to military forces in Siberia, subsequent to January 1, 1918, and that such claims shall be regarded as finally settled and disposed of by this agreement.¹⁸

Propaganda was another very important issue discussed in the conference of Roosevelt and Litvinoff. During the period of non-recognition the Soviet Government had encouraged and financed dangerous communist activities, with the objective of destroying the existing systems of government in the United States and other nations. They did this with the purpose of establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. Propaganda had always been one of the main reasons that the United States had refused to recognize the Soviet Government for the past sixteen years. The Third International which headed the propaganda program had its headquarters at Moscow. By 1933 the Soviet Government had disavowed responsibility

¹⁸Philip M. Brown, "The Recognition of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," The American Journal of International Law, Vol. XXVII, p. 292.

for the activities of the Third International.

Soviet leaders now felt that the principal task of Communism was to establish economic and social stability in Russia whenever possible with the cooperation of capitalistic countries. It seemed that the Communist party was beginning to abandon its revolutionary aims and to have more immediate internal goals. Even the leading newspapers and magazines in the United States were beginning to change their opinion toward Russian propaganda and admitted the advantages of closer trade relations with Russia.

The American Foundation conducted a poll among twelve hundred newspapers throughout the United States and it showed that sixty-three percent of them favored recognition and another ten percent were willing to accept it under certain conditions.

Litvinoff being aware of all of this was ready to make it

... a fixed policy of the Soviet Government to respect the undisputable right of the United States to order its own life within its own jurisdiction in its own way and that Russia would not interfere in any way in the internal affairs of the United States.¹⁹

He went still further and agreed that no organization in any form under Russia control would be permitted in any way to injure the tranquillity, propriety and order of security of any part of the United States, its territory or possessions.

Litvinoff not willing to leave any loop holes went still further in his negotiations with Roosevelt by agreeing that it would also be the fixed policy of the Soviet Government not to permit the formation or residence in Soviet territory of any organization or group and would prevent

¹⁹Cong. Record, daily ed., Jan. 16, 1934, p. 466.

the activities of any such organization or group having as an aim the overthrow or preparation for the overthrow or bringing about by force a change in the political or social order of the whole or any part of the United States.

The pledge not to interfere in the other's internal affairs, not to permit the formation or residence within its jurisdiction of any group aiming at a forcible change in the political or social order of the other was signed by Roosevelt and Litvinoff. This agreement was very complete and left nothing out that might have caused any grounds for legal propaganda by the Communists. President Roosevelt was interested in seeing that the Americans going to Russia permanently or temporarily would have in all respects the same freedom of conscience and religious liberty which they had in America. And Roosevelt would not consent to recognition until this matter was settled satisfactorily. In his note Roosevelt stated very carefully the specific right he wanted Litvinoff and the Russian Government to agree to carry out. Litvinoff not only agreed but he described freedom of conscience as the Fixed Policy of the Soviet Government and he furnished a comprehensive summary of existing laws assuring the religious freedom of foreigners within the Soviet territory. The law as Litvinoff reviewed it reads as follows:

A free performance of religious rites is guaranteed as long as it does not interfere with public order and is not accompanied by interference with the rights of citizens of the Soviet Union. Local authorities possess the right in such cases to adopt all necessary measures to preserve public order and safety. (Decree of January 23, 1918, art. 5.)²⁰

President Roosevelt in his note wanted to be sure that the Americans

²⁰Cong. Record, daily ed., Jan. 11, 1934, p. 464.

in Russia would be allowed to conduct without annoyance or molestation of any kind, any type of religious services and rites of a ceremonial nature, including baptismal, confirmation, communion, marriages and burial rites, in any language used in the practice of the religious faith which the individual belonged, in churches, houses or any appropriate building for such services. Roosevelt also requested that Litvinoff sign a note saying that the Americans would have the right to collect from their co-religionists and to receive from abroad voluntary offerings for religious purposes and they would have an opportunity to teach religion of their own choice to their children in their own way. He also wanted to be sure that the Americans in Russia would be permitted to bury their dead in accordance with their religious practice in burial grounds established and maintained by them with the approval of the competent authorities on sanitary laws and regulations. And the Americans in Russia would have the right to have their spiritual needs ministered to by clergymen, priests, rabbis or other ecclesiastical functionaries and these would not be denied entry into the territory of Russia because of their ecclesiastical status.

These specified rights were granted to American nationals in a signed statement by Litvinoff with an added paragraph that read,

That the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, while reserving to itself the right of refusing visas to Americans desiring to enter the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on personnel grounds, does not intend to base such refusals on the fact of such person having an ecclesiastical status.²¹

Litvinoff not only agreed to the specific rights requested by Roosevelt but he signed a statement saying that the Soviet Government would

²¹State Department, Eastern European Series No. 2, Publication 557, p. 4.

include them in a consular convention and give them the same rights as given Germany in 1925 and nationals of other countries. He didn't agree to any special privileges for Americans in these religious matters but quoted existing Soviet laws pertaining to religion, and these confirmed the things desired by Roosevelt.

Another important matter to which President Roosevelt gave particular attention was the treatment of our nationals in Russia who might have been accused of any criminal offense. This was especially important because in April of 1933 the Soviet Government had refused to admit British counsel to attend the trial of six British engineers.

To prevent any such circumstances from arising President Roosevelt stated in a note to Mr. Litvinoff that the American diplomatic and consular officers in the Soviet Union must be zealous in guarding the rights of American nationals, particularly the right to a fair and public trial and that they were to be represented by a counsel of their choice. To prevent any misunderstanding on the part of the Soviet Government as to what Roosevelt meant he added,

We shall expect that the nearest American diplomatic or consular officer shall be notified immediately of any arrest or detention of any American national, and that he shall promptly be offered the opportunity to communicate and converse with such national.²²

Mr. Litvinoff agreed that just as soon as diplomatic relations were established a consular convention would be negotiated giving our nationals rights with reference to legal protection no less favorable than those enjoyed by citizens of the nations most favored in that respect and that such rights would be extended to nationals of the United States at once.

²²Cong. Record, daily ed., Jan. 11, 1934, p. 465.

Again Litvinoff referred to the agreement between Germany and the Soviet Union in 1925 and quoted the law written then.

This involved Article II and the Protocol of Article II of the agreement where the conditions and legal protection in general concerning Germany and the Soviet Union were considered. Article II makes it a law that each party must take necessary measures to inform the consul of the other immediately when a national of the country he represents is arrested in his district and this applies to a prisoner transferred from one place of detention to another. Included in the final Protocol is the maximum time for notification designated as a period not to exceed seven times twenty-four hours and in large towns, including capitols of districts, within a period not to exceed three times twenty-four hours. Notification can be made by person arrested or by the authorities themselves. Any request made by the consular representatives must be granted without delay. There is one provision which said that the consular representative will not be granted the right to require officials of the courts or prisons to withdraw during his interview with the person under arrest. President Roosevelt after a study of the Article II and Protocol was willing to make the agreement by accepting Litvinoff's note.

To make negotiations complete and leave nothing out that might cause future trouble between the Soviet Government and the American Government President Roosevelt requested a clarification of the Soviet's attitude toward economic espionage. This was an important matter in that it would remove the danger of Americans being punished for disseminating economic information impressed with the stamp of secrecy. The matter of economic espionage was dealt with, because this subject had received much notice in connection with a recent trial of certain English engineers in the Soviet

Union.

Litvinoff in response to Roosevelt's note concerning economic espionage said that information to the effect that the dissemination of economic information from the Soviet Union was allowed only in so far as the information had been published in newspapers and magazines was not true. Because in Russia as in all other countries, the right to obtain economic information was limited only in case of business and production secrets and in the case of the employment of forbidden methods such as bribery, theft, fraud to obtain the information desired.

The category of business and production secrets includes the official economic plans, insofar as they have not been made public. This did not pertain to individual reports concerning the production conditions and the general conditions of individual enterprises.

In his direct reply to President Roosevelt's questions concerning economic espionage Litvinoff stated that, "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republic has no reason to complicate or hinder the critical examination of its economic organization."²³

Litvinoff said that everyone in the Soviet Union had the right to talk about economic matters and to receive information about such matters in the Soviet Union providing the information for which he had asked or which had been given was not such as might be on the basis of special regulations issued by responsible enterprises. This principal applied mainly to information concerning economic trends and tendencies.

It was late Thursday November 16, 1933 before President Roosevelt and Litvinoff reached the desired agreement on all the issues and

²³Cong. Record, daily ed., January 11, 1934, p. 465.

President Roosevelt stated that he would reestablish normal diplomatic relations with the Soviet Government. President Roosevelt's decision was announced to the public early November 17, 1933 and before the sun sank behind the Blue Ridge Mountains there had been communicated to the public the final texts of the agreements obtained by the President.

As far as the conferences are concerned there can not be a full picture exposed to the eye of the future historian. Basic information was gleaned briefly through signed notes between Roosevelt and Litvinoff.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The word recognition was not mentioned, but by signing of notes between Roosevelt and Litvinoff including all questions and agreements desired normal diplomatic relations were established between the two countries. On November 17, 1933 there were released to the public and for the benefit of future historians, five exchanges of notes, two declarations and one joint statement dealing with claims and counter claims taking in trade and debts questions.

The establishment of friendly relations marked the final liquidation of one of the most tragic consequences of the World War, that of breaking off relations with the Soviet Government. This act of Roosevelt's in 1933 welded a vital link into international comity among the nations and it helped to make smoother the problems resulting in the Far East and made possible a stronger trade relations.

The act of settling important issues by the two countries made possible also effective understandings and conventions to maintaining international price levels for the benefits of all nations engaged in foreign trade and it was the best guarantee for the development and maintenance of world peace.

Thomas Jefferson in 1809 in speaking of Russia and the United States said that the United States had in character and practice a common interest, that of trying to be a peaceable nation. It was in this same attitude of Jefferson, that of trying to be peaceable that President

Roosevelt and Litvinoff proceeded to resume normal relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Throughout the conferences President Roosevelt and Litvinoff approached the questions seriously but in a friendly and fearless spirit, leaving no points out that might later be the cause of disagreement. The cultivation of tolerance between the United States and the Soviet Union did much to the stabilization of international law and international relations at a time when stability and confidence were the world's most needed thing. On Thanksgiving day, November 17, 1933, before the Georgia Bicentennial Celebration President Roosevelt made the following statement:

I believe sincerely that the most impelling motive that has lain behind the conversation which were successfully concluded yesterday, between Russia and the United States was the desire of both countries for peace and for the strengthening of the peaceful purpose of the civilized world.²⁴

Mr. Vanderburg before the 73rd Congress, 2nd. Session was very impressed with the way President Roosevelt conducted the conference. He said that if any contract had to be written between the United States and Russia that the notes exchanged between Litvinoff and President Roosevelt were as complete as could be devised to cover the situations which had so disturbed the viewpoint of the United States in respect to the Russian actions over the long period of time.

After much discussion and agreement upon the issues President Roosevelt concluded the conference on November 16, 1933 by saying that he was happy to inform the public that the United States Government had decided to establish normal diplomatic relations with the Government of the

²⁴F. D. Roosevelt, "Address to Georgia Bicentennial Celebration," Press Release, Vol. IX (December, 1933), p. 279.

Soviet Union and to exchange ambassadors. Litvinoff expressed the same desire and in his note to President Roosevelt he said that the Russian Government would exchange ambassadors with the United States.

President Roosevelt appointed William Christian Bullitt as the United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union. Bullitt was a man of extraordinary intellectual and physical vigor who had served as a personal emissary of President Wilson, having personally first hand information and knowledge of the Government and social condition in Russia, which would make him even more qualified for the vital position of ambassador.

Secretary Moore in his address on the Recognition of Russia said of Bullitt,

There is not any other man combining first-hand knowledge of governmental and social conditions in Russia with complete information as to all of the details of the recent negotiations and in the light of its results, such a full conception of the duties that have to be performed by our ambassador and his subordinates in order to make certain that the relations between the two countries shall be as friendly and mutually beneficial as the most sanguine Americans desire.²⁵

William Bullitt was a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He had had much experience in political machinery both at home and abroad. Because of his past record as personal emissary of President Wilson, it was assured that he would aid in the promoting of friendly relations between the Russians and the Americans.

Congress had no part in the actual establishment of diplomatic relations but it could vote on the ambassador. Roosevelt recommended Bullitt and the Senate was willing to accept Roosevelt's recommendation. William Bullitt was appointed to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

²⁵Moore, op. cit., p. 293.

to the Union of Soviet Russia.

As a result of the announcement of the establishment of diplomatic relations William Phillips, Acting Secretary of State, notified the Russian Financial Attache, S. Ughet, that he would no longer be needed and Phillips also notified the Consul of Russia, Joseph A. Conry at Boston, that his office would no longer be needed in the United States. The two offices of Russian Consul General located at Chicago and Seattle were also done away with.

Recognition resulted in numerous changes in the diplomatic personnel connected with Russian questions. When recognition was announced Secretary of State Phillips had to send out a circular instruction to all American diplomatic missions, on November 17, 1933 stating that

In view of the recognition thus accorded by the Government of the United States to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, you should enter into cordial official and social relations with the established practice of the past at which you are stationed. Soviet passports should be treated henceforth as passports of other recognized governments.²⁶

²⁶State Department, Eastern European Series No. 1, Publication 528, p. 19.

CONCLUSION

One of the greatest events ever to take place at the White House occurred on November 16, 1933 when President Roosevelt, after a long discussion of ten days with the Russian Representative Litvinoff, announced to the public that normal diplomatic relations would be established with the Soviet Government.

The main purpose of this action was to aid in world peace and make for a better condition under which foreign trade could operate. Other issues discussed and settled were: (1) claims and counter claims concerning trade and methods of settling debts, (2) the Siberian question, (3) propaganda, (4) legal protection and right to trial (5) religious liberty and (6) economic espionage. All of these were thoroughly discussed by President Roosevelt and Russian representative Litvinoff and both agreed to the terms asked.

After recognition was granted it was necessary for the United States to send an ambassador to Russia. President Roosevelt appointed William Bullitt to Russia as the Ambassador because he already had been over there and knew something about the conditions there and had knowledge of what would be needed. His appointment was approved by the Senate.

Secretary of State Phillips notified the Russian Financial Attache, S. Ughet and Consul of Russia, Josepha Conry, that their positions expired as of the date of recognition. Likewise also the offices of the Russian Consul General were revoked.

The recognition of Russia brought to an end a long period of abnormal relations between the Russian and the United States Governments.

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