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Documentary Evidence

Secretary of State Lansing and President Wilson Have Been Fully Informed Regarding The Soviet Government By Accredited Representative

(From the International Relations Section of the Nation, New York, April 5)

The documents printed below comprise (1) the letter of L.C.A.K. Martens, official representative in the United States of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, dated at New York, March 18, which accompanied the submission of his credentials to the Secretary of State; and (2) a Memorandum accompanying the letter. A summary of the Memorandum was handed to representatives of the press on March 20. Mr. Martens, by profession an engineer, was for several years the representative in this country of the Demidoff Iron and Steel Works in Russia. Mr. Nuorteva, the secretary of the Bureau established by Mr. Martens, was for some time the head of the Finnish Information Bureau at New York; and has also represented the interests of the Russian Soviet Government. The temporary offices of the Bureau are at 299 Broadway, New York.

Hon. Robert Lansing,

Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir: I have the honor to enclose you herewith original credentials of my appointment as representative of the Socialist Federated Soviet Republic of Russia in the United States, together with an English translation of the same.

I have also the honor to submit a Memorandum of the present political and economic conditions of Soviet Russia, based upon information supplied to me by my Government, and, furthermore, I enclose a translation of the Constitution of the Federated Soviet Republic of Russia.

Holding myself entirely at the disposal of the United States Government for any additional information or for any conference, official or unofficial,

I am, Sir, very respectfully yours,

(signed) L. A. Martens,
Representative in the United States.
S. Nuorteva,
Secretary of the Bureau.

MEMORANDUM

The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic was established on the 6th of November, 1917, by a spontaneous uprising of the toiling masses of Russia. Its Government, the Council of the People's Commissars, is a Government controlled by and responsible to all such members of the population of Russia as are willing to perform useful work, physical or mental. Those who, while not being unable to work, deliberately refuse to exercise their productive abilities, choosing to live on the fruits of the labor of the other people, are eliminated from participation in the control of my Government.

Under present conditions those who are willing to work for the common good number at least 90 per cent of the adult population in the area controlled by the Soviets. All such people have full political and civil rights.

The basis of citizenship in Russia being industrial and economic rather than political, and the social system being of such a nature that every person engaged in useful social labor is bound to participate in public affairs, the percentage of people directly participating in the management of society in Soviet Russia is higher than has been the case until now anywhere in the world. The Russian Soviet Republic affords thereby the widest possible field for a real expression of a conscious popular will. While the Soviet Government is a Government of the working classes, the abolition of the exploitation of labor and the elimination thereby of class division creates a productive community in which all able inhabitants are bound to become

useful workers who have full political rights. My Government thus becomes the expression of fully one hundred per cent of the people. It should also be noted that political rights are granted in Russia to every inhabitant engaged in useful work, though he be not a citizen of Russia but only temporarily working there.

The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic was rapidly acclaimed by the vast majority of the laboring people throughout the former Empire of Russia. It has maintained itself in the face of manifold plots and opposition on the part of small groups of the former ruling classes, who in many cases enlisted foreign help and who employed the most unscrupulous methods in their fight against the Soviet institutions. Yet nowhere in Russia could such elements of their own accord organize any noticeable resistance to the popular will, as expressed by the Soviet Government. Only in sparsely populated outlying districts and in such of those districts where our opponents had access to foreign military help, has it been possible for them to maintain any organization and to wrest from the control of Soviet Russia some territory. Today, after sixteen months of existence, the Russian Soviet Republic finds itself more securely established than at any previous time.

During the current year the Soviet Government has been particularly successful in retaking vast territories wrested from its control during the preceding months. By February, 1919, the Soviet troops on the northern front had retaken the city of Shenkursk and adjoining territory. On the eastern front they have lost Perm, but they have regained Pereufa, Ufa, Sterlitamak, Bellbey, Orenburg, and Uralsk. The railway connection with central Asia is at present in the hands of the Soviet Government. On the southern front they have taken the railway stations at Pavorino, Alexikovo, Polovaya, Kalatsk, and Begutchar, which have assured them of a control over the railways of that region, while on the southeastern front the Ukrainian Soviet troops threaten the army of Krasnov from Ugansk in the rear. In the Ukraine the Soviet troops have acquired Kharkov, Yekaterinoslav, Poltava, Krementchug, Tchernigov, and Obruch. In the Baltic provinces and in Lithuania the Soviet power has been extended to a great part of the territory formerly occupied by Germans, with the large cities of Minsk, Vilna, Riga, Mitau, Dvinsk, Windau, and others in the control of adherents of the Soviet.

These last-mentioned successes are largely due to the fact that, after the evacuation by the German armies of the territories wrested from Russia during the war, and by the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which the Soviet was forced to sign under duress, the workers in such territories everywhere are rising to support the ideals and the social order represented by the Soviet Republic.

The resentment against former ruling classes who did not hesitate at inviting foreign military help against their own people, has evinced itself by an ever-increasing popular support of the Soviet Government, even among such people as at first were either hostile or indifferent to the Soviet rule. Men and women of literary or technical training and of other intellectual accomplishments are now in great numbers rallying to the support of the Soviet Government, and co-operate with it in all administrative branches. The peasantry of Russia, the great majority of whom from the very outset were supporting the workers' revolution, have become more consciously attached to our social system, realizing that in the support of the workers' republic lies the only guarantee for their remaining in control of the land which they have wrested from their former oppressors. The economic isolation of Russia, which so far has prevented the Soviet Government from adequately supplying the peasants with implements that they so badly need, is, of course, causing hardship among the peasantry; yet the peasants generally