

explanation "by special permission from the 'committee.'"

But the word captain is an anachronism. Rule 2 of the Decree for the Democratization of the Fleet reads: "All denominations of ranks existing up till now which serve to show class distinctions are abolished and all are to be called Seamen of the War Fleet of the Russian Republic."

Furthermore, "All giving of titles is to be abolished and all men are to bear the name of their calling in accordance with the special function that they fulfil; for example, grazhdanin kommander (citizen commander). In like manner it is 'citizen artilleryman,' 'citizen electro-technician,' etc." But captain is not the only anachronism. His gold braid is an anachronism likewise, for on the new uniform common to all seamen the trappings and tinsel are at a minimum.

The citizen commander pointed down the corridor past the princesses' suites to the great cabin from whose precincts he said that he was debarred. It was consecrated to the meetings of the Central Committee of the Baltic Sea—or, as it is more familiarly known, the Centrobalt. It consisted of one representative for every contingent of 1,000 sailors, making a committee of about 65. This General Committee is divided into four general departments.

The Administrative Committee deals with questions about the make-up of the fleet, the construction of new ships, and the conditions in the factories where these ships are made. It determines the personnel of the crews, the transfer of sailors from one ship to another, the rate of pay, mobilization, and demobilization.

The Supply Committee looks after the provisioning of the fleet with food, coal, oil and medicines. It looks after the finances of the fleet, accepting the new ships that are built and paying for them.

The Political Committee conducts a propaganda by sending to the front, to the barracks, and throughout the countryside, men with papers, books and speeches. The rules provide that all seamen are free to become members of any political, national, religious, economic or professional organizations, societies, or unions. They have the right to preach freely and openly, verbally, by writing, or in print, their political, religious, or other views. The juridical section of this committee examines into scandals and conflicts between sailors and commanders. The inquest section makes inquiries into bad ships, counter-revolutionary activities, and like matters.

The War Marine Department (Voyenno-Morskoy-Otdiel) is the executive head of the fleet. It consists of a commander and two assistants, one managing the operative and the other the technical side. In all operative and technical affairs the War Marine Department is of supreme authority. All the orders to the fleet, to the smaller units, and to the individual ships are given under the signature of the chief and countersigned by a number of the department attached to his service. In matters of navigation and technique this commanding staff is in complete control over the whole organization both in and out of battle. It holds command over the drilling; and fixes the time for the sailing of the ships. Having such a large measure of authority, it is responsible for its actions before the plenum of the Central Committee and the higher organs of state. In all orders and dispositions regarding the technical and operative side of the fleet the chief of this department must assume full responsibility for results. As for the work executed in conjunction with the Central Committee on economic, administrative, or political affairs, the chief is responsible only when the resolution of the Central Committee is in conformity with his own report. If the resolution passed by the Central Committee is opposed to the views announced by the chief on the subject, he is freed from all responsibility as to the results of its execution.

By the irony of history these seamen were put to work upon the problems of radical democracy in the very cabin where but a few months before the most reactionary autocrat in all the world held control. My credentials secured me entrance to the cabin which had none of the elegance that I had imagined. The piano and other decorative furnishings had been removed, while the table and chairs were protected with brown canvas covers. It had been turned into a workshop and carried as business-like an air about it as did the seamen who were conducting their routine work in it. Ordinary seamen they were who had suddenly turned legislators, administrators, and clerks. They were a bit awkward in their new role but they clung to it with desperate earnestness for sixteen hours a day. For they were dreamers held by an ideal whose drive and scope appear in the address which they presented to me after my greetings had been interpreted by the captain.

TO THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AMERICAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY,  
ALBERT WILLIAMS, IN REPLY TO HIS GREETING TO THE  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE BALTIC FLEET

The Russian democracy in the person of the representatives of the whole Baltic Fleet sends warm greetings to the entire proletariat and all the workers of the country beyond the ocean and hearty thanks for the greetings

sent by our brothers in America.

Comrade Williams is the first swallow come flying across to see us to the cold waves of the Baltic Fleet, which now for a period of over three years has been dyed by the blood of the sons of one family, the International.

The Russian democracy, the Russian proletariat, will strive up to its last breath, to unite everybody under the red banner of the International. When starting the Revolution, the Russian democracy did not have in view a political revolution alone. The task of all true fighters for Freedom consisted in the creation of a social revolution and the advanced vanguard of the revolutionaries in the person of the members of the Russian Fleet and the workmen will fight to the end for the realization of these great ideas and will hope to find sympathy, an answer to their call, and help in other countries.

The flame of the Russian Revolution, we are sure, will spread over the whole world and light a fire in the hearts of the workers of all countries, and we shall obtain support in our struggle for a speedy general peace.

The free Baltic Fleet is awaiting with impatience the moment, when it will be able to go to America and relate there all that the Russian democracy went through before the revolution under the yoke of czarism and capital and what it is feeling now when the banner of the struggle for the freedom of peoples is unfurled.

LONG LIFE TO THE AMERICAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.  
LONG LIVE THE PROLETARIAT OF ALL COUNTRIES.  
LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL.  
LONG LIVE GENERAL PEACE.

The Central Committee of the Baltic Fleet, Fourth Convention.

(SEAL)

(Signed by the officers and thirty-four members of the Committee.)

Feodor Averichin, secretary of the Central Committee, escorted me on the pilot-boat to his battleship, the "Respublika." The entire crew was assembled on deck to give cheers and to hear the news from the first foreign tovarishch (comrade). The declaration that he was an American Internationalist put him immediately at one with 960 out of 1,020 members of the crew. The officer Zazloki translated, but a speech was not necessary. The phraseology of the new revolutionary ideology has entirely displaced the old patriotic and religious ideology in Russia. The mere reiteration of the new battle cries has power to charm and in spirit these new disciples of revolt. The sounding of them in my foreign accent drew such an outburst of applause that it echoed like a salvo from all the ship's batteries. A testimonial was inscribed with an array of seals and signatures in the characteristic Russian manner.

The photographer was called upon to make a record of this historic event—the American and the Russian Internationalist shaking hands on the bridge of the battleship "Respublika" off the coast of Finland. It was done amidst great acclamation from the crew.

In all this the commander and his staff hung on the edge of the crowd as if they were outsiders or outcasts. I pointed this out to Averichin and suggested that it savored of humiliation. He averred that the proceedings were quite in accord with regulation Number 37, which provided that the commanding staff be debarred from all affairs which were of state or international significance.

"But isn't your commander a good fellow?" I asked. "He looks that way to me."

"Why, yes," Averichin replied. "Even before the revolution he was a good fellow and now he is one of the best in the world. So if you want him in the picture, all right."

The captain smiled and took his place in the picture amidst much applause from the crew. After the love feast we retired to the ship committees' quarters where I was plied with innumerable questions about the American navy ranging from "Do the American navy officers reflect solely the viewpoint of the upper classes?" to "Are the American battleships kept as clean as this one of ours?" As we talked, eggs and steak were brought to me, while a great plate of potatoes was served each member of the committee. I commented upon the difference.

"Yours is officers' fare and ours is sailors'," they exclaimed.

"Pochemoo, revolutsia?" (Why, after the revolution?) I exclaimed.

They laughed and said, "The revolution has given us the thing that we value most—our freedom. We are masters of our own ship. We are masters of our own lives. We have our own courts. We can have shore-leave when not in service. Off duty we have the right to wear civilian clothes. We do not demand that the revolution should give us anything." Afterwards, however, these men became a bit more ambitious gastronomically, though on account of the shortage of food the democratization of the ration was accomplished more by sabotage on the officers' ration than by levelling up that of the sailors.

The crew not only elects its own committee—generally on the basis of one member for every fifty sailors—but likewise chooses all its officers. For the position of commander the list of candidates is drawn up by the ship's committee together with the flagman. For the position of assistant commander the list is made up by the committee in consultation with the commander. The balloting then proceeds on the basis of general suffrage and the election is valid if two-thirds of the crew participate.

Each group of specialized workers elects its own head. The electro-technicians elect one of the number as chief. The divers