

publicity bureaus, and other bodies. And all the time wretched crowds of refugees were pressing eastward, toward Vladivostok—Russians, Serbs, Greeks, Poles, Jews—men and women and children of all nationalities and conditions. They settled in railway cars, railway stations, military barracks—wherever there were four walls and a roof.

The Zemstvo officials in Vladivostok worked like beavers. Amid all the difficulties and mistakes, one saw clearly that a strong democratic system of government was gradually emerging. At the City of Tomsk the several Siberian Zemstvos were being co-ordinated, and a central government was gradually but certainly evolving and assuming definite outlines. At the same time about 90 members of the original Russian Constituent Assembly which had been dispersed by the Bolsheviks, assembled at Ufa, a town on the Siberian side of the Ural Mountains. National groups added to the representation and an All-Russian Convention was held. The convention elected a Directorate of Five to organize an All-Russian government. The seat of the new government was Omsk.

The All-Russian Directorate fell to work. The several ministries were organized and the labor of rebuilding the country proceeded apace.

One heard very little about the Bolsheviks at this time. The fact was that the Siberian Soviets had never gone to great extremes, as in European Russia, and the changes from Zemstvo to Soviet government and back again to Zemstvo government had not been of such a drastic nature as to cause great bitterness. The mass of the people were very hopeful and had great confidence in their new Zemstvo officials, whom they felt to be truly representative of their interests and ideals.

Their attitude toward the Americans was that of a small boy in distress who sees his strong older brother coming to his rescue.

"The Americans are our brothers," I heard on all sides. "The Americans fought for their own liberty and won it. Now they have come to help us win our liberty. They will show us how to establish a United States of Russia."

The newspapers were full of accounts of the excellence of the American soldiers: how they cooked their coffee in the morning by the side of the railway train; how they laughed and played and sang; how their officers wore nearly the same clothing as the men, and were neither arrogant nor cruel; how considerate and polite they were with women; and how generous with cigarettes and kopeks.

The Zemstvos were working out a scheme of government on the model of the United States. "By the time we are through," one of their leading officials said to me, "we shall have your American Constitution, with such changes as will accommodate it to the peculiarities of Russian life. The particular changes to which I refer are such as will allow of a broader expansion along the lines of national, state, county and municipal ownership of public utilities."

"We have established a special Bureau in our Zemstvo," the chairman told me, "whose business it is to obtain all possible information about the way America lives and works, so that we can teach the Siberians the best possible methods. Permit me to introduce you to the chief of this bureau—M. Afanasyeff."

And the excellent Afanasyeff proceeded to explain to me the workings of his bureau. . . .

Such was the condition of Siberia in the early days of October 1918.

#### First Inroads of the New Autocracy

One morning, about the middle of October, I found M. Medvleyeff, the Chairman of the Maritime Province Zemstvo (an office equivalent to that of governor with us) in a gloomy mood.

He had received a disquieting piece of news. A Commissar was arriving in Vladivostok, sent by the All-Russian Directorate at Omsk, to superintend the affairs of the Province. What the exact function of this Commissar would be he did not know. A sort of inspector, to watch over the Constitution of the Province? But the Constitution of the Province provided for no such office. It was very disquieting.

The Commissar, M. Zimmerman, indeed arrived in Vladivostok, and