

## The Situation in Russia

THE gravest anxieties of the Allies to-day are not concerning the continued heavy fighting on the Western front, nor even the submarine menace which to some extent puts in peril the transportation of troops, munitions and food. The situation that must cause the most uneasiness is that which is found in Russia. A revolt against a long-established autocracy usually thrusts to the front of public affairs men having little or no fitness for the responsibility of government, and too often some reckless and unscrupulous men who use the opportunity to promote their own ends. It was a happy condition when, for the moment at least, the revolution which so suddenly broke out in Russia found for its leaders a group of men of character and ability who, while differing widely in many things, were ready to unite in giving the country a constitutional government. Whether these men can now hold their ground or be obliged to make way for others of much more radical and irresponsible character is the most serious question, for if the men who form the present Provisional Government have to stand aside and the more radical group obtain power there will be little probability of the continued co-operation of Russia with the Allies. Indeed, there is too much room for fear that the leaders of the "Workmen's Council and Soldiers Delegates," if permitted to control the situation, would enter into peace negotiations with Germany, without stopping to consider what is due to Great Britain, France, Italy and the smaller nations joined to them in the war. The withdrawal of Russia from the Allies' cause would at this stage be a movement fraught with grave danger to the other nations at present engaged in the conflict with Germany.

The moderate attitude of the Provisional Government gave some offence to the extremists at the beginning of the revolution. To Professor Miliukoff, who had taken the position of Foreign Minister, was assigned the task of making announcement to the people of the dethronement of the Czar and the formation of the new administration. He did so in a speech which has now become famous. He pleaded earnestly for unity of action. "We, the members of the present Cabinet," he said, "have many old and important quarrels and differences. Perhaps these differences will become very important and serious; but to-day they are set aside in the face of the common and important task which has not yet been completely accomplished, the task of creating the new popular authority in the place of the old authority that has fallen. We must be united in this new movement. Therefore let us be united by setting aside political quarrels which are perhaps important, but which might to-day tear from our hands the fruits of victory." Of the manner in which the Cabinet had been formed, he said:

"Somebody asks me, 'Who elected you?' Nobody elected us, because if we had waited for a popular convention, we would not have been able to seize the authority from the hands of the enemy. We would have quarreled over whom to elect, and the enemy would have had time to organize and defeat you and us. It was the Russian revolution that elected us." (Loud and long applause). It was very fortunate that at the necessary moment, when one could not wait, there was at hand a group of men who were sufficiently known to the people through their political past, and against

whom there was no possibility to direct charges, under the blows of which the old authority fell. But we remember only too well that we ourselves only recently defended the policy that the Government must be responsible to the elected of the people. We shall not exercise this authority for a single minute after the elected of the people tell us that they wish to see in our places others more deserving of their confidence. (Applause). Believe me, gentlemen, that we do not assume authority because of desire for power. It is not reward and it is not to satisfy our desires, but service and sacrifice. (Loud applause). And as soon as we are told that the people no longer need these sacrifices, we shall step aside, thanking you for the chance you have given us. But we shall not give up this authority now, when it is necessary to strengthen the victory of the people, and when the authority, if it fell from our hands, might pass into the hands of the enemy. (Applause)."

As he proceeded to mention the names of the men in the Cabinet there were signs of some disapproval. The name of the Premier, Prince Lvoff, was received with the cry of "landlord." "Yes," said Prof. Miliukoff, "landlord, but Prince Lvoff is the leader of Zemstvo Russia, and the Zemstvo is the only organized group that will make it possible later to organize the other classes of Russian society." The explanation elicited applause, and then, to reassure the democratic sections, Prof. Miliukoff continued:

"And, gentlemen, I am glad to tell you that the more democratic elements will also have their representative in our ministry. I have just received the consent of my comrade, Kerensky, to occupy a post in Russia's first people's Cabinet. (Wild applause). We are inexpressibly happy to turn over to this faithful public worker this ministry, where he will handle justly all the supporters of the old regimes, all these Sturmers and Sukhomlinoffs. (Applause). The cowardly heroes of the days, now forever past by the will of fate, are in the hands of justice administered by Kerensky. (Wild applause and shouts). You wish to know the other names. (Shouts, 'And you?')"

Prof. Miliukoff, in modest terms, stated that he was to be Foreign Minister, an announcement that was received with great applause. "Perhaps," he said, "in this post I shall be a weak minister, but I can promise you that under my direction the secrets of the Russian people will not fall into the hands of our enemies." The applause which followed indicated that treason was one of the crimes of which some former ministers were believed to have been guilty. Prof. Miliukoff continued:

"Now I shall give a name which I know will arouse here protests. Alexander Guchkoff has been my political enemy (cries, 'Friend') during the whole existence of the Duma. But, gentlemen, we are now political friends, and one must be just to one's enemy. You know that Guchkoff, in the third Duma, worked to reorganize the Russian army, still disorganized by the Manchurian disaster. He, therefore, laid the first stone for the victory which our renovated and reborn army will win in the present great conflict. Guchkoff and I are quite different types. I am a former professor, accustomed to give lectures, while Guchkoff is a man of action. And now, at this moment, while

I talk with you in this hall, Guchkoff is on the streets, organizing for victory. (Applause). What would you have said if, instead of stationing the troops at the railway stations where one was expecting the arrival of troops hostile to the change, Guchkoff had taken part in our political discussions, and the hostile troops, having occupied the railway stations, would have occupied the streets and then this very hall? What then would have been left of you and me? (Exclamations of approval — shouts, 'It's true' — questions, 'And Minister of the Navy?') Until we find a worthy candidate, we shall also turn over to Guchkoff the Ministry of the Navy."

Prof. Miliukoff, who appeared to have the confidence of the people generally, continued to explain how they had endeavored to have all interests represented in the Provisional Government. When he mentioned that it was proposed to have the Grand Duke Michael, made Regent, with Prince Alexis to succeed, there were loud cries against "the old dynasty." Prof. Miliukoff replied:

"Yes, it is the old dynasty, which perhaps you do not like and which perhaps I also do not like. But at the present moment it is not a question of what we like. We cannot leave without answer and without decision the question of the form of political organization. Our view is a parliamentary, constitutional monarchy. Perhaps others will have other views. But if we begin to quarrel about this, instead of deciding it immediately, then Russia will find herself in a state of civil war, and the regime that has just been destroyed will re-establish itself. We have not the right to allow this."

At the conclusion of the speech Prof. Miliukoff was generally applauded. But the dissent that had been manifested was evidently of a widespread character. Very soon the hostility to any further rule of the Romanoff family became so strong that the proposal respecting the Regency was abandoned and assurances were given the people that at a later stage they would be permitted to determine the new form of government. Concessions of this kind enabled the Provisional Government to hold its position for a little while, with promise of stability. Now it seems the forces of disorder are overpowering those who have labored so hard for the establishing of a strong constitutional government. The Council of Workmen and Soldiers' Delegates are interfering with the work of the Provisional Government in a manner that may only end in disaster. The general who has accepted the command of the army in Petrograd, refusing to submit to the rule of this body, resigned in disgust. Now Guchkoff, the Minister of War, whose ability and services were so eloquently recognized by Miliukoff in the speech we have quoted, has refused to accept the Council's dictation and has resigned his office in a letter in which he warns the people that they are on the verge of conditions that are likely to bring ruin to Russia at the very moment when freedom was brought within their grasp. Kerenski, in an alarming letter, warns the people that unless a better spirit is manifested, there will be civil war. Miliukoff himself has been obliged to resign. An effort is being made to meet the situation by including in the Provisional Government some representatives of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council, but whether these conflicting elements can be brought into successful co-operation is very doubtful.