

BOLSHEVIST RULE IN RUSSIA

Evidence of U.S. Ambassador Francis at
Washington, March 8, 1919

BELIEVING that the Soviet government of Russia was carrying on worldwide propaganda and that its agents and its literature were being extensively employed in America, the United States Senate early in the year appointed a committee to investigate these Bolshevist activities. Senator Overman was appointed chairman of the committee. The inquiry covered a wide range and brought to light first-hand information concerning the Soviet Government in Russia, its origin, its growth, its aims, and its methods. One of the most interesting witnesses was David R. Francis, United States Ambassador to Russia. Mr. Francis arrived in Petrograd on the 28th day of April, 1916, and remained there till November, 1918. He witnessed the downfall of the government of the Czar, the rise and fall of the provisional government under Alexander Kerensky, the calling of the Constituent Assembly and its dispersal by armed Bolsheviks, and finally the institution of the Soviet government under Lenine and Trotsky. The following summary of the testimony given by Mr. Francis is taken from the official report of the proceedings of the Senate Committee on March 8, 1919.

Mr. Francis said he arrived in Petrograd April 28, 1916. Speaking of the causes that produced the chaos in Russian affairs, he said that the first act of demoralization committed under the Kerensky provisional government was the issuing of the general army order No. 1. Issued by the Soviet, it reduced all officers to the rank of soldiers, besides permitting the soldiers to elect their officers. The second demoralizing feature was to be attributed to Kerensky after he became Minister of War, one of his first acts being the decree to abolish the death penalty in the army, thus completing the demoralization.