THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE
WITHOUT THE BOLSHEVIK THREAT

by

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Arno J. Mayer became established as an authority on Peace Conference history with the 1967 publication of his sweeping class-based analysis, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918-1919*. In it he maintains that the peacemakers who were gathered in Paris to settle accounts after the Great War were influenced more by the appearance of Bolshevism than by any other single factor. According to Mayer, the statesmen reacted to a threat from the Left that had been given momentum by Lenin's success in Russia. His panoramic view of class struggle across Europe and America, which likely seemed so apropos in the 1960s, has unfortunately obscured many of the opinions of the men who were actually there. This thesis is an investigation into the opinions of those men as revealed by a selection of primary source documents and as supported by appropriate secondary source material.

The official and the personal records kept by the delegates who attended Versailles, reveal men who were not particularly concerned about the establishment of Bolshevism in Russia. The records clearly establish that the leading statesmen of the day, including David Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson, were not apprehensive about and did not feel threatened by either Lenin or the Hungarian Bolshevik, Béla Kun. There is ample evidence to show that in 1919 the
peacemakers and their contemporaries felt that Bolshevism in Russia was only a temporary phenomenon in that country's development toward liberal democracy. While Bolshevism did not overly concern the Allied leaders, issues such as reparations to be charged to Germany, formation of a League of Nations, and their respective places in the postwar world certainly did concern them. Arno Mayer's claim that it "was symptomatic of the entire Peace Conference that the specter of Bolshevism significantly impinged on the deliberations of both opening sessions," (Mayer, 411) is not defensible on the basis of the documents and the memoirs left by the peacemakers themselves.
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To Sid

Thank you for everything, but especially for introducing me to Barbara and to Madeleine
INTRODUCTION

Arno J. Mayer’s analysis of the Paris Peace Conference, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918-1919*, has stood for some time as a major contribution to Peace Conference history.¹ His thesis rests squarely upon events in Russia and makes the claim that the appearance of Bolshevism there had a direct bearing upon the decisions made by statesmen in Paris. Mayer has, however, overstated the significance of the Bolshevik Revolution to the peacemaking process in 1919. By his own admission he has not examined at length the day-to-day correspondence of the delegates to the Versailles Conference, but instead he has focussed "on the political and diplomatic context and climate in which the principal peacemakers dealt with critical issues and problems involving fundamental policy considerations."²

A closer look at some of the daily correspondence and notes kept by those negotiators significantly weakens Mayer’s argument. Published personal and official records of the delegates and their advisors at Versailles demonstrate that the peacemakers did not consider Bolshevism a significant threat. On the contrary, issues concerning Russia were often disregarded or postponed as many of the statesmen felt that Lenin’s regime was merely a temporary or transitional phase in Russia’s evolution. The conclusion drawn by the editor of

² Ibid., vii.
American delegate Charles Seymour's *Letters From the Paris Peace Conference*, that "Lenin's revolution was largely ignored by the peacemakers," aptly fits the points of view expressed in other diaries and memoirs of the day.

In *Politics and Diplomacy* Mayer claims that "the Paris Peace Conference made a host of decisions, all of which, in varying degrees, were designed to check Bolshevism." His attempt to support that claim leads him to examine the domestic political climate within each major power at the end of the Great War. In doing so he finds that the working classes and the democratizing elements, which he terms "the forces of movement," have become restless in a contest with "the forces of order" throughout European and American society.

Mayer points, for example, to the American Congressional elections of November 1918, in which the Republican Party made significant gains, and then to the British general election of December 1918, during which Lloyd George was forced to join with the Conservative leader, Bonar Law, in order to win votes. As well, that election campaign saw Lloyd George compromising some of his liberal principles by temporarily adopting a hard line anti-German and anti-Bolshevik stance. In Italy, Mayer sees a move to the right expressed in the growing role that Sidney Sonnino begins to

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5 Ibid., 40, 54.
play at Versailles, and in the inception of the Italian fascist movement. To Mayer this resurgence of the right is a reaction to the growth of left wing parties and labour interests throughout Europe and America. He maintains that this polarization of politics in the immediate postwar period had a substantial effect on the negotiators who assembled in Paris.

On the basis of this class-structured analysis of power struggles between left and right wing parties within each country, Mayer concludes that the closing phases of World War One opened "a universal international civil war." By suggesting that Russian Bolshevism was a "specter which was haunting Europe," he mirrors the language of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* By boldly stating that "it was symptomatic of the entire Peace Conference that the specter of Bolshevism significantly impinged on the deliberations of both opening sessions," Mayer makes Bolshevism the key adversary and the key issue for the peacemakers in Paris. He portrays the delegates to Versailles as being steadily driven into increasingly reactionary positions by the 'forces of order' within their respective countries. Those forces, he maintains, were traditional ruling elites unwilling to share political power, and fearful of the growing influence of the labouring classes.

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6 Ibid., vii.
7 Ibid., 9.
stirred by Lenin's revolution in Russia.

Three arguments contradict Mayer's reasoning. First, the policies and actions of Lenin's administration (and also of the short-lived Hungarian Bolshevik administration of 1919) were not unusually threatening and did not appear to arouse a great deal of fear. Secondly, personal accounts and official records left by the delegates to Paris show little or no concern about imminent Bolshevik revolution. Thirdly, the amount of time and paperwork spent on either Bolshevik or Russian issues at the Versailles Conference was not great compared with the amount of time spent on other issues. These three arguments lead to the conclusion that Russian communism was not nearly so intense an issue for the diplomats as Arno Mayer maintains. On the contrary, they seemed very much preoccupied with the overall settlement with Germany and with securing for their countries the most favourable geopolitical position that the postwar world could offer. The peacemakers were worried less about Bolshevism gaining the upper hand in world affairs than they were about one another gaining the upper hand. For the traditional European powers there was additional pressure to admit Japan and the U.S.A. to the international table.

To suggest that Arno Mayer is amiss in his reading of the Versailles Conference is not to suggest that there is no value in Marxist interpretations of the Conference. Nor is it to discard the valuable tools that Karl Marx provided for historians. Quite correctly, Mayer points out the increasing role that working men and women were coming to play in
postwar European and American society. He reminds his readers that labour and socialist parties were indeed demanding to be heard in 1919. It is unfortunate that Mayer does not address economic issues, as views written from the Left commonly do, because a great portion of the settlement concerned economic issues. Decisions made at the Paris Peace Conference generally benefited the former Allies whose expanding economies were driven by the interests of industrial capital. Lenin's analysis of the relationship between capitalism and imperialism¹⁰ may well be useful for the study of the immediate postwar period: nations represented at Paris did strive to expand the base for their capitalist enterprises and to improve their strategic positions for favourable postwar trade. Mayer's mistake is in attributing too much influence to class war and a Bolshevik peril in the decision-making process in Paris. For the most part the delegates did not see themselves as engaged in a class war. They were preoccupied with the continuing struggle for advantage vis-à-vis one another in claiming what they could of the world's resources.

Prior to Mayer, histories of the Peace Conference had focussed on either the punitive nature of the settlement, or on the varying degree to which Wilsonian ideals had been achieved by it. Mayer's class-based history, however, appeared in the late 1960s after more than twenty years of frigid relations between the Soviet Union and the West.

Writing during the height of the Cold War, it may well have seemed to Mayer that mankind was "splitting into two great hostile camps . . . bourgeoisie and proletariat." There is no doubt that the tension of the Cold War era in which he wrote has permeated Arno Mayer's analysis of the Versailles Conference.

As Mayer could not escape his age, we cannot wholly escape ours. There is much about the late 1990s that invites historians to rethink Russia's role in the events of 1919, and much that will colour our view of that role. To begin, there are some notable similarities between the two periods. Today, as in 1919, Russia has recently undergone a tremendous political and economic restructuring. Today, as in 1919, Russia has recently lost Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on her Baltic coast. Today, as in 1919, Russia is plagued with the unrest of minority groups on her borderlands and has been cut back in size to allow for the independence of several national groups. Today, as in 1919, internal political struggles continue alongside consumer shortages and spiralling inflation. Today, as in 1919, Russia has reached out to the West for economic assistance and reciprocal trade agreements, and has been greeted coolly. In 1919 Russia's attempts to participate in international conferences such as the one in Paris, and to join international bodies such as the League of Nations were denied. Today, Russia's approaches to the International Monetary Fund and her desire to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have been denied.

Although the political philosophy of the administration in the Russian capital has changed significantly since 1919, the attitudes of the other major world powers in relation to Russia have remained somewhat constant. The major powers today generally seem to favour Russia's downsizing, to seek profit from Russia's resources, and to maintain strategic positions in eastern and southern Asia along Russia's periphery just as they did in 1919 and earlier.

Thinking about some of the consistencies throughout the twentieth century may help historians to re-evaluate the attitudes of the peacemakers in 1919. Perhaps those statesmen were not reacting to Russia because she was Bolshevik per se. Perhaps the Western stance toward Russia has remained more or less constant throughout the Czarist, the Bolshevik, the Soviet, and the most recent periods. Perhaps evaluating how we now view Russia can help us to understand how the statesmen of 1919 did. The raw materials required to refute Arno Mayer's thesis, as presented in Politics and Diplomacy, can readily be found in the records left by the men who attended Versailles. The present moment is opportune to delve into them because many of the attitudes and ambitions displayed by the peacemakers of 1919 are still with us.
CHAPTER ONE
LENIN'S APPROACHES TO THE WEST

The manner in which Lenin approached the West, prior to and during the Paris Peace Conference, was indicative of his willingness to co-operate with the capitalist West on several issues. To be sure, Russia's former Allies were not pleased with the Bolshevik decision to withdraw from World War One but, contrary to Mayer's claim that a Bolshevik specter haunted Versailles, the policies and actions of Lenin's government did not appear to be threatening and did not appear to arouse a great deal of fear at the Paris Peace Conference. Lenin's overtures toward the 'Big Three' who dominated at Versailles were open, straightforward, inviting and reasonable. Despite a lack of formal diplomatic recognition, an Allied economic blockade, heavy losses to Germany by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and the presence of foreign armies on her soil, the Bolshevik government repeatedly tried to normalize relations with the West during the Conference. Lenin's actions and pronouncements were not of the type that might have been expected to generate a strong defence from the diplomats in Paris.

In practical terms, Lenin desperately needed the West at this time. He needed diplomatic recognition, he needed to trade, and he needed evacuation of foreign troops from Russia. Whether or not he would have been so conciliatory had he not desired these ends, must remain a matter of conjecture. In early 1919 Lenin was still struggling to maintain a hold on Russia, and there is much in the
literature to suggest that the West could have dealt with him at that time. The point to be made here is that based on the communications that Lenin’s government sent to the West during this period, the peacemakers most likely would not, and it appears did not, become alarmed and unduly concerned about Bolshevism.

Before arriving in Paris in January 1919, representatives from the victorious powers had already been dealing with Bolshevik Russia for over a year. Although on the eve of the Peace Conference each of the Allied Powers had regiments inside Russia providing aid to the ‘White’ armies against the Bolsheviks, each was unclear about its mandate for being there and about its duration of stay. This ambiguous situation had begun, at least ostensibly, as a campaign to continue to oppose Germany from within Russia, after Lenin had pulled Russia out of the Great War. It was only after Germany’s collapse in November 1918 that it became unquestionably obvious that contingents from Britain, France, the U.S.A., Canada, and Japan were indeed involved in the Russian Civil War supplying and assisting the Whites against Trotsky’s Red Army. While foreign troops remained on Russian soil throughout the duration of the Paris Peace Conference, several delegates to the Conference questioned the validity of Allied involvement and voiced serious objections to it.

The year of 1918 began with a statement of Allied war aims designed, among other things, to lure Russia back into the war effort. On 8 January, two months after Lenin’s successful seizure of power in Petrograd, President Woodrow
Wilson delivered his ‘Fourteen Points For a Just Peace’ to the American Congress. Together with freedom of navigation and trade, national self-determination, the abolition of secret treaties, and the creation of a League of Nations, the President’s program called for Russia to be afforded “unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development . . . under institutions of her own choosing.” Wilson envisioned that Allied treatment of Russia would “be the acid test of their good will” toward her. After Allied hopes of enticing Russia back into the war through promises embodied in the Fourteen Points did not materialize, Western nations withdrew their formal diplomatic representatives from Russia during the first half of 1918. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed between Germany and Russia in March, and the economic blockade that already applied to the defeated Central Powers was extended to include Bolshevik-held Russia as well.

Three fronts developed in the civil war: a northern

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1 In his earlier work, Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917-1918, Arno Mayer claimed that Wilson’s Fourteen Points were written as an answer to Trotsky’s publication of secret Allied treaties. Others have disagreed. Betty Miller Unterberger maintains that the idea of self-determination embodied in the Fourteen Points was Wilson’s own, and “not simply reactive to Bolshevik initiatives.” See Betty Miller Unterberger, “Woodrow Wilson and the Bolsheviks: The ‘Acid Test’ of Soviet-American Relations,” Diplomatic History 11 (Spring 1987): 71.

Thomas J. Knock presents other factors that led Wilson to deliver his famous program, saying that the Fourteen Points “did not define a single point that was in any way inspired by the Bolsheviks,” and that they should not be understood as “the opening salvo of a counterrevolutionary campaign.” See Thomas J. Knock, To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 145.


front near Murmansk and in the Archangel region, a southern front centered in the Crimea and the Caucasus, and an eastern front in Siberia. By the spring of 1918 British and French troops were already stationed in the north to assist General Yudenich, and in the south alongside General Denikin, both of whom were still 'resisting Germany' as well as resisting the Bolshevik Red Army. The Americans did not send troops until July 1918, at which time the majority were sent to Siberia where they assisted Admiral Kolchak. A Canadian contingent served under British command in northern Russia. The Red Army held the heartland of central Russia including Petrograd and Moscow. It was not until late 1919 and early 1920 that foreign armies finally evacuated Russia completely.

Although formal diplomatic relations had been severed, a handful of 'informal diplomats' operated inside Bolshevik Russia throughout 1918.⁴ The information passed from Lenin's government to the Allied governments via these men reveals a Bolshevik administration that seemed non-threatening, conciliatory, open and eager to be accepted politically and

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In May of 1918 'informal diplomat', British agent R.H. Bruce Lockhart, reported from Moscow that the Bolshevik government was more than ready to co-operate with the Allies. Ironically, the British expeditionary force that would eventually carry out operations against the Red Army, in those early months, was invited into Russia by Trotsky.

Lockhart listed

the following definite instances in which Trotsky has shown his willingness to work with the Allies.

1) He has invited Allied officers to co-operate in the reorganization of the New Army
2) He invited us to send a commission of British Naval officers to save the Black Seas Fleet
3) On every occasion when we have asked him for papers and assistance for our naval officers...he has always given us exactly what we wanted.
4) He has given every facility so far for Allied Co-operation at Murmansk
5) He has agreed to send the Czech Corps\(^5\) to Murmansk and Archangel
6) Finally, he has today come to a full agreement with us regarding the Allied stores at Archangel where by we shall be allowed to retain those stores which we require for ourselves.\(^6\)

According to Lockhart the spring of 1918 would have been the ideal time for the Allies to have come to an understanding with the Bolsheviks. Still fearful of further German aggression and unsure of their own future, Trotsky and Lenin "would have welcomed the assistance of Allied officers in training the new Red Army."\(^7\)

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\(^5\) Czech soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian forces, caught inside Russia at the time of Brest-Litovsk.


ratified a lengthy proposal by Lenin inviting the United States to trade with Russia. The proposal was forwarded to the State Department by U.S. Colonel Raymond Robins, head of the American Red Cross in Russia during 1918. In the proposal Lenin invited the U.S.A. to assume the role of Russia's leading trade partner—a role that Germany could no longer fulfill due to the ravages of war:

The exhaustion of the economic apparatus of Germany will not allow her to furnish to other countries tools of production even under the most advantageous commercial and political conditions. By force of events Germany will be compelled to surrender her leading place as a source for the economic life of Russia for the next few years to a country which has not been disorganized as much as Germany by the war. Only America can become that country.8

Lenin included a long list of products that Russia was prepared to sell and asked in return for manufactured goods, especially agricultural implements and railway equipment. Although under Lenin's plan the Russian government would retain control and ownership of Russia's resources, the plan recognized the need to make trade profitable for prospective Americans:

It is possible to make commercial agreements and bargains. . . . Not on the basis of some written concessions but on the basis of business arrangements, could America participate actively in the exploitation of the marine riches of Eastern Siberia, of coal and other mines, as well as in the railroad and marine transportation construction in Siberia and northern European Russia.9

Lenin's proposal was forwarded to the American authorities to

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9 Ibid., 211.
no avail. The Allied economic blockade of Russia, which included food and medical supplies, continued in full force.

About two months later, Colonel Robins himself submitted a report to Secretary of State Robert Lansing. In it he suggested that an American Economic Commission be set up immediately to oversee trade between the two nations. In Robins' opinion the Russians were negotiating in good faith and putting forth "an earnest request for America's co-operation in the internal reconstruction of economic life."\textsuperscript{10}

The Bolshevik Government was so keen to make any positive contact with the United States that it did not consider formal diplomatic recognition to be a prerequisite for contact.\textsuperscript{11} As of July 1918 there seemed to be evidence that some American companies in Russia would remain untouched. International Harvester, Singer Sewing Machine, and Westinghouse Air Brake had been allowed to carry on as private companies:

That efficient production is possible under Soviet rule has been demonstrated by the experience of the International Harvester Company which has largely increased its producing efficiency during the past six months under Soviet rule. This experience . . . resulted in effective co-operation from the Soviet authorities who in order to get results were willing when faced with the practical necessities of the situation to modify the rigid formulas of their economic theory.\textsuperscript{12}

The 'practical necessities of the situation' in the east included holding off Japanese advancement. It was actually

\textsuperscript{10} "Report presented by Colonel Raymond Robins to the Secretary of State, July 1, 1918," in Cumming and Pettit, eds., \textit{Russian-American Relations}, 213.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 216.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 215.
in the Bolshevik Government's interest to allow American companies to flourish as a block to Japanese incursions there. In his study of Siberia during the civil war, John A. White has noted that the Soviets were undoubtedly interested . . . in using American capital as a means of achieving recognition and of dislodging and holding off Japan . . . The nationalizations of property carried out during 1918 and 1919 did not then affect the International Harvester, Singer Sewing Machine, Westinghouse Air Brake, and other American companies having branches or properties in Russia. In fact, during the period . . . the Soviet Government granted large concessions there to Americans.13

Rather than following the advice of William Boyce Thompson, who had been Robins' predecessor as head of the American Red Cross in Russia and who had urged the Allies to "adopt a pragmatic tolerance toward the Russian situation,"14 the Allied nations rebuffed Lenin's offers, declined diplomatic recognition, and increased their numbers of troops stationed in Russia in 1918.15

The French took up positions primarily in southern Russia, the British primarily in northern Russia, and the Americans together with the Japanese in Siberia. As 1918 unfolded the Allied presence in Russia looked less like a peripheral operation of the Great War--guarding storehouses, retrieving equipment, monitoring German movements, and assisting the Whites against Germany and Austria--and more like an Allied operation against the Bolsheviks. After

14 Filene, Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 31.
15 The number of troops would change again by the time the Peace Conference opened. See below, p. 52.
November 1918 pretences about encouraging Russia to re-enter the war against Germany melted away. On December 24, 1918, the Bolshevik representative in Stockholm, Maxim Litvinov, wrote to Woodrow Wilson with an appeal "to withdraw the foreign troops from Russian territory, and to raise the economic blockade."\textsuperscript{16} His request was not answered.

Minimal interaction continued to be carried on by unofficial diplomats from the West stationed in Russia, although no formal diplomats were appointed by any of the Allies during the period of the Paris Peace Conference. Without an invitation to do so, Lenin's government appointed a Russian citizen who was living in the U.S.A. to be Russia's official representative. The People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, G.V. Chicherin, announced from Moscow on 2 January 1919 that L.C.A. Carlovitch Martens, "who resides in the United States of America, is appointed the representative of the people's commissariat of foreign affairs in the United States of America."\textsuperscript{17} The Bolshevik government had made a unilateral decision to indicate its willingness and seriousness in normalizing relations with the Allies. Still, the leaders of the Allied countries were unable to consider recognition of Lenin's regime. Although the previously cited stumbling block to recognition, that Bolshevik Russia had made a separate peace with Germany, was no longer an issue, some important obstacles remained. These included the

\textsuperscript{16} "Appeal by Litvinov to President Wilson, December 24, 1918," in Cumming and Pettit, eds., Russian-American Relations, 272.

\textsuperscript{17} "Translation of Credentials sent by L. C. A. K. Martens to the State Department, March 19, 1919," in Cumming and Pettit, eds., Russian-American Relations, 320.
refusal of Bolshevik Russia to repay Czarist debts to the West, and the uncertainty that the Bolsheviks would actually remain in control of the country.

As delegates from the victorious powers gathered in Paris during January 1919, another indication of good will came from Soviet Russia. Maxim Litvinov announced that if the Allies were to withdraw their troops from Russian soil, then the Bolshevik government "would be willing to reconsider some of its decrees affecting the financial obligations of Russia towards other countries." ¹⁸ According to American William H. Buckler, who had been sent by President Wilson to meet Litvinov in Stockholm, the Soviet minister was "eager for permanent peace and was willing to compromise on all points." ¹⁹ Buckler also reported that the Bolsheviks would support a League of Nations and that they "were prepared to cease at once all propaganda activities abroad." ²⁰

Representatives from Lenin's government were not invited to Paris. Neither were representatives from any of the White factions in the Russian civil war. To complicate matters, a group of former Czarist officials led by Prince Lvov, who had for a short time headed the Provisional Government in Petrograd after Czar Nicholas' abdication, and

former foreign minister Sergei Sazonov, had taken refuge in Paris and were claiming to be the Russian government-in-exile. This self-styled Paris group became known as the 'Russian Political Conference' and petitioned the statesmen at Versailles for the right to represent Russia. Neither the Whites, nor the Bolsheviks, nor the Russian Political Conference ever officially participated at the Peace Conference. It is worth noting that although Arno Mayer claims that virtually every action taken at Versailles was either directly or indirectly meant to resist Bolshevism, the Allies passed up the opportunity to recognize any non-Bolshevik faction.

The French, with Clemenceau in the lead, were the most obstinate about not allowing Bolsheviks to come to Paris. France had developed the closest relationship with Imperial Russia, the French were owed the greatest sums of money borrowed by Czar Nicholas’ regime, and France felt the most threatened when Lenin closed down Germany’s eastern front in early 1918. When Lloyd George “expressed the view that the Bolsheviks had the support of the majority of the Russian people and therefore should be represented at Paris,”21 Clemenceau would not hear of it.

President Wilson therefore suggested a neutral site, Prince’s Island in the Sea of Marmara, to which all major Allied leaders, including Clemenceau, agreed “for the sake of solidarity.”22 All factions claiming to speak for Russia were

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invited and a date was set to meet there in February. Lenin cabled his acceptance of the planned Prince’s Island meeting. Not only would Lenin agree to Bolshevik attendance at the session, but he also agreed to the conditions placed on his acceptance. These were to discuss repayment of Czarist loans to the West, to offer the Allies access to Russian raw materials, to offer territorial concessions to Russia’s neighbours, and to abide by the ceasefire conditions attached to the talks. A note written by the People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs, G. Chicherin, made this conciliatory Bolshevik position clear.23

The Russian Political Conference advised all parties concerned not to go ahead with the meeting. Similarly, each of the White Army generals declined the invitation. American Major Harris, stationed with Admiral Kolchak’s forces in Omsk, sent the following report to Paris on 11 February 1919. He summarized White reaction to the Prince’s Island plan by the authorities in two Siberian cities:

Altogether, Omsk Government . . . is unquestionably opposed to proposition. . . . This Government is quite satisfied that no truce or agreement with Bolsheviks is possible. . . . To receive them on an equality with the constructive elements of Russia is felt to be a deep insult. . . . All three daily papers . . . oppose Prince’s Island plan.

In Irkutsk cadet newspaper Svobdnyyzumkdt . . . denounces Allied proposal as blow to the dignity of Russia, saying Lenin army not a revolutionary army but consists of Germans, Mallars, Letts and criminals. . . . Impression is that men and cadets bitterly disapprove Allied suggestion.24

The planned meeting to give all Russian factions input into the Paris Peace Conference and to arrange a ceasefire as a prelude to peace never happened. Back in Paris the Prince's Island scheme was shelved and the Conference delegates got on with other business. Both Lloyd George and Wilson subsequently made trips home to deal temporarily with domestic business. It had not been the Bolsheviks who had appeared threatening or who had escalated the tension. It had not been Lenin's government which had given cause for statesmen gathered at Versailles to be fearful of an impending "universal international civil war." Rather, it had been the enemies of the Bolsheviks.

The most far-reaching offer of co-operation and conciliation from Moscow came in late March 1919. It came in the form of a document carried out of Russia by a young American State Department official, William C. Bullitt, who had been sent to Russia by President Wilson to sound out the Russian situation. Bullitt, a member of the American delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris, was debriefed by Wilson's second-in-command, Colonel E.M. House. Prime Minister Lloyd George took part in the planning, and his closest advisor, Philip Kerr, provided Bullitt with an eight-point peace proposal to offer to Lenin. Journalist Lincoln Steffens and U.S. Army Intelligence Officer Captain W. Pettit accompanied Bullitt to England where passage by sea was arranged for them to Stockholm.

In Stockholm the party was introduced to Bolshevik

26 Appendix 1.
agents who escorted them, first by water to Helsinki, and then by horse-drawn sleigh to the frontier town of Terijoki where they crossed into Russia on 6 March. Greeted by a delegation of Bolsheviks and a brass band, the group was received by Chicherin in Petrograd. It was then arranged that they should travel on to Moscow to meet Lenin.

Bullitt wrote that Moscow "glistened in the sun like a gigantic Christmas tree" on the morning of 11 March as he and Steffens rode into the city. Three days later they were taken to the Kremlin. In later testimony Bullitt described meeting Lenin:

When I called on Lenin . . . I had to wait a few minutes until a delegation of peasants left his room. They had heard in their village that Comrade Lenin was hungry . . . and . . . was working in an unheated room. They came bearing a stove and enough firewood to heat it for three months.

On behalf of both the British and the Americans, Bullitt presented Kerr's peace proposal. He found Lenin to be very serious, "straightforward and direct, but also genial and with a large humor and serenity." As to conditions in the Russian cities that he had visited, Bullitt noted that food and fuel were in short supply, but he also commented that:

The Soviet Government is firmly established, and the Communist Party is strong politically and morally . . . There is order in Petrograd and Moscow . . . opera, theatres and and ballet are performing as in peace.

After some consideration of Kerr's proposal Lenin

28 Bullitt, The Bullitt Mission to Russia, 63.
29 Ibid., 64.
30 Brownell and Billings, So Close to Greatness, 88.
presented Bullitt with his own proposal to be carried back to Paris for the approval of Wilson and Lloyd George. The two proposals were virtually identical. Lenin had simply restated the British/American terms and, in a twist of diplomacy, had taken the upper hand and had asked that the Allies make the gesture of responding to him.

Lenin's terms were the best the Allies would ever receive from Russia. Desperate to remove foreign armies from Russian soil, the Bolsheviks had promised to "recognize their responsibility for the financial obligations of the former Russian Empire, to foreign States," and to allow the various non-Bolshevik Russian factions to maintain their ground when hostilities ceased. Lenin attached a 10 April deadline to his proposal and sent it out with Bullitt. Bullitt cabled ahead to Paris from Helsinki with the entire text of Lenin's message so that the leaders of the Allied powers would have ample time for consideration of the proposal.

Upon his return to Paris, Bullitt was unsuccessful in gaining either Lloyd George's or Wilson's attention or approval. Colonel House tried on Bullitt's behalf to arrange an audience with Wilson, but to no avail. Lenin's deadline was allowed to slip away. A frustrated and disheartened

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32 Lenin was in agreement with the Allied terms. By turning the question back on them, however, he had left the door open for the Allies to decline.

33 Bullitt, The Bullitt Mission to Russia, 43. See also Appendix 2, Article 7.

34 "Telegram from Bullitt," in Miller, My Diary, 6:445-50.
Bullitt would soon resign his position. Throughout this exchange Lenin's government had not acted in ways that would be expected to arouse fear or suspicion and had not been uncooperative or threatening in any way. There is no evidence here to suggest that the peacemakers gathered at Versailles in the spring of 1919 were affected by threatening or fearful actions on the part of the Bolshevik government of Russia.

During the week that Lenin was meeting with Bullitt in Moscow, Moscow's official 'ambassador' in the U.S.A. was offering to trade with Americans. In a proposal similar to Lenin's offers of 1918, Martens announced that Soviet Russia was willing to do business with "citizens of other countries" and was ready to purchase in the American market great quantities of the following commodities, commensurate with the needs of 150,000,000 people: Railroad supplies, agricultural implements and machinery, tools, mining machinery and supplies, electrical supplies, printing machinery, textile manufactures, shoes and clothing, fats and canned meats, rubber goods, typewriters and office supplies, automobiles and trucks, chemicals, medical supplies, etc. Russia is prepared to sell the following commodities: Flax, hemp, hides, bristles, furs, lumber, grain, platinum, metals and minerals.

and that the Soviet government was prepared to place at once in banks in Europe and America, gold to the amount of $200,000,000, to cover the price of initial purchases.35

The new leaders of Russia were offering to trade on an equal

footing with the West, but not to open up Russia to foreign
ownership or to exploitation of her natural resources. There
did not seem to be any socialist prohibition against dealing
with the West. Lenin said:

I know of no reason why a socialist commonwealth like
ours cannot do business indefinitely with capitalist
countries. We don’t mind taking their capitalist
locomotives and farming machinery, so why should they
mind taking our socialist wheat, flax and platinum?36

There is very little evidence that the economic approaches of
Lenin’s government caused undue apprehension and frightened
concern among the delegates to Versailles.

Did the West have reason to be alarmed at the
Bolsheviks’ military actions up to early 1919? Certainly
there was terror and bloodshed in Russia during the Civil
War. The situation must be evaluated in its context to
understand how the delegates to Paris reacted.

The major Western Powers had for some time recognized
Imperial Russia with full knowledge of her repressive,
autocratic regime. American journalist George Kennan had
travelled and documented the Siberian labour camps, or
gulags, during the late nineteenth century and had published
his work.37 Abuses of Czar Nicholas II’s regime were widely

36 Lenin as interviewed by Lincoln Eyre of the American newspaper,
The World, Feb. 21, 1920, quoted in B. Ponomaryov, A. Gromyko, and V.
Khvostov, History of Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-1945, trans. by David

37 George Kennan, Tent-life in Siberia and Adventures Among the
Koraks and Other Tribes in Kamtchatka and Northern Asia (New York: G.P.
Putnam's Sons, 1879), and, after making a second journey across Siberia,
Siberia and the Exile System (London: James R. Osgood, McIlvaine & Co.,
1891). See also a short study of Kennan in Robert Cowley, "A Year in
Hell," in America and Russia: A Century and a Half of Dramatic
121.
acknowledged, and it was quite common for special interest
groups, particularly Jews, to petition the U.S. or the
British governments to protest human rights violations in
Russia. These abuses together with the very limited
franchise in Czarist Russia and the concentration of power in
Czar Nicholas himself, did not prevent the Allied powers from
maintaining diplomatic relations prior to the war with
Germany.

The Bolshevik seizure of power in November 1917 had
been relatively bloodless. The worst terror of the Russian
Civil War had not yet happened when the peacemakers began to
gather in Paris. Throughout 1918, according to George F.
Kennan, the worst had not yet begun. The "real beginning of
the Russian civil war," he maintains, was when foreign
interventionist troops arrived, causing a concerted effort by
the Red Army to oppose the Whites. Before foreigners
arrived, during most of 1918 the reports being sent out of
Russia by the unofficial diplomats did not speak of violence
and terror. Bruce Lockhart wrote:

Life in St. Petersburg during this period was a curious
affair. There was no terror, nor was the population
particularly afraid of its new masters. The anti-
Bolshevik newspapers continued to appear. The
bourgeoisie, was more cheerful than one might have
expected. The rich still had money. Restaurants and
cabarets were open. The only real danger to human
life during these early days of the Bolshevik revolution
was furnished, not by the Bolsheviks, but by the
Anarchists.39

38 George F. Kennan, Soviet Foreign Policy (London: D. Van
Nostrand Co. Inc., 1960), 22. George F. Kennan (b.1904) is a nephew of
the late George Kennan (1845-1924). George F. Kennan served as U.S.
Ambassador to the Soviet Union in the early 1950s and is an accomplished
author on Soviet affairs.

Reports sent from Bolshevik Russia by men such as Bullitt, Robins, and Lockhart contrasted sharply with reports sent from Allied agents in the White strongholds. Consul General Harris of the U.S. State Department cabled to Paris from Omsk on 29 January 1919. Harris described the condition of Admiral Kolchak's government to Secretary of State Robert Lansing:

The Government, in interior affairs, however, is still weak and it just has not the power to enforce its will in the administration of many vital matters. For example, Kolchak is powerless to control the action of the Cossack Atamans such as Ivanoff, 'Dytoffe and Semenoff, ... Generally speaking a Cossack Ataman has no conception of any policy which would contribute towards the restoration of a great united Russia. 40

Corruption was rife in Siberia, and was responsible for atrocities becoming commonplace. According to Harris several members of the Social Revolutionary Party were brutally murdered while they were being held as political prisoners in an Omsk jailhouse. Although the culprits were well known to the authorities, the Omsk government had "not sufficient strength to bring the murderers to justice for reason it might implicate someone" in Kolchak's own ranks. 41

Kolchak's Cossack associate, Semenoff, made a "career of torture, murder, and robbery" particularly in the region of Transbaikal. He committed "merciless and indiscriminate attacks on those...who were merely unfortunate enough to be near him at the wrong time." 42 Moving about in commandeered railway cars that he had reinforced with armour, Semenoff

40 "Cablegram Received," in Miller, My Diary, 4:375.
41 Ibid., 376.
42 White, The Siberian Intervention, 196-97.
used “shooting and whipping with chains” to break up groups of townspeople. By one account, “1,600 people were carried off and killed at Adrianovka Station” in one day.43

Major General William S. Graves of the U.S. Army, stationed in Siberia during the Allied intervention, also described the tactics of the Whites against local town councils and peasants’ organizations:

The Zemstvos, the dumas, and the cooperatives were such well known legal, reliable, and law abiding organizations, that it would have been difficult for Kolchak to have justified to the world, the oppressive measures used against these people if they had been referred to by their proper names. This could be, and was, easily avoided by putting all who were not Kolchak supporters . . . into one class and calling that class Bolsheviks.44

Graves, who was often at odds with Harris, later criticized Harris for not giving an accurate enough account of the true horror of the Siberian situation under Kolchak.45

In Paris then, the representatives of the major Allied powers could learn about conditions in Russia from various sources. Based on the information that they received about the policies and actions of Lenin’s administration as compared to the actions of Kolchak’s administration, it does not appear likely that the Big Three felt particularly threatened by the new regime in Moscow. Thoughtful members of the negotiating commissions, including the leading politicians and their advisors, likely thought through the Russian situation in much the same way as Harold Nicolson,

43 Ibid., 197.
44 Major General William S. Graves, America’s Siberian Adventure 1918-1920 (New York: Peter Smith, 1941), 103.
45 Ibid., 162.
British delegate. Over "lunch at the Meurice," on Friday, 11 April 1919, Nicolson entered in his diary:

In fact I am an agnostic about Bolshevism--I simply do not know. Here we are told only of the atrocities and the executions: they are probably true; but there must be another side, some reality behind it all which has produced this firm and successful government.  

Just over two months into the Peace Conference Fridjof Nansen, renowned Norwegian explorer, devised a scheme to transport much-needed food into Russia. The intent of his plan was to circumvent the continuing Allied blockade of Soviet Russia by diverting American food through neutral Norway and then supervising its distribution to hungry villages. Lenin's government agreed to the Nansen plan provided that, during distribution of the food in both Red and White controlled regions, the respective armies were subject to identical conditions--either both disarmed or both armed. Neither the Whites nor the Russian Political Conference would agree. Both insisted that only the Red Army be disarmed during food distribution. The Peace Conference turned down Nansen, his scheme never came to fruition, and hundreds of thousands of Russians remained hungry. Again, the new Soviet government had not handled the

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48 The Russian Political Conference in Paris warned that "this generous idea [of Nansen's] would have the opposite result if effective precautions were not taken for the purpose of keeping the provisioning of Russia entirely separate from any influence by the Bolshevist authorities;...The provisioning of the starving population is not a solution of [sic] the Russian question." See Bulletin No. 263, 13 May 1919, in Miller, *My Diary*, 18:197.
issue in a way that aroused a high level of anxiety or concern for the men who would draft the treaties of peace in Paris.

It might be expected that a momentous event such as the founding of the Communist International in Moscow in early March, 1919 would indeed be a shock to the negotiators in Paris. Even this event, presided over by Lenin and taking place during the Peace Conference, did not appear to affect the course of discussions in Paris, and may actually have eased some concerns that delegates may have had.

The Third, or 'Communist', International (Comintern) held in Moscow differed from the prewar 'Second International' in that it did not include moderate socialist parties. Moderate socialist and labour groups from a wide range of countries had, just three weeks before the Third International, attended a separate international conference in Berne, Switzerland. The Bolsheviks were not present at Berne, and it appears that Lenin was somewhat worried that the Berne meeting had lured away some of his potential support. Lenin was probably hastening to keep pace with the organizational efforts of the moderate socialists who had made a strong statement of solidarity at Berne. The Moscow meeting was attended by only a handful of delegates from outside Russia, the most important of whom, the German delegate, chose to abstain from the crucial vote to found the Comintern. In the final analysis it seems that the Third

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49 "Memorandum for Colonel House," in Miller, My Diary, 5:240.
50 "Resolution Constituting the Comintern, March 4, 1919," in George F. Kennan, Soviet Foreign Policy, 125.
International held in Moscow during the first week of March, actually reaffirmed the separateness of the two world socialist movements, and may even have left the impression in the minds of some of the delegates to Versailles that moderate socialist and labour parties were indeed successfully resisting Lenin's communism.

Preceding and during the Peace Conference Lenin did very little to suggest that his Russian Bolshevik Party was on the threshold of overtaking Russia's neighbours. When Hungary's Bolshèvik leader, Béla Kun, assumed power in Budapest for a few months in 1919, Lenin did not send even token military aid, did not establish diplomatic relations, and did not send any prominent revolutionary "to bolster the morale of the Communists in Hungary." Although in 1919 world leaders could not have known that by 1920 Soviet Russia would recognize and establish diplomatic relations with the three Baltic States, there were some indications that Lenin would do so.

It was only after 1922 that the Soviet Union adopted a policy to maintain the frontiers of the former Czarist Empire. Prior to 1922 there was still reason to believe that Lenin would respect the independent spirits of several minority nationalities on Russia's borderlands. In works such as "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," and "Seven Theses on the War," he had "repeatedly denounced the


empire exercised by the Russians over the other peoples ruled by the Czar. At the Seventh Social Democratic Congress in 1917, Lenin had prevailed over several of his colleagues by having a resolution accepted that would not force minority nationalities into a greater Soviet state.

Between 1917 and 1922 a widening rift developed in the Party between those who would allow the minority nationalities free choice in their association with Soviet Russia, and those who would demand their inclusion in a larger state, based on prewar Imperial boundaries. Lenin favoured the former policy, and Stalin the latter. Stalin, according to David Fromkin, was fiercely at odds with Lenin over the nationalities issue and the constitution of the Soviet Union. Lenin’s proposal was for each of the Soviet countries--Russia, the Ukraine, Georgia, and the various others--to be independent; they were to cooperate with one another as allies do, on the basis of treaties between them. Stalin’s plan . . . was for . . . all the others to adhere to the Russian state.

By 1922 the Soviet Congress had approved Stalin’s plan, and with failing health, Lenin’s influence was rapidly declining. Thus, in the period just prior to and during the Paris Peace Conference, Lenin did little if anything, to alarm the Conference members about possible Bolshevik takeovers of minority nationalities on the borderlands of Russia proper.

In contrast, all other major stakeholders in Russia’s future in 1919 held to the ‘greater Russian’ view that called for the maintenance of the old Imperial frontiers. The

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54 Ibid., 475.
55 Ibid., 476.
Russian political Conference in Paris sent petitions to the Big Three pleading that Russia should be permitted to retain lands acquired by agreements as dated as the 1812 Treaty of Bucharest and the 1878 Berlin Congress. In addition, Russian claims in Moldavia and Wallachia were vital, they reasoned, in order to save "the Orthodox Christians from the Turkish yoke."

Neither did the White commanders support the minority ethnic groups. In 1918, and most of 1919, Admiral Kolchak controlled the Kazakh region. The Kazakhs had little choice but to serve with Kolchak and so found themselves aligned against the Red Army. In this situation their only immediate hope of autonomy was to appeal to Kolchak, but as the people of the Kazakh country learned in 1918, no support was to be obtained from the White Russians, for they, . . . were opposed to native aspirations. The Kazakhs of the Central Asian plains had proclaimed their autonomy and asked the aid of the Czarist commander, Admiral Kolchak, in defending themselves against the Bolsheviks—only to find that he, too, was their enemy.

Even President Wilson himself defended the prewar Imperial boundaries of Russia in spite of his pronouncements about national self-determination and in spite of his support for the independence of several national groups from within the former Austro-Hungarian and German Empires. Thus, of all the voices shaping the new Russian state in 1919, it was only

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57 Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace, 478.
58 President Wilson's defence of Russian 'territorial integrity' despite the policy of 'national self-determination' as proposed by the U.S. 'Inquiry' is examined below, in Chapter 2. See also Linda Killen, "Self-Determination vs. Territorial Integrity: Conflict within the American Delegation at Paris over Wilsonian Policy toward the Russian Borderlands," Nationalities Papers 10, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 65-78.
Lenin's that could be heard speaking for some measure of autonomy for the national groups on Russia's borderlands. Lenin's position on this issue, at least in 1919, can hardly have alarmed the statesmen gathered in Paris.

Lenin's government did not act in ways that provoked strong retaliatory measures from the leaders of the major Allied powers meeting in Paris. On the contrary, Lenin's regime welcomed the unofficial diplomats from the West, made several attempts to address the concerns of the victorious Allies, and tried to initiate trade with the West. It was the actions of the Allied Powers that contributed to ongoing hardship and austerity in Russia, making it most difficult for her to become established economically. The intervention of Allied troops into Russia's civil war escalated and prolonged it, which in turn exacerbated the economic hardships caused by the continuing economic blockade. Considering the foreign policy initiatives taken by Lenin's new Bolshevik government during the first year and a half of its existence, it is not reasonable to suggest that the major statesmen in Paris were unduly concerned about Bolshevism or that the appearance of Bolshevism in Russia had a direct bearing upon the decisions made at Versailles.
CHAPTER TWO
RUSSIA'S 'TEMPORARY' GOVERNMENT

Arno Mayer's image of the Allied statesmen gathered at the Paris Peace Conference gripped with anxiety about Russia's Bolshevik government as they decided upon ways to halt its advance into Eastern Europe does not reflect the evidence found in either the official or the personal records of the day. Although Mayer maintains that the Conference delegates viewed Bolshevism as a "terrifying...specter which was haunting Europe," memoirs, diaries, and notes kept of conversations at the time reveal that the statesmen saw Bolshevism as a temporary phenomenon unlikely to take root in the West. James Shotwell, American historian and Conference delegate in Paris, confided to his diary in late March 1919 that, concerning Bolshevism, "the situation is not so desperate as people have been describing it," and "as between extreme nationalists . . . and Bolshevists . . . give me Bolshevists." Comments such as these demand that today's historians take a closer look at what men were saying about Lenin and the Bolsheviks in early 1919.

While Mayer claims that the Paris Peace Conference awarded "territorial concessions" to Eastern European nations to help them resist Bolshevism, the primary sources suggest that the Big Three--Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau--

1 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 9.
3 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 9.
clearly understood that nationalism, not Bolshevism, was at the heart of troubles in Eastern Europe. As a result, the Allies generally turned down requests for military aid from the countries bordering on Russia. Rather than having "stepped up their direct military intervention" against the Bolshevik Red Army as Mayer contends, evidence exists to show that the Allies rebuffed attempts by militarists such as France's Marshal Foch and Britain's Winston Churchill to have military expenditure increased in Russia. As well, some Allied troops actually began to withdraw from selected regions of Russia during the period of the Peace Conference.

What Mayer perceives to be anti-Bolshevik hysteria over Lenin's "flaming manifestoes" and "lust for power," turns out on closer inspection to be nothing more than thinly disguised anti-Russian, anti-Hungarian, anti-Semitic, or even anti-German sentiment. Mayer repeats anti-Bolshevik statements made by Western leaders without taking into account the circumstances in which the statements were made. In this way he overlooks the important fact that Western politicians projected one face to the press and public, and another face to their colleagues in the relatively unencumbered meeting rooms of Paris. Intent on evaluating "the political and diplomatic context and climate" surrounding the Conference, Mayer neglects the details of day-to-day correspondence between the peacemakers. Rather

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4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 22.
7 Ibid., vii.
than using the details of history to construct a grand theory, he allows a grand theory to obscure the details found in the records of the day.

Any scholar who only looked at Lloyd George's or Wilson's speeches, press releases, campaign literature, or other public statements might very well miss the more candid side of these men's characters. Off guard and away from reporters, they showed little concern over any apparent Bolshevik menace. Lloyd George, for example, when speaking privately with Lord Riddell in early December 1918, commented on the Communist candidates who were seeking parliamentary seats in the British general election that month:

I would like to see some of them in the House of Commons. That is the place for them to ventilate their opinions. They are better in than out.\(^8\)

Again in 1919 while dining with Riddell, Lloyd George offered the following:

I am not sure that twelve months of Bolshevism would not be a good thing for this country, so as to clear away a lot of the vested interests which are always stopping progress.\(^9\)

The British Prime Minister's openness to talk with Russian Bolsheviks became evident early in 1919 during preliminary discussions in Paris on the question of Russian participation at the Peace Conference. Secretary's notes kept during a conversation at the Quai d'Orsay reveal that Lloyd George "was not afraid of Bolshevism," and was "convinced that an educated democracy can always be trusted

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\(^9\) Ibid., 107.
to turn down Bolshevism.”

He apparently showed understanding for those people who had turned to Bolshevism by adding that “the general body of men have grown impatient at the failure to bring about the necessary reform.”

John Thompson’s conclusion in *Russia, Bolshevism, and the Versailles Peace*, that during this period Lloyd George “believed that the aspirations of the Bolsheviks were not entirely unworthy,” is probably correct.

President Wilson was also present at the Quai d’Orsay meeting to discuss Russian participation in the Peace. Wilson argued that the Peace Conference must “give Russia a chance to find herself,” and he “concurred with Mr. Lloyd George’s view and supported his recommendations” that Lenin’s government along with all other Russian factions, be invited to Paris. At the Conference Wilson continued with the “moderate attitude toward the Bolshevik revolution” that he had demonstrated throughout 1918. On a similar note in the spring of 1919 Italian Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando remarked to the leaders of the Great Powers that “the Russian or Ukrainian Bolsheviks, thus far, have merely been defending

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10 “Notes on Conversations held in the Office of M. Pichon at the Quai d’Orsay, on January 16, 1919: preliminary discussion regarding the Situation in Russia,” in Cumming and Pettit, eds., *Russian-American Relations*, 287.

11 Ibid.


13 “Notes on Conversations held in the Office of M. Pichon at the Quai d’Orsay,” 288.

their own territory."\(^{15}\)

At Versailles, two voices for a military solution to the Russian problem were Winston Churchill and Marshal Ferdinand Foch.\(^{16}\) Churchill had been serving as First Lord of the Admiralty when war broke out and subsequently had served as Minister of Munitions and had commanded forces on the Western Front. In Paris he served in an advisory capacity as part of the British Delegation to Negotiate Peace, and he took Lloyd George's place for a time in February when the Prime Minister had returned to Britain. Marshal Foch had been appointed Allied Commander-in-Chief of the Western Front after April 1918. As a military advisor at the Conference, Foch considered the position of Clemenceau, 'the tiger,' to be too soft.

The American President and the British Prime Minister, however, did not share the views of their military advisors who wanted to increase the scope of military action against the Bolsheviks. Neither Churchill nor Foch could convince the delegates in Paris to mount a massive attack upon Bolshevik Russia. The political leaders had accurately gauged their publics' views and had decided against any further military commitment in Russia. Replying to Marshal


\(^{16}\) A third prominent voice, that of General Bridges, also favoured military action against the Bolsheviks. Lloyd George opposed General Bridges on this matter. See Riddell, *Intimate Diary of the Peace Conference*, 118.
Foch at a meeting of the Council of Four, President Wilson turned down a proposed Allied-Polish-Romanian advance toward Bolshevik Russia:

As for the notion of joining together the Polish and Roumanian forces to make them face toward the east, this would be the prelude to a march toward the east and raises the question of military intervention in Russia. . . . military intervention must not be contemplated.

Similarly, Churchill's calls for increased military spending to aid the White generals against the Red Army were denied. Lloyd George even seems to have gently mocked some of Churchill's views. According to Riddell, Lloyd George confided:

In certain moods he [Winston] is dangerous. He has Bolshevism on the brain. Now he wants to make a treaty with the Germans to fight the Bolsheviks. He wants to employ German troops, and he is mad for operations in Russia.

A social occasion later in 1919 brought together Riddell, General Bridges, Lloyd George and Mrs. Astor. The talk again turned to ridicule of Churchill's obsession with Bolshevism. In Riddell's words:

Mrs. Astor very fierce on the subject of Winston and Russia. She said, 'Why not send him to carry on the Russian campaign? He could call for volunteers and

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17 The Council of Four consisted of David Lloyd George, Woodrow Wilson, Georges Clemenceau, and Vittorio Orlando. It was formed after the original Council of Ten proved to be inefficient. Orlando did not attend as often as the others, and thus the most influential statesmen were the 'Big Three.'


19 Riddell, Intimate Diary of the Peace Conference, 50.
raise the necessary funds.'
I said he might become Tsar. This greatly amused
L.G. 20

Neither the views of Foch nor those of Churchill were
seriously considered by the Council of Four. Nevertheless,
Arno Mayer relies on their views as one barometer of the
'context and climate' surrounding the Paris Peace Conference.
His mistake in doing so has been duly noted by Kay Lundgreen-
Nielsen in her look at the Polish experience in 1919. 21 It is
reiterated here.

Of the Allied representatives who dominated the
proceedings at Versailles in the spring of 1919, it was the
French who were the least open to negotiation with Bolshevik
Russia. However, even among the French there could be found
some measure of give-and-take toward Lenin's regime.
Clemenceau, for instance, had eventually been convinced to
invite the Bolsheviks to Prince's Island, 22 and he admitted
that the Bolsheviks in Hungary were not unreasonable in their
demands. 23 As well, the architect of French foreign policy at
this time, Aristide Briand, did not appear to fear the spread
of Bolshevism into his country. During a lunch with Arthur
Balfour, Briand had apparently expressed the view

that France's strength is her agricultural population.
The peasants are against violent changes. They live
hard lives, but are comparatively well-off and would
resent anything in the nature of Bolshevism. Therefore

20 Ibid., 117-18.
21 Kay Lundgreen-Nielsen, "The Mayer Thesis Reconsidered: The
Poles and the Paris Peace Conference, 1919," The International History
22 See above, p. 18.
23 See below, p. 57-58.
France always has a million soldiers upon whom she can depend to keep order—men drawn from agricultural districts.24

While French investors and bankers were angry about the Bolshevik government's cancellation of Imperial Russia's debt, that anger did not appear to generate the fear of a Bolshevik France.25

Other prominent men of the day also expressed little fear of Bolshevik revolution. British Labour Party leader Ramsay MacDonald felt that although Lenin himself was a tremendously important figure, "Bolshevism was dead as a form of Government," and that "drastic changes"26 would not work in Russia or elsewhere. In MacDonald's opinion Bolshevism would not last.

Some insight into the attitudes toward Bolshevism prevalent among lesser officials at the Peace Conference is provided in Harold Nicolson's Peacemaking 1919. A member of the British delegation to Paris, Nicolson left most of his observations in diary form. On 27 March 1919, he recorded meeting two Balkan delegates, Popovic and Vosnyak, who left him with the impression that "the Jugo-Slavs are not frightened of Bolshevism."27 In Paris Nicolson also met William Bullitt and afterwards left this account:

24 Riddell, Intimate Diary of the Peace Conference, 38.
25 French imperial interests were established in south-western Russia and the Balkans. French interest in this region in 1919 was related to the recovery of Czarist loans and access to resources. See Michael Jabara Carley, Revolution and Intervention: The French Government and the Russian Civil War 1917-1919 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983).
26 Ibid., 79.
Lunch at the Meurice...Bullitt there....A young man with beliefs. He was sent to Russia by the President and has returned with a pro-Bolshevik report. He talks about them. I blink politely. He probably thinks me a lousy official. Better blink therefore. But in fact I am an agnostic about Bolshevism--I simply do not know and do not pretend to know. Here we are told only of the atrocities and the executions: they are probably true; but there must be another side, some reality behind it all which has produced this firm and successful government. Bullitt says that the only danger for Lenin comes from the left extremists, not from the whites.28

It appears that Nicolson had a genuine interest in learning more about Lenin's Russia. Bullitt desperately wanted the peace proposals that he had carefully carried from Moscow to Paris to be accepted by the West. It seems that Lloyd George felt the Bolsheviks had acted upon some legitimate grievances. It is evident that Briand was not afraid for France, and neither were the Jugo-Slavs afraid for the Balkans. President Wilson opposed the military schemers and favoured leaving Russia to her own devices as much as possible. Of all these sentiments, it was perhaps that expressed by Ramsay MacDonald that best epitomized feelings about Bolshevist Russia and best explains now why so little was accomplished on the Russian question. Because the changes it proposed were too drastic, MacDonald had thought that Bolshevism simply would not last.

Ramsay MacDonald's view was shared by the group of academics and technical experts that officially prepared the American position in readiness for Paris. Known as the 'Inquiry,' these advisors worked throughout 1918 to prepare a position for the United States to take to the Conference in

28 Ibid., 310.
1919. The Inquiry's pre-conference report suggested that Bolshevism in Russia was merely a transitional stage between the fall of the autocracy and the evolution of a liberal democratic government. Lawrence Gelfand has observed that according to the Inquiry:

Bolshevism in Russia was viewed strictly as a temporary, abnormal condition. All of the Inquiry's plans assumed the imminent establishment of a democratic constitutional government in Russia.²⁹

A very important factor behind the lack of fear of Bolshevism in 1919 was, therefore, the widely held view that it was not going to last very long.

Woodrow Wilson agreed with the members of his Inquiry. This is clearly illustrated by his strong ideological defence of the territorial integrity of prewar Russian boundaries. Other than for the creation of Poland and Finland, Wilson maintained a dedication to the frontiers of old Imperial Russia even at the expense of his own ideals of national self-determination. He accepted a report by the Intelligence Section of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace which recommended:

That encouragement be given, at opportune times, to the reunion with Russia of those border regions of the south and west which have broken away and set up their own national governments, particularly the Baltic Provinces and the Ukraine.³⁰

Ironically, Wilson found himself defending some of the territorial gains made by the Russian Bolsheviks against non-


³⁰ "Outline of Tentative Report and Recommendations Prepared By the Intelligence Section, in Accordance With Instructions, for the President and the Plenipotentiaries, Jan. 21, 1919," in Miller, My Diary 4:219.
Bolshevik break-away provinces. At a meeting of the foreign ministers of the five most influential nations at Paris, the question of aid for Estonian nationalists in their struggle against Trotsky’s Red Army was debated. Secretary of State Robert Lansing reaffirmed President Wilson’s position:

Mr. Lansing pointed out that at the bottom of the whole question lay a very important principle of policy. The recognition of de facto Governments in territories formerly Russian, constituted in a measure a dissection of Russia which the United States of America had carefully avoided, except in the case of Finland and Poland.31

Similar discussions subsequently took place concerning Lithuania and Latvia. President Wilson and ultimately the American delegation in Paris steadfastly maintained a commitment to prewar Russian borders even when that policy may have inadvertently assisted the Red Army. This could only be because Wilson had not accepted Bolshevism as a form of government entrenched or permanent. Like the Inquiry he had commissioned, Wilson expected that as Bolshevism burned itself out some form of constitutional democracy would emerge in Russia. Linda Killen maintains that America’s attitude toward Lenin’s regime during this period was “distorted by reference not to any existing Russia but to some future Russia in Wilson’s mind.”32 She also concludes that after the Inquiry broke ranks with President Wilson over the issue of support for emerging nationalities, he still insisted on the

31 “Secretary’s Notes of a Meeting of Foreign Ministers, Held in M. Pichon’s Room at the Quai d’Orsay, Paris, on Friday, 9th May, 1919, at 3:00 P.M.,” in Miller, My Diary 16:247.

territorial integrity of pre-war Russia at the expense of the borderland nationalities.\textsuperscript{33}

More could have been done, especially by the Americans and the British, to oppose Bolshevik forces in eastern Europe. Although it is true that the Allied powers sent provisions and troops to assist the White Generals against the Red Army, several opportunities to assist local non-Bolshevik nationalities were passed up by the West. M.B. Biskupski questions why, in 1919, Woodrow Wilson did “not champion the claims of Ukrainian and Lithuanian nationalists, thus shrinking Bolshevik Russia while enlarging the barrier to her expansion?”\textsuperscript{34} The failure of British authorities to support the non-Bolshevik Polish resistance to Soviet Russia during this period is an underlying theme of Kay Lundgreen-Nielsen’s work.\textsuperscript{35} She argues that it was not opposition to Bolshevism per se that motivated the peacemakers in Paris, but rather, “considerations of a stable and permanent peace.”\textsuperscript{36} She presents evidence that both the British and American governments chose not to support Polish right wing parties that had vowed to exterminate Bolshevism. While she criticizes Mayer’s thesis, at least in the Polish case,

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 65-78. Betty Miller Unterberger also tries to explain Wilson’s support for the territorial integrity of Imperial Russia. She cites Wilson’s devotion to the principle of self-determination as central to his upholding of Russia, and does not take up the case of neighbouring minorities. See Unterberger, “Woodrow Wilson and the Bolsheviks,” 71-90.

\textsuperscript{34} M.B. Biskupski, “Re-creating Central Europe: The United States ‘Inquiry’ into the Future of Poland in 1918,” \textit{The International History Review} 12, no.2 (May 1990): 278.


\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 101.
Lundgreen-Nielsen does concede that some of her sources were "not available to Mayer" at the time he wrote. Neither British nor American policy toward eastern Europe during the immediate postwar period suggests a fear that Bolshevism was threatening European civilization.

The task of sorting out the degree to which people felt threatened by Bolshevism in 1919 is complicated by the various meanings that the term took on. Depending upon who was using the term and what cause was being championed, the term was coupled with anarchism, or Judaism, or Russian imperialism, or Hungarian nationalism. In Eastern Europe the anti-Bolshevik banner was adopted by several nationalist groups in an attempt to legitimize their claims against neighbouring countries. Defeated nations exaggerated the Bolshevik presence in order to extract more favourable terms from the victorious Allies. The reward for untangling the myriad of implications associated with the term 'Bolshevism' has been to find that most often it was not Bolshevism that was feared at all. The term, in fact, acted as a disguise for many other fears and ambitions.

In the minds of those who were disposed to exhibit anti-Semitism, Bolshevism became associated with Judaism. In Eastern Europe, for example, the French Military Commander, Franchet d’Espérey, worried that his troops would be subjected to Bolshevik agitators who were Jewish:

In his report to Paris, Franchet d’Espérey noted that most members of the Russian Red Cross Mission were Jewish, and that in addition to the large sums they found on them earmarked for agitation, there were indications that the Russians were readying a propaganda

37 Ibid., 73.
campaign directed at the French troops who were expected to occupy Budapest.\textsuperscript{38}

With little understanding of what Bolshevism was, those who wanted to draw connections with Jews did just that. It was noted that Trotsky was Jewish and that the Hungarian leader, Béla Kun, was the "son of a Jewish village notary."\textsuperscript{39}

According to Peter Pastor

The Jewish-Bolshevik nexus was also seen in existence in Hungary, whose capital, according to the French ambassador in Bucharest, Count Charles Saint-Aulaire, was called Jewdapest.\textsuperscript{40}

It was not unusual in the postwar climate to draw sinister connections between groups and thus to promote convenient, if distorted, perceptions of Bolshevism:

[Bolsheviks] came to be viewed, not as Russians or even as ideological extremists, but as enemy secret agents called into existence by Germans doing the work of Jews who were devoted to the vengeful destruction of Russia. In 1917 and for many years afterward British officials continued to believe that the Bolsheviks were not principals in their own right, with their own agenda and their own objectives, but were mere employees of the German General Staff who took their orders from Jews and Prussians in Berlin.\textsuperscript{41}

Even the leaders of the Young Turks were thought by British Intelligence to be "members of the German and Jewish conspiracy that controlled the Bolshevik regime."\textsuperscript{42}


\textsuperscript{39} Frank J. Coppa, "The Hungarian Communist Revolution and the Partito Socialista Italiano," in Pastor, ed., Revolutions and Interventions in Hungary, 231.

\textsuperscript{40} Pastor, "The French Military Mission," 257.

\textsuperscript{41} Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace, 247.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 480.
association between Judaism and Bolshevism in postwar Romania was exaggerated and exploited by anti-Bolshevik political leaders and by Romanian nationalists. It is clear, then, that much of what at first may seem to have been fear of Bolshevism was in reality a mixture of fears that had been present in European society for years.

While the term 'Bolshevik' became interchangeable with 'German' or 'Jew' in Europe, it became synonymous with 'traitor' under General Denikin in the Caucasus and under Admiral Kolchak in Siberia. One did not have to be a Bolshevik in order to be labelled and punished as one. In Siberia the term 'Bolshevik'

was used in a special political sense, and was applied to every one who did not support Kolchak and the autocratic class surrounding him. . . . [They] were kicked, beaten with knouts and murdered in cold blood by the thousands, and then . . . called . . . 'Bolshevik.'

The term was being applied at will to all non-supporters of Kolchak, lending credence to the maxim that it was not Bolshevism per se that was feared by the White Generals, but rather opposition of any kind.

The distortion of the term 'Bolshevism' was used to a different end in Germany during 1919. Klaus Schwabe has explained that German authorities often exaggerated the threat of Bolshevism in their country in order to "win concessions for Germany" from the Allied statesmen in Paris.

44 Graves, America's Siberian Adventure, 101-02.
At least some of the negotiators at the Peace Conference seemed to notice that German claims of Bolshevism on the horizon were inflated. In early March at a meeting of the Council of Ten, Clemenceau was asked to consider lifting the food embargo that was still in place against Germany. It was thought by some that the Germans might be driven to embrace extremist political parties. Promptly, however, Clemenceau countered that

his information tended to show that the Germans were using Bolshevism as a bogey with which to frighten the Allies. If the Germans were starving, as General Plumer and others said they were, why did they continue to refuse to surrender their fleet?46

There was much instability throughout Germany due to the formation of a number of different kinds of councils, but the firmly entrenched German bureaucracy, described by Joll as "the old organs of administration,"47 together with a foundation of social and labour legislation already in place, helped to steel the war-weary German state against upheaval. The Berlin rebellions lost momentum after the murders of the two leading German communists, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, in January of 1919. There was a short-lived 'Munich Soviet' set up for one week in April 1919. James Joll describes this Bavarian experiment as "a soviet run by a group of intellectual anarchists" who initially stepped into power without even the backing of the Bavarian Communist

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46 "Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the 17th Session, Supreme War Council, Held in M. Pichon’s Room at the Quai d’Orsay, Paris, on Saturday, 8th March, 1919, at 3 p.m.," in Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, 4:281-82.

47 Joll, Europe Since 1870, 243.
This confused episode was also characterized largely by Bavarian national sentiment directed against Berlin. Even in Germany the threat of Bolshevism may have been overstated and appears to have been manipulated by those who hoped they might influence the Peace Conference.

Arno Mayer understands this as well. In describing the German delegation present at Compiègne in November 1918, he maintains that they "knowingly and deliberately exploited the specter of Bolshevism" when they argued "that excessively severe armistice conditions would foster Bolshevism in Germany." Elsewhere, Mayer also observes that the "uses and abuses of this spuriously inflated bogey of Bolshevism were as numerous then as they are today." He is accurate to this point. He goes on, however, to make the assumption that these contrived fears and threats became real in the sense that they actually affected the decision-making in Paris. If Mayer was correct, the victorious Allies would have softened their settlement with Germany and would have lifted the food blockade that continued right through the Peace Conference. They did not.

Through central and eastern Europe the attitudes toward Bolshevism sometimes became inextricably tied to feelings of nationalism. Most of the 'anti-Bolshevik' movements that arose in the new national states carved out of the defeated Central Powers can be much more accurately described as nationalist movements. During the months of the

48 Ibid., 249.
49 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 93.
50 Ibid., 10.
Paris Peace Conference "under the ideological cloak of anti-Bolshevik intervention, further territorial demands" were made by almost every new nation upon its neighbour. Even Prime Minister Orlando threatened the rise of Bolshevism in Italy if the Conference could not fulfill Italian demands. Orlando's tactics, however, apparently "made little impression on President Wilson."  

Peter Pastor claims that the Hungarian archives, not available to scholars before the 1980s, "amply demonstrate" that the Romanian government distorted the threat of Bolshevism which was then "utilized as justification for Romania's expansion into most of Transylvania." When Russia left World War I and became embroiled in her own civil war, Romania took advantage of the confusion by expanding into parts of Bessarabia that were formerly within the Czarist Empire. Similarly, when Hungary was defeated, Romanian ambitions toward the Hungarian frontier escalated. These ambitions were not new, for Romanian policy "had been characterized historically by anti-Magyarism, anti-Russianism, and anti-Semitism." The Romanian nationalist movement during the immediate postwar period became firmly set on an anti-Bolshevik course:  

The systematic and skillful exploitation of the Bolshevist threat by the architect of Greater Romania,  

52 Thompson, Russia, Bolshevism, and Versailles, 393.  
53 Pastor, ed., Revolutions and Interventions in Hungary, 4.  
55 Ibid., 298.
Ioan I.C. Bratianu . . . became the essence of Romanian policies during the last few months of World War I.\textsuperscript{56} The anti-Bolshevik movement in Romania could better be described as a Romanian nationalist movement.

Of utmost importance here is the fact that the peacemakers in Paris did not respond with help when Romanian nationalists raised cries of "Bolshevism!" It seems that the Allied leaders were not particularly disposed to meet Romania's demands \textit{vis-à-vis} Hungary.\textsuperscript{57} Mayer states that at the Paris Conference the victors of World War I "gave military assistance . . . to the Whites for their armed assault on . . . Hungary; [and] they stepped up their direct military intervention in Russia."\textsuperscript{58} Contrary to Mayer's claim, the Allies did not step up their direct military intervention during the first six months of 1919. Documents in David Hunter Miller's \textit{Diary} reveal that as early as November 1918 there was discussion about American troops evacuating the Archangel district, leaving only British forces there. Winter conditions, according to Miller, prevented the Americans from moving out until spring, but the decision to leave had already been made.\textsuperscript{59} At the end of January 1919 William Bullitt suggested the withdrawal of American soldiers from Archangel. He also maintained that Buckler had already discussed withdrawal of American troops with Litvinov in January, and said that Lloyd George "intends

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 295. \\
\textsuperscript{57} See below, pp. 56-58. \\
\textsuperscript{58} Mayer, \textit{Politics and Diplomacy}, 9. \\
\textsuperscript{59} Miller, \textit{My Diary} 1:15.
to bring the British troops out on the first day of May."

Similarly, in late March when U.S. Lt. Colonel Riggs, who was stationed in the Crimea, requested assistance from the American Commissioners in Paris, he was denied. The Commissioners questioned the whole concept and value of Riggs' assignment "at this time when it is reported that the Bolsheviks will shortly be in control of most of Southern Russia." Soon after, the Council of Four made a decision to cancel the supplies originally intended for the Crimea. These documents do not suggest stepping up military efforts. They do suggest the beginning of an Allied retreat from some sections of Russia during the months of the Paris Peace Conference.

On 12 June 1919 a decision was finally made by the Council of Four to formally assist Admiral Kolchak in Siberia. However, by that date the Versailles Treaty was virtually complete and events in Russia could hardly have made a difference to the content of the Treaty. The 12 June decision was also too late to help the Whites:

No sooner had the policy of June 12 been established than the military collapse of Kolchak's army began, and once it began, it was precipitate. By mid-June, Kolchak's military situation was deteriorating rapidly, and by the end of June, his drive on Moscow had totally collapsed. . . . Great Britain and the United States, . . . concurred in abandoning further efforts to influence events in Russia.

Much the same situation developed in Poland. On 13

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60 Link, ed., The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, 54:349.
61 Miller, My Diary 7:264.
May 1919 the Polish government petitioned the Paris Peace Conference for aid in fighting the Red Army in the province of Galicia. David Hunter Miller filed this Polish request:

Today this danger has become much greater, as the Bolshevik troops have advanced to the frontier of Galicia, and the Bolshevik movement is making rapid progress amongst the Ruthenian troops of Galicia. The disorganization amongst these troops is proceeding rapidly to-day.64

But the prime minister would not be manipulated by any contrived threats:

Lloyd George called the Polish use of the term Bolshevism 'a cloak for their Imperialistic aims'--the struggle against Bolshevism was a Polish pretext to annex the oil in eastern Galicia.65

In an attempt to solve the Polish dispute a Commission was struck in Paris. This 'Inter-Allied Commission For the Negotiation of An Armistice Between Poland and the Ukraine' met in April to consider military and financial aid to Poland. With General Botha in the chair, the French delegate spoke while the Secretary recorded these notes:

In the event of the armistice being accepted by Poland, who would undertake the responsibility of defending her against Bolshevism? He [General Le Rond] reminded the Commission of its unanimous decision to the effect that it could not give Poland the assurance that, in the circumstances referred to, she might rely on the protection of the Great Powers, and that consequently the question was outside the competence of the Commission.66

It is clear that the delegates to the Paris Peace Conference were not easily convinced of the need to bolster the Poles against the threat of advancing Bolshevism.

64 Miller, "Reply of Polish Delegation," My Diary 10:479.
66 Miller, "Inter-Allied Commission For the Negotiation of An Armistice Between Poland and the Ukraine," My Diary 10:413.
The situation in Hungary deserves special consideration. The Hungarian government came under the control of the Bolshevik leader, Béla Kun, in March 1919. Because this ‘Hungarian Soviet’ was seemingly the closest replica to the Russian Soviet, it provides Arno Mayer with the opportunity to draw conclusions about the fear of Bolshevism in the immediate postwar period. Mayer’s argument is that the peacemakers were very distraught over the appearance of Bolshevism in Hungary and that the Hungarian experience was a major reason why the Conference made “a host of decisions, designed to check Bolshevism.”

After the armistice of November 1918, a liberal democratic government was set up in Budapest under Count Mihaly Károlyi. Károlyi began to institute land reform by dividing and distributing his own estate to peasant families. Károlyi’s statement that, “We have only one maxim: Wilson, Wilson and Wilson,” made it clear that he was willing to cooperate with Paris but also indicated his devotion to the Wilsonian ideal of national self-determination.

Almost immediately upon taking office, Károlyi was faced with frontier disputes with Czechoslovakia and Romania. The most serious was with Romania where a demarcation line had not yet been fixed and was awaiting the decision of the Paris Conference. Károlyi staked his Presidency on the attainment of favourable frontier settlements with Hungary’s neighbours. Speaking to a group of soldiers in March, he

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67 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 9.
declared that

If Wilson's principles do not materialize and, instead of a peace based on mutual agreement, a dictated peace demanding territorial dismemberment is offered, I promise you, soldiers, I will never sign such peace terms!  

On 20 March a decision arrived from Paris. French Lieutenant-Colonel Fernand Vix, "the official representative of the Great Powers in Budapest," accompanied by U.S. Navy Captain Nicholas Roosevelt, delivered a note to Károlyi requiring Hungarian troops to withdraw completely from disputed territory with Romania. As he had said he would, Károlyi resigned virtually "on the spot."  

Finding common ground in the heightened climate of intense nationalism, the socialists and the communists formed a coalition and assumed power. Under the leadership of Béla Kun a 'Soviet Republic' was declared which "aimed to undo the dictated frontiers in the north and the south." So broad was the appeal of the Bolsheviks' nationalist platform that it "made even the officer class of the old army side with Kun." So blatant was the nationalism in Kun's socialism that it caught the attention of Benito Mussolini by

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70 Károly Vigh, "The Causes and Consequences of Trianon: A Re-Examination," in Ibid., 68.

71 Ibid.

72 Pastor, "Hungarian Territorial Losses During the Liberal-Democratic Revolution," 270.

73 Vigh, "Causes and Consequences of Trianon," 70.
suggesting "precisely what he hoped to accomplish in Italy."\textsuperscript{74}

The Bolshevik revolution in Hungary had been born of national rather than class-based grievances.

The statesmen in Paris seemed to understand that. British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour declared in March 1919 that from his reading of the press, the Kun regime had "a nationalist aspect."\textsuperscript{75} Within one week of Kun's taking power, Lloyd George spoke to the Council of Four in Paris explaining why he saw no reason to suppress the Hungarian revolution:

I do not see why this should be done; few countries need a revolution so badly. Today I spoke with someone who has visited Hungary and knows it well: he reports that its system of land tenure is the worst in all Europe. The peasants are oppressed as they were in the Middle Ages and the droit du seigneur still exists.\textsuperscript{76}

Throughout the duration of the Hungarian Soviet which lasted until August 1919, Lloyd George defended its position as opposed to Czechoslovakia's or Romania's positions on frontier issues.\textsuperscript{77} The British position generally seemed to be "to ride out the storm"\textsuperscript{78} in the belief that the Kun government would be a temporary one. According to Mária Ormos, Georges Clemenceau was forced to declare that justice was on the side of Béla Kun: Hungary had carried out the demands of

\textsuperscript{74} Coppa, "Hungarian Revolution and the Partito Socialista Italiano," 238.
\textsuperscript{75} Mantoux, Proceedings of the Council of Four, 70.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 36.
\textsuperscript{77} Thomas L. Sakmyster, "Great Britain and the Making of the Treaty of Trianon," in Király, Pastor and Sanders eds., Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, vol. 6 of War and Society in East Central Europe, 121.
\textsuperscript{78} Peter Pastor, introduction to Revolutions and Interventions in Hungary, 5.
the Entente, whereas Romania had not.\textsuperscript{79}

Several of the top echelon American negotiators in Paris appear to have had some degree of sympathy for events in Hungary. Secretary of State Robert Lansing generally agreed with Hungary's territorial claims and blamed the Romanians for first violating the armistice.\textsuperscript{80} President Wilson gave the impression that he thought Kun's government was merely a passing trend when he told the Conference that it was "a government of Soviets because that is the form of revolution now in fashion."\textsuperscript{81} He described Béla Kun as a "rascal" but declared that he was "prepared to begin talks" with the man.\textsuperscript{82} When Marshal Foch addressed the Council of Four to request money and arms to oppose Kun, President Wilson squarely rejected him:

We hear the expression 'clean up Hungary', which means, in other words, to crush Hungarian Bolshevism. If this Bolshevism remains within its own frontiers, this is no business of ours.\textsuperscript{83}

Perhaps the most telling comment at the Conference came from General Tasker Bliss of the United States. Speaking to Lansing and two other American commissioners, Bliss exhibited a view not typical of military men, and therefore exceptionally revealing of the Conference's attitude toward Bolshevik Hungary:

General Bliss stated that he felt very strongly that we had no reason to change our attitude toward Hungary merely because a change of Government had occurred there

\textsuperscript{79} Ormos, "The Foreign Policy of the Hungarian Soviet Republic," 362.

\textsuperscript{80} Mantoux, \textit{Proceedings of the Council of Four}, 70.

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., 72.

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 71.

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 35.
which did not suit us very well. He stated that if the present government maintained order there is no reason why we should not deal with it just as we had with the previous government.\(^84\)

Bliss went on to say that if a choice had to be made between supporting Romania or Hungary, he would support Hungary regardless of its Bolshevik government:

Moreover, if the present government [Béla Kun’s government] refused to obey the injunction of the Peace Conference to retire its troops behind the designated neutral zone, but preferred to fight with the Rumanians, we should then refuse to give any assistance to the Rumanians regardless of how greatly such a step might be misinterpreted by the other nations.\(^85\)

Bliss realized that the Hungarian issue “would be red hot,” but he received assurances from Mr. White and Mr. Lansing, then present, to “back him up.”\(^86\) Bliss clearly seemed to feel that Béla Kun’s government was worthy of some measure of support.

In the case of Hungary, and in the cases of other central and eastern European nations, the influential parties to the Paris Peace Conference appeared to be aware of the strong undercurrents of national sentiment that drove the politics of the region. They did not appear concerned about a rising tide of Bolshevism spilling out of Russia.

That the peacemakers, in particular Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson, were open to negotiation with both Lenin’s and Kun’s Bolshevik governments, is evident. The Conference invited Lenin’s representatives to Prince’s Island in

\(^{84}\) "Minutes of the Daily Meetings of Commissioners Plenipotentiary," in Miller, My Diary 7:260-61.
\(^{85}\) Ibid., 261.
\(^{86}\) Ibid.
February, Wilson sent William Buckler to Bolshevik Russia, and Wilson and Lloyd George co-operated in sending William Bullitt to seek Lenin's peace terms in March. Although the Great Powers did have troops stationed in Russia with the White Generals throughout 1918, some Allied operations were being scaled down by 1919, notably in Crimea and in northern Russia. Lloyd George, Wilson, and Clemenceau resisted pleas from militarists such as Churchill and Foch to oppose Bolshevism by force of arms. The Hungarian revolution was seen by most Conference delegates as an expression of nationalism led by a 'rascal' who likely would not remain in power for long. In private conversations the leaders of the Great Powers did not appear to be worried about Bolshevist revolution and were known to have joked about those, such as Churchill, who were.

However, it is also true that when faced directly by their legislature, their opposition, their public, or their press, these politicians became likely to lash out against Bolshevism. It is the public faces of these men, visible during their election campaigns and in their press reports, that Mayer has concentrated on. Most of their anti-Bolshevik public pronouncements can be explained as one form or another of electioneering or, in cases where Russian issues were ignored altogether, as an indication of just how unimportant an issue it was to politicians.

During the British election campaign of December 1918, Lloyd George joined in a coalition with Bonar Law's Conservatives in order to mount a campaign against Labour.
Literature published by the Liberal/Conservative coalition tied 'Labour' to 'Bolshevism' and, in the immediate postwar climate, linked both terms to German collaboration. Red ink was displayed across pamphlets denouncing the Independent Labour Party. The Times reported Lloyd George as declaring:

The Labour Party is being run by the extreme pacifist, Bolshevist group . . . Supposing the Labour Party won. The moment they got in these are the men who would run the Government. That is exactly what happened in Russia.

Lloyd George was re-elected and began another term as Prime Minister, but he would thereafter have to answer to the Conservatives who had helped him to get elected.

Lloyd George was perpetually torn between his personal liberal views and the Conservative bloc in Parliament. Led by Winston Churchill, and supported by Lord Northcliffe's Press, Conservatives in Britain and especially in the House of Commons criticized the Prime Minister's 'softness' toward both Germany and Russia. The newspapers were relentless:

Throughout the period of the Conference Lord Northcliffe, incensed at not having himself been appointed a Peace Delegate, turned upon Lloyd George a constant stream of boiling water. . . . it was unfortunate that a British Liberal should have placed himself at the mercy of . . . a jingo Press.

In April, Lord Northcliffe together with the editor of The Times, Mr. Wickam Steed, and assisted by Mr. Churchill, whipped up tremendous opposition to Lloyd George in the House

87 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 159.
88 The Times, 14 Dec. 1918, quoted in Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 159.
89 Lord Northcliffe owned the Daily Mail and The Times. In 1917 he had represented Britain on a mission to the U.S.A., and during the war he had orchestrated propaganda aimed at the Central Powers.
90 Nicolson, Peacemaking 1919, 20.
of Commons over the Bolshevik issue. According to Tillman, Churchill and Northcliffe "had rigged a hostile majority in the House of Commons in case Lloyd George gave his true opinions" about Bolshevism in Russia.  

The issue arose after William Bullitt’s return to Paris from Moscow. Word had leaked out of British collaboration in the ‘secret’ American mission. Although he had participated in planning Bullitt’s trip and although his private secretary, Philip Kerr, had provided Bullitt with a proposal in the name of the British Government to hand directly to Lenin, Lloyd George denied any knowledge of the trip. When questioned in the House of Commons, he was not truthful:

Mr. Clynes. Before the right honorable gentleman comes to the next subject, can he make any statement on the approaches or representations alleged to have been made to his Government by persons acting on behalf of such government as there is in Central Russia?
Mr. Lloyd George. We have had no approaches at all . . .
Mr. Clynes. I ask the question because it has been repeatedly alleged.
Mr. Lloyd George. We have had no approaches at all. Constantly there are men coming and going to Russia of all nationalities, and they always come back with their tales of Russia. But we have made no approach of any sort.

Less than a week earlier Lloyd George had attended a breakfast meeting with William Bullitt. This “deliberate falsehood” was subsequently backed by Woodrow Wilson who

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92 See Appendices 1 and 2. Lenin replied to Kerr's proposal, and sent it with Bullitt from Moscow to Paris.
93 Bullitt, *The Bullitt Mission to Russia*, 94.
94 Brownell and Billings, *So Close to Greatness*, 91-92.
95 Ponomaryov et al., *Soviet Foreign Policy*, 119.
declined to comment on Lloyd George’s behavior in the House.  

An astute politician, Lloyd George was somewhat “capricious and inconsistent” and “always quick to temper his beliefs in the face of political attack.” The Prime Minister knew exactly what he was doing. His memoirs confirm what the literature has revealed:

Personally I would have dealt with the Soviets as the de facto Government of Russia. So would President Wilson. But we both agreed that we could not carry to that extent our colleagues at the Congress, nor the public opinion of our own countries which was frightened by Bolshevik violence and feared its spread.

When international diplomacy is practiced by the same men who must stand for re-election, then political opportunism may well figure into the diplomatic equation. In his attitude toward Bolsheviks Lloyd George had two faces. His government’s Russian policy was perhaps best described by Leon Trotsky, as he spoke to British agent Bruce Lockhart:

Your policy towards Russia right from the beginning has been indecisive and vacillating. Your Lloyd George is like a man playing roulette and scattering chips on every number.

If there was any specter for Lloyd George at Paris, it was not Mayer’s specter of Bolshevism. It was the specter of political failure at the hands of the Official Opposition in

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96 Arthur Link comments on Lloyd George’s denial: “Lloyd George’s remarks to this point were disingenuous, to say the least. In fact, Lloyd George had had a breakfast conference with Bullitt on March 27, at which Bullitt’s mission to Russia and the Soviet peace proposal he had brought back were discussed at length.” The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, 57:460, n.3.

97 Thompson, Russia, Bolshevism, and Versailles, 52-53.


99 Lockhart, Memoirs of a British Agent, 231.
the House of Commons.

Woodrow Wilson's public persona was inclined to shy away from entanglement with Bolshevik Russia. Wilson, a Democrat, faced a Republican Senate eager to contest his every move in Paris. Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge became Wilson's chief adversary, leading a campaign against American participation in Wilson's consuming brainchild and foremost raison d'être at Paris--the creation of a League of Nations.

In January Wilson had arrived in Paris with hopes that his idealistic 'Fourteen Points For a Just Peace' would be accepted as the basis for a settlement. Included in the Fourteen Points, alongside calls for an end to secret treaties, free navigation on the high seas, and national self-determination for subject peoples, was a provision for Russia. Point number six asked for Russia to have "opportunity for the independent determination" of her own institutions. It was widely held that the only Peace Conference delegate who might be able to bring the Allies together on a Russian policy was President Wilson. Point number fourteen stipulated the creation of a League of Nations to solve future international disputes peacefully.

While in Paris Wilson found it difficult to have all his points accepted. In the give-and-take of diplomatic exchange he lost Allied support for some of his principles in order to retain Allied backing for a League of Nations. With

each passing week Wilson’s initial dedication to finding a workable Russian policy sank to lower priority. He refused to acknowledge Bullitt’s report from Russia, he did not reply to Lenin’s peace proposal, and he offered no explanation after Lloyd George’s ‘deliberate falsehood’ in the House of Commons. Political considerations began to block his idealistic vision of a settlement, not only with the Germans, but with the Russian Bolsheviks as well.

At the end of June Wilson returned home with the Treaty of Versailles, within which was contained an acceptance of the Covenant of the League of Nations. His job that summer was to gain U.S. public support for the Treaty before the Senate debated it in the autumn. Not about to allow the League of Nations to be lost through the political manoeuvrings of men such as Senator Lodge, Wilson now gave up the last remnants of understanding and conciliation with Bolshevik Russia:

By the summer of 1919, even Wilson had abandoned his verbal neutrality towards Russia. In the course of his nationwide tour to rally support for the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations, he spoke of the Moscow regime as ‘the negation of everything that is American.’

‘And do you honestly think...’ he asked an audience in Des Moines, ‘that none of that poison [of Bolshevism] has gotten into the veins of this free people?’

The American Senate did not ratify the Treaty of Versailles and the United States did not join the League of Nations. Senator Lodge’s bid for isolationism, helped along by

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testimony from William Bullitt,\textsuperscript{102} had worked. In early October Wilson suffered a stroke which paralyzed much of the left side of his body. In the fall of 1919 he appeared to be broken and defeated.

It has become clear that Wilson's concern for the creation of a League of Nations transcended his other objectives at Versailles. The resulting political opposition that he had to face both in Europe and at home gradually led him to give up his earlier attempts to develop a realistic Russian policy. As with Lloyd George, it had not been the threat of Bolshevism looming over Europe that had influenced Wilson's decision-making in Paris. On the contrary, it had been the threat of political failure over the rejection of his League of Nations. In Wilson's mind, other issues, including the issue of Russian Bolsheviks, paled in comparison to the League of Nations issue.

Besides a degree of political opportunism that invariably affects most politicians, Wilson seemed to be driven by other even less tangible motives while in Paris. He had a tremendous conviction that America in general and he in particular "had a mission" to serve "the rest of the world, Russia included."\textsuperscript{103} Due to the idealistic moral tone of the Fourteen Points and to the relative detachment of America from age-old European rivalries, Wilson was perceived by many as the man whose principles could really bring a

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\textsuperscript{103} Thompson, \textit{Russia, Bolshevism, and Versailles}, 41.
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sense of national fulfillment and international peace. According to Arthur Link, who has devoted a career to the study of Wilson, the 'Fourteen Points' speech as delivered by the President in January 1918, "had appealed for peace in the name of all that was high and holy in the democratic and Christian tradition for the purpose of saving Western civilization." Himself the son of a Presbyterian minister, Wilson has been described as being consumed with the role he assigned to himself. At Versailles, Clemenceau had remarked "that Wilson thought himself 'another Jesus Christ come upon the earth to reform men.'"

Psychological studies of Woodrow Wilson have attempted to find connections between his self-styled moral mission, his emotional needs, his physical and neurological illness, and his debilitating stroke. One such study by Edwin Weinstein suggests that Wilson's "long history of cerebral vascular disease . . . was associated with alterations in behavior and personality, and . . . events of [his] . . . professional and political careers."

Another psychological study focusses on Wilson's

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106 Quoted in Thompson, Russia, Bolshevism, and Versailles, 41.
performance at Versailles and on the Russian question at the Peace Conference. It is co-authored by Sigmund Freud and William Bullitt. According to their work, Wilson was convinced "that God had chosen him to give the world a just and lasting peace." At Paris, they suggested, Wilson tried to "lift the negotiations to the plane of the sermon on the Mount."\(^{108}\) When he found he had to compromise his principles, he felt he was not living up to his mission. Intense emotional and psychological stress gathered against Wilson during late March and early April. Negotiations had been extremely arduous with Clemenceau over the disposition of the Saar and the Rhineland, acceptance of the League was in jeopardy, the Republicans were on the offensive across the Atlantic, and Colonel House had been repeatedly after him to meet with Bullitt about Lenin's peace proposals. As he cancelled more than one scheduled meeting with Bullitt, Wilson complained that he was over-worked, that the German issues took precedence, and that he was plagued with chronic headaches. While still in Paris, Wilson finally became outwardly ill "with a serious illness accompanied by high fever (and complicated by untreated hypertension) that put him in bed for nearly a week."\(^{109}\) Ray Stannard Baker, Wilson's close personal secretary for many years, recorded in his diary:

April 3. To cap the climax the President fell ill today . . . He had a severe cold with fever . . . The Four jump about from question to question and decide nothing. There is unlimited greedy bargaining


\(^{109}\) Knock, *To End All Wars*, 251.
especially by the French and Italians . . .
April 5. . . . Wilson is still in bed.\textsuperscript{110}

To Freud, this illness was related to the psychological stress and to Wilson's inability to complete his lofty mission according to plan. At the time of the illness, Lenin's deadline was fast approaching. During the most crucial week in regards to the Bolshevik issue, Woodrow Wilson was unable to function:

Through the early morning hours of April 4, 1919, Wilson writhed in his bed, vomiting, coughing, giving out profuse diarrhea and bloody urine, pain shooting from his swollen prostate and the neuritis in his left shoulder, fighting for breath, his face haggard, its left side and his left eye twitching. But the torment in his body at that moment was perhaps less terrible to him than the torment in his mind.\textsuperscript{111}

A few days later Wilson was able to conduct minimal business from his bedside. Lenin's deadline of 10 April, however, passed without notice.\textsuperscript{112} The most favourable terms that any Western nation would ever receive from Soviet Russia had slipped by unanswered while Wilson lay ill.

This capsule look at Wilson's physical and psychological health has not been a diversion from the issue at hand. In fact it has helped to illuminate the issue by keeping it in perspective. Realistically, Wilson's performance in Paris was the result of many factors including his idealistic vision, his moral commitment, his political calculations, and his physical and mental health, to say

\textsuperscript{110} Quoted in Mayer, \textit{Politics and Diplomacy}, 572-73.
\textsuperscript{111} Freud and Bullitt, \textit{Wilson: A Psychological Study}, 246.
\textsuperscript{112} The sensitive nature of diplomatic communication with an 'enemy' regime during the Russian Civil War likely would have ruled out cablegrams. Courier or diplomatic pouch would have necessitated that Wilson act by 6 April at the latest.
nothing of his dedication to American national interests. Likely his perception of Bolshevism was also one factor. But it was only one, and one that plenty of documentary evidence has shown did not cause Wilson undue concern.

Freud and Bullitt's book has been aptly described as "good psychology but bad history"\textsuperscript{113} for the excessive importance it assigns to Wilson alone for shaping the Peace Settlement. It has a value, however, in reminding us of the danger of subscribing to grand theories such as Mayer's. Grand schemes tend to gloss over the unexpected and the particulars that do not fit. They squash the details and they silence the element of chance in history. They may well overlook the effect of one man's illness upon the course of events.

Mayer's claim that it "was symptomatic of the entire Peace Conference that the specter of Bolshevism significantly impinged on the deliberations of both opening sessions,"\textsuperscript{114} is not secure in the light of documentary evidence. Official records, secretary's notes, memoirs, and diaries kept of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 suggest that the three most powerful world leaders in attendance were not significantly affected by the existence of Lenin's Bolshevik regime in Russia. Nor was it only the Big Three who considered Bolshevism to be no serious or immediate threat. The American 'Inquiry' of experts, as well as observers such as Harold Nicolson, Ramsay MacDonald, Captain Roosevelt, General Tasker Bliss, Aristide Briand, and William Bullitt agreed.

\textsuperscript{113} Tuchman, "Woodrow Wilson on Freud's Couch," 147.
\textsuperscript{114} Mayer, \textit{Politics and Diplomacy}, 411.
The documents have also revealed that the delegates to Paris could and did recognize that what appeared to be anti-Bolshevik movements in Eastern Europe were almost invariably aggressively nationalist elements designed to secure territory from neighbouring states.

The chief reason why the statesmen did not worry about Bolshevism in 1919 appears to have been the belief that it would not last in Russia. The state of flux created by Russia's ongoing Civil War allowed most of the Conference delegates to dismiss Bolshevism as temporary, and then to relegate the Russian question to the last of their priorities. To be sure, "no grand anti-Bolshevik design could be traced"\(^{115}\) during any stage of the Conference. After a few unsuccessful but noteworthy attempts, primarily by President Wilson and Prime Minister Lloyd George, to arrange for Russian representation in Paris, the matter was dropped and the delegates got on with their primary task--writing a settlement with defeated Germany.

\(^{115}\) Thompson, Russia, Bolshevism, and Versailles, 381.
The settlement with Germany together with an Allied tug of war over the disposition of former German assets consumed the efforts of the peacemakers in Paris. Hour for hour the amount of time and effort put into either Bolshevik or Russian issues was very minor indeed, both prior to and during the Versailles Conference. British and American strategists seemed to take little notice of Lenin's new regime. Their preparations for the Conference contain very few references to Bolshevism and those references invariably assess the Bolshevik menace as minor in comparison to the German menace. On the eve of the Paris Conference the peacemakers were ill-prepared to evaluate the effect of emerging Bolshevism, and they did not appear to anticipate it as a major issue. As the Conference got underway, it became evident that Bolshevism was not high on its agenda. The official proceedings of the Conference contain only scattered references to Bolshevism or to Lenin. Some memoirs, such as André Tardieu's The Truth About the Treaty, contain even less; they make no attempt to evaluate the Russian situation at all. Mayer's claim that the Bolshevik issue "significantly impinged" on virtually all conversations held in Paris is an exaggeration unsubstantiated by documentary evidence.

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1 André Tardieu, The Truth About the Treaty, with a Foreword by E.M. House and an Introduction by Georges Clemenceau (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1921).
2 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 411.
To begin with, although the peacemakers were charged with designing a new world, like all statesmen they had only old and known tools to work with. Thus, the preparations for the Peace began with an historical look back to the way things had been, rather than with a progressive look forward to new political forces such as Bolshevism. The British Foreign Office, for example, had prepared a series of handbooks, called the 'Peace Books'. One of these, *The Congress of Vienna*, was considered "as useful reading for men about to meet at the first major conference for reordering the international system"\(^3\) since 1815. Historical precedent would apparently help guide the peacemaking process. One of the Peace Books, *The Congress of Berlin*, seemed to be favoured by Balfour,\(^4\) and by some East Europeans hoping to petition the Conference on frontier claims. The United States wanted acceptance of the 1823 Monroe Doctrine, which secured the western hemisphere within an American sphere of interest. France planned a return to pre-1870 frontiers. Most of the delegates to the Paris Peace Conference viewed the world in traditional ways and scarcely comprehended the nature of Bolshevism.

Prior to the Peace Conference the British Government did not seem haunted by the 'specter' of Bolshevism. In preparation for Paris the British Director of Military Intelligence ordered his staff to write reports on "historical, political, and ethnographical"\(^5\) topics pertaining

\(^{3}\) Goldstein, 40.
\(^{4}\) Ibid.
\(^{5}\) Ibid., 51.
to a European peace. Of the thirty-five papers thus produced, only two dealt with Russia, and they addressed a broad range of Russian concerns, not merely Bolshevism in Russia.  

Similarly, reports prepared by the British Political Intelligence Department within the Foreign Office did not appear concerned about Bolshevism. According to Goldstein, the Political Intelligence Department recommended that "it might be possible to deal with the Bolsheviks on a semi-official basis and to provide them with food, if they met certain conditions." Thus, the Foreign Office proposed dealing with the Bolshevik Government in Russia.

The British Government appeared to be far more concerned with a future threat from Germany than with a threat from the new Soviet Russia, and in most cases when warnings about Bolshevism were voiced they were tied to a deeper fear of Germany. If anything was feared, it was "a German-Russian combination" in which Germany would play a leading role in restructuring the Russian economy and restoring Russian political stability after the war. Clearly, this scenario took for granted that Bolshevism was a temporary political phase in Russia's development. The British desire to check German expansion eastward was evident long before a Bolshevik government ever existed in Russia. In the early months of 1917 the British Cabinet had considered a recommendation to create "a Polish kingdom to

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6 Ibid., 53.
7 Ibid., 143.
serve as a buffer between Germany and Russia." By this the British were attempting to limit German exploitation of Eastern European and Russian resources. Arno Mayer’s analysis of the Paris Peace Conference, however, implies that the creation of a string of Eastern European countries after the Great War was one of the Conference’s “host of decisions ... designed to check Bolshevism,” and that “the victors made territorial concessions to Poland, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia for helping to stem the revolutionary tide beyond their own borders.” He has not looked closely enough at the British program before Bolshevism became a factor. It cannot be claimed that the British planned new states in Eastern Europe in order to halt the spread of Bolshevism, and it would be misleading to say that British delegates to the Paris Peace Conference arrived with the threat of Bolshevism foremost on their minds. The American Commissioners who came to Paris in 1919 were also largely unprepared for the appearance of Bolshevism in Europe. The Government of the

9 Gelfand, The Inquiry, 123.

10 British concern over a possible German-Russian combination extended throughout the Peace Conference itself. Shortly before the Treaty of Versailles was concluded, British diplomat Maurice Hankey "argued that Germany and Russia were exhausted and would remain so for years. The principal danger to European peace was eventual exploitation by Germany of Russian resources." See George W. Egerton, Great Britain and the Creation of the League of Nations (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 178. As well, Winston Churchill, although decidedly anti-Bolshevik, also saw Bolsheviks as weak and as far less threatening than Germans. At a meeting of the Council of Ten, in February of 1919, Churchill asked, "Would it be possible to make certain that Germany...would not in the near future become the supreme influence in Russia?" See "The Council of Ten: Minutes of Meeting February 15, 3 p.m.," in Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference 1919, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), 4:15.

11 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 9.
United States had not formulated a clear policy on Russia and had refrained from officially recognizing any Russian faction as legitimate. President Wilson's team of researchers, the Inquiry, had produced no analysis or description of the Soviet "political or economic program" already underway in Russia:

Prior to the peace conference, there was not a single Inquiry report which tried to come to grips with the possible menace of Bolshevism to European society. There had not appeared a single report which dealt systematically with socialism in any area of Europe.13

The members of the Inquiry expected that the Paris Peace Conference would deal with the same kinds of issues that previous peace conferences had dealt with—issues such as the fixing of boundaries, the allocation of resources, the redistribution of colonial possessions, the control of valuable industrial enterprises, and the supervision of key transportation routes—and that it would add national self-determination as a new consideration.14 They were not far wrong. Needless to say, they did not prepare to deal with Bolshevism as a major issue, and Bolshevism did not emerge during the Conference as a major issue.

Like their British counterparts, American strategists also recommended the creation of new states in Eastern Europe quite independently of any concern over the spread of Bolshevism. According to Gelfand, Secretary of State Robert Lansing recommended as early as October 1917, "the creation of strong, populous, independent buffer states" to stretch

12 Gelfand, The Inquiry, 212.
13 Ibid., 213.
14 Ibid.
along "the Danube and the Adriatic, and across the eastern frontiers of Germany." During the war Lansing shared the same fears as the British, and felt the need to guard against the perceived threat of a German "Mittel-Europa" expansion. Lansing made his position clear in January 1918:

I think that the President will have to . . . favor the erection of new states out of the imperial territory and require the separation of Austria and Hungary. This is the only certain means of ending German power in Europe. Convinced of this, I think we should encourage the erection of a Polish state, a Czech state, and possibly a Ruthenian state. Then would come the union of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia under one sovereignty. . . . These independent states would present an insuperable barrier to German ambition.

By September 1918, Lansing had formulated a series of twenty-nine steps that he felt needed to be taken to arrange the peace at war's end. Not one of the twenty-nine took up the issue of Bolshevism. Lansing only mentioned that Russia's "shattered and impotent" condition would render her easy prey for German, not Bolshevik, ambition.

It is important to note that these were Lansing's views prior to the Paris Peace Conference. It is possible to find other statements from Lansing which declare that the "proletarian revolution seemed imminent," in 1919, and that

15 Ibid., 191, from Lansing's Confidential Private Memorandum, dated 24 October 1917.
17 Quoted in Gelfand, The Inquiry, 152, from Lansing's Private Memorandum on the President's Statement of War Aims, dated 8 January 1918.
18 Lansing, The Peace Negotiations, 171-75.
19 Ibid., 171.
20 Ibid., 98.
Bolshevism was "raising its abominable head." Like the alarmist remarks made by Churchill and Foch, the examples from Lansing comprise only a tiny fraction of the immense collection of Peace Conference literature, most of which reveals no fear of Bolshevism or sometimes no acknowledgement that Russia was even under Bolshevik rule at that time. Overall, the British and American preparations for the Peace Conference show very few signs of fear, concern, or distress over a possible threat from Bolsheviks either inside or outside of Russia.

During the Conference itself little time was expended on Bolshevik-related issues. Other more demanding issues such as reparations settlements, the disposition of the Saar, the de-militarization of the Rhineland, the creation of a League of Nations, and the redistribution of former German colonies to the victorious Allies consumed the energies of the peacemakers. Secretarial notes kept of the meetings of the Council of Four "show that Bolshevism was a major topic of discussion at only five of the 148 meetings." Indeed, Bolshevik Russia "was hardly more than a sideshow on the diplomatic stage at Paris," and attempts to deal with Russian issues were few and far between.

21 Quoted in Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 60.
22 For example, members of the Inquiry did consider that the creation of new Eastern European nations would help hold back Bolshevism, but they gave so much more consideration to holding back Germany, that their concern over Bolshevism appears insignificant by comparison. See Gelfand, The Inquiry, 323.
24 Tillman, Anglo-American Relations at Paris, 152.
The records kept by David Hunter Miller confirm that issues concerning Bolshevism did not come up often. Miller's multi-volume work is both a diary and collection of every document that crossed his desk while he served in Paris as a legal consultant for the American Commission to Negotiate Peace. Miller received reports from a variety of specialized committees, both American and foreign. He wrote American policy proposals and he screened information before it was passed to President Wilson. He was in daily contact with the inner circle of the American negotiating team: Colonel Edward M. House, General Tasker H. Bliss, Secretary of State Robert Lansing, Herbert Hoover, and President Wilson. The few references to Bolshevism that can be found in Miller's My Diary are buried, and do not appear to have aroused attention at the time.

This lack of attention is evident in the index volume alone. The terms 'Bolshevism,' 'Communism,' 'Lenin,' and 'Socialism' do not appear as index entries, although 'Women's Suffrage' and 'International Opium Traffic' do. The index is comprised of 270 columns of entries. Of these, only one column is devoted to Russia, and it covers a wide variety of Russian issues, not just Russian Bolshevism. The index entries for 'Morocco' and 'Women' similarly receive one column each, suggesting that they were given as much attention as all topics relating to Russian ethnography, history, economics, agriculture, resources, and politics taken together. In contrast the index devotes six columns of entries to arrangements for the Saar coal fields, twelve
columns to the regulation of ports, waterways and railways, and twenty-six full columns to the organization of the League of Nations. Although this measure is admittedly somewhat crude, it does establish that Bolshevism and Bolshevik-related issues were not in high profile at Paris.

The documentation left by Miller makes it possible to trace the paperwork on William Bullitt’s mission to Moscow, one of the few Bolshevik-related issues that surfaced within the American delegation in Paris. The record reveals that Miller and other members of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace paid little attention to Bullitt’s trip or to his message from Lenin.

Bullitt must have sensed the importance of Lenin’s proposal for peace that he carried with him out of Russia in March 1919, for he cabled the American Commission in Paris from his first stop en route back to France.25 Dated from Helsinki, 16 March 1919, Bullitt’s telegram was addressed: “Most Secret. For the President, Secretary Lansing and Colonel House only”26 and was verified as received by Miller on 17 March. If Arno Mayer is accurate in suggesting that the fear of Bolshevism significantly influenced the deliberations of the peacemakers,27 then surely this correspondence would have been considered promptly and

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25 Lenin’s proposal is in Appendix 2. It matches the Allied request as written by Philip Kerr, and delivered by Bullitt to Lenin. More favourable terms for the cessation of hostilities between foreign interventionist armies and the Red Army had never been and would never again be offered by Lenin. See above, p. 21, and Miller, My Diary, 6:445-50.

26 Ibid., 445.

27 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 411.
thoroughly by the representatives of the Government of the United States. It was not.

Two days later, Bullitt's telegram was read by Commissioner Henry White, in the presence of Miller, and formally entered into the records. It is unclear whether Colonel House was present for the reading, as he entered and left the room more than once. It is certain that the others to whom the telegram was addressed, President Wilson and Secretary Lansing, were not present. There ensued no commentary or discussion of the telegram at that time, it does not appear to have been forwarded to Wilson, and it was set aside before the Commissioners broke for lunch. That afternoon was spent discussing arrangements for Syria, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Although Miller made diary notations every day of his stay in Paris, he did not take up the issue of Bullitt's telegram again until 3 April when he simply recorded that the "report of Bullitt on Russia is in the files. It is undated." Miller mentioned correspondence concerning Fridjof Nansen's food relief scheme for Russia, but not Bullitt's telegram or the crucial peace proposal. Lenin's 10 April deadline slipped away, and the opportunity to develop a workable Russian policy was lost. In contrast, according to Miller, the American Commissioners worked late into the night

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28 Miller, My Diary, 1:189.
29 Ibid., 190-92.
30 Ibid., 221.
31 See above, p. 27-28.
32 See above, pp. 22, 68-69.
of 10 April on a naval agreement with Great Britain, on strengthening the Monroe Doctrine, on consideration of women’s issues, and on a viable covenant for the League of Nations. The documents included in Miller’s diary provide no evidence that issues relating to Bolshevism in Russia or elsewhere were high on the agenda within the American camp in Paris.

Some of the conclusions derived from Miller’s records can be verified in Paul Mantoux’s Proceedings of the Council of Four, which covers the period from 24 March to 18 April, when Mantoux was the official secretary. Although the time period coincides with when Bullitt was offering Lenin’s proposal to the Peace Conference, Mantoux does not mention Bullitt or his telegram concerning Lenin. Mantoux does record a discussion of Nansen’s food relief scheme, although by the time it was brought to the Council, a rejection letter to Nansen had already been drafted by the American Commission to Negotiate Peace.

It cannot be said that the Allied powers attempted to bolster the war-torn and hungry regions of Eastern Europe, and Russia, against Bolshevism by supplying them with foodstuffs. Nansen’s scheme for sending American food through neutral ports was rejected. In making the decision

33 “Thursday, April 10th,” in Miller, My Diary, 1:232-39. The League of Nations Commission, which included legal advisor David Hunter Miller, met from January until 11 April 1919. The work of the League Commission reached its peak during the same week in April that Lenin was expecting an answer. This was yet another diversion of Allied attention away from the Bolshevik issue.

34 Mantoux, Proceedings of the Council of Four, 162.

35 Miller, My Diary, 7:428-43. Miller drafted the letter and Wilson, Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and Orlando signed it.
to shelve it, the Allies had sided with the position of the Whites in the Russian Civil War.\textsuperscript{36} Throughout 1919 the victorious Great Powers held fast to the economic blockade of the defeated Central Powers and Russia. White-controlled Russia was receiving foreign aid regardless, but Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, and Russians in the borderlands and Bolshevik controlled areas endured extended periods of starvation. It seems that food was not sent to Europe with the idea of preventing people from sympathizing with Bolsheviks.

In rejecting pleas to send food to the blockaded areas, the peacemakers in Paris were also rejecting the advice of Herbert Hoover, then head of the American Food Administration. The story of Hoover is an interesting one. He urged American and other Allied governments to lift the ban on food exports to the defeated countries and Russia, citing among other arguments, that hungry people might be attracted by Bolshevism:

\begin{quote}
It is clear . . . that the food situation in Poland is most critical and that immediate supplies are necessary if the present Government is to be able to withstand the Bolsheviks.\textsuperscript{37}
\end{quote}

A "whole mass of urban humanity formerly under enemy domination," he said, "seemed headed directly for Bolshevism."\textsuperscript{38}

At first glance it would seem that Hoover's remarks

\textsuperscript{36} See above, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{37} "Telegram Sent," in Miller, My Diary, 4:369.
support Mayer’s view about Allied fear of Bolshevik activity. A closer look, however, reveals that Hoover was driven by other pressures unrelated to Bolshevik activity. During the war Hoover’s duties had included the supervision of food to Allied countries whose domestic production was temporarily down. He had encouraged American farmers to produce more and had promised them good prices for their produce. At war’s end American agricultural production was greater than it had ever been.

As the desperate situation in western Europe began to ease, countries such as Britain, France, and Italy\(^{39}\) began to cancel some of their orders for American-grown produce. Europeans asked that high wartime prices for agricultural products be lowered. With promises having been made to farmers in the United States, Hoover could not allow prices to be lowered. Grain, meat, and other foodstuffs began to stockpile, and Hoover worried that the glut would cause a collapse in prices on the world market. Not only would American producers and distributors face possible ruin, but Hoover might face political ruin as well. He had to get American produce sold, and sold quickly.

When the Italian Food Minister, Signor Crespi, withdrew Italy’s pork order for January 1919, Hoover angrily retorted:

> It is utterly impossible for us to withdraw such shipments without total demoralization of American industry and the repudiation of undertakings put forward on behalf of Allied Governments. This being the middle of the pork producing season our warehouses are fully

\(^{39}\)Schwabe, *Woodrow Wilson, Revolutionary Germany*, 150.
stocked and we cannot hold for provision later on after the completion of January shipments.\textsuperscript{40}

Not long after, Hoover cabled Washington from Paris about the disruptions in the grain trade for American producers:

Under present restraints on trade through blockade, censorship, financial restrictions, etc., it is utterly impossible for private merchants to undertake the risks of private cereal trade with Europe and owing to the situation in armistice the flow of our commodities is largely stopped to a positive national danger. . . . we must have the Grain Corporation temporarily established in Europe for purely commercial purposes. . . . It is in no sense a relief operation but purely a commercial operation in the promotion of the sale of American commodities pending the re-estabishment of trade.\textsuperscript{41}

Hoover's private financial investments in American agricultural production were at risk as well. According to Schwabe, there was "a great deal at stake for Hoover personally, because he had his own fortune invested in the storage of foodstuffs in Europe."\textsuperscript{42} It seems safe to suggest that both Hoover's personal and political fortunes depended upon moving American food into Europe. Neither Hoover, nor the American government, nor any Allied government seemed intent on sending food to Eastern and Central Europe simply for the purpose of arresting Bolshevik activities. Regardless of Hoover's view, the statesmen in Paris did not lift the blockade during 1919. Against this background, the warnings that Hoover broadcast about Bolshevik activity in Eastern Europe appear to have been somewhat of a sensationalist sales pitch.

Another way in which the degree of concern over

\textsuperscript{40} "Dispatch from Hoover to Crespi," in Miller, \textit{My Diary}, 3:116-17.
\textsuperscript{41} "Cablegram Sent," in Miller, \textit{My Diary}, 5:480.
\textsuperscript{42} Schwabe, \textit{Woodrow Wilson, Revolutionary Germany}, 150.
Bolshevism can be measured within its context is to look at the other issues before world leaders during the same time period. The argument about postwar naval strength flared up in early April 1919. While Bolshevik-related issues were sometimes ignored, shelved, or postponed, the topic of naval superiority was passionately debated. At about the same time that Lenin was awaiting either a British or an American response to his proposal sent with Bullitt, British and American statesmen were embroiled in an argument over naval capabilities. The tone of the following exchange from Miller’s diary confirms that this issue stirred up men’s emotions far more than the Bolshevik issue did. During the first week of April Colonel House wrote to Prime Minister Lloyd George:

Dear Prime Minister

When I asked you yesterday what, if any, objection you had to the clause which I submitted regarding an affirmation of the Monroe Doctrine, you told me as you have told me before that you could not consent without first coming to an agreement with the United States regarding our naval building programme. I cannot see what connection the two matters have. . . . I understand that no one but you has raised any objection to our proposal, and I hope my dear Prime Minister, that you will not further insist upon the point you have raised.

E.M. House

On 8 April Lord Cecil, answering on behalf of Lloyd George, retorted that it was clear to him

that the naval policy of America is one of expansion; that the American ambition is to have a navy at least as strong or stronger than that of the British Empire, and so on. It is urged with some force that such an attitude is wholly inconsistent with the conception of the League of Nations, and that if it really represents the settled policy of the United States it could only

43 Miller, My Diary, 8:141.
lead sooner or later to a competition in arms between us and them.\textsuperscript{44}

Entering the exchange on behalf of the United States, David Hunter Miller attacked the established position of the Royal Navy:

British naval strength is out of all proportion to any question of defense. That strength is now greater than the strength of all the other navies of the world together. . . . it is not healthy as a permanent condition in the world and should be changed, and the British should be told so plainly.\textsuperscript{45}

Lord Cecil tenaciously defended the interests of the British:

The United Kingdom can only be fed and clothed provided the avenues of sea traffic are safe: . . . That is not true of any other country in the world to the same extent. Least of all is it true of the United States, which could, as far as necessaries of life are concerned, laugh at any blockade. . . . Would it be possible, for instance, for you to say that when the Treaty of Peace containing the League of Nations has been signed you would abandon or modify your naval programme?\textsuperscript{46}

Clearly, during the two weeks prior to Lenin’s imposed April 10th deadline there were far more pressing concerns on the minds of the statesmen in Paris, only one of which was the naval issue. The League of Nations Commission was concluding its work before its 11 April final meeting, the Council of Four was deliberating over the Saar, the Rhineland, and reparations, and, it will be recalled, President Wilson was quite ill. Even while Allied soldiers continued to give assistance to the Whites inside Russia, what to do with Bolsheviks and Bolshevism cannot be said to

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 8:142.
\textsuperscript{45} "Memorandum for Colonel House," in Ibid., 8:147.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 8:143
have been foremost on the minds of the men charged with writing a peace settlement after World War One.

The context in which the Bolshevik issue came up in Paris has been used to demonstrate just how relatively insignificant the issue was to the major world leaders at the Peace Conference. Arno Mayer plays tricks with the context in order to try to demonstrate just the opposite. In an attempt to create a climate of fear of Bolshevism surrounding Paris, Mayer sees trouble where there is none. The best example of this is in his treatment of Labour issues.

Mayer carefully constructs a political backdrop for the International Labour and Socialist Conference in Berne, in February 1919. He begins by describing Switzerland. According to Mayer before the end of the war there were plans to hold the peace conference in Switzerland. However, because President Wilson was apparently fearful that the "hostile elements" there might be disruptive, the location was changed. From this point Mayer surmises that Wilson must have been consumed by fear as "the specter of Bolshevism gripped Switzerland."  

Having established a mood of anxiety concerning Switzerland, Mayer then presents the International Labour and Socialist Conference in Berne in February 1919, as an event that worried and distressed the international leaders in Paris. Although Mayer recognizes that Berne was definitely not a Bolshevik conference, he seems to suggest that it

47 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 348.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., 408-09.
indirectly relayed the Bolshevik message to the West. To Mayer the Berne Conference demonstrated a general European shift to the left that was being led, knowingly or unknowingly, by the Russian Bolsheviks. He feels that threats posed by the International Labour and Socialist Conference in Berne caused the peacemakers to place labour issues higher on the agenda than they otherwise would have done and to put a great deal of time into the establishment of an International Labour Organization. Fearing the effects of such meetings as Berne, the peacemakers supposedly "drafted the charters of the International Labor Organization (I.L.O.) and the League of Nations with a view to immunizing the non-Bolshevik Left against the ideological bacillus of the Bolshevik Revolution."  

According to Mayer, the prominence of labour-related issues in 1919 resulted from the presence of Bolshevism in Russia.

Mayer is amiss in his analysis of the Berne Conference, and he is negligent in his reading of labour history in European and North American society. The Berne Conference itself did more to separate the working classes of Europe from Russian Bolshevism than it did to draw them to it. Lenin was actually concerned by the split in the working class movement when moderate socialist and labour leaders declared their solidarity in Berne, thus distancing themselves from the Moscow-centered Comintern scheduled to meet that March.  

Mayer encourages his readers to imagine an alarmist report pouring into Paris from William Bullitt, who

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50 Ibid., 9.
51 See above, p. 29.
was sent to Berne as an observer by the American Commission to Negotiate Peace. A careful reading of Bullitt’s report, however, reveals that it should not have been alarming, but rather it should have been quite comforting:

My dear Colonel House:
In accordance with your request of this afternoon, I submit this brief description of the Berne Conference:

1. The Conference was composed of the moderate socialist elements of 26 countries. There was not one Bolshevik in attendance, and numerous speakers condemned the anti-democratic standpoint of the Bolsheviks. Indeed, during the days I sat in the conference hall, I heard not one word of 'revolution.'

2. The entire conference showed an almost pathetic confidence in President Wilson. Speaker after speaker praised the President and insisted that the masses of Europe must stand behind him in his fight for the League of Nations.52

The peacemakers in Paris had no reason to fear Bolshevism either among the populace of Switzerland or at the International Labour and Socialist Conference in Berne. Mayer misleads his readers in implying otherwise.

Mayer’s attempt to connect the expenditure of time and effort on labour issues with a deep fear of Bolshevism is also inaccurate. That connection diminishes the importance of the European and the American labour movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Mayer fails to see that the attention given to the concerns of working people in 1919 was, in the short term, an attempt to provide the working classes in the combatant countries with some gains for their enormous sacrifices of life and blood on the battlefield. In the long term it was a logical progression of the gains workers had made so far, and was an attempt to

52 Miller, My Diary, 5:240.
address some of the demands that labour had been making in the West quite independently of any Bolshevik activity in Russia.

Women, for example, had been demanding the vote for some time in Britain and, largely as a result of societal changes during the Great War, were winning it at the end of the war. Women were insisting that their needs as workers and as citizens be addressed at the Paris Peace Conference; and, as has been shown, by the rough measure of Miller's index they received as much attention as did the whole of Russia.

In the same way, all workers had been making steady, if slow, gains in most Western nations prior to the war. During the 1870s unions in Britain had won the right to strike, and in Germany some social legislation had originated in Bismarck's time. In 1912 the German Social Democratic Party became the largest party in the Reichstag. By 1906 the Labour Representation Committee had become the Labour Party of Great Britain and had already elected members to the House of Commons. The industrialized nations of the West had begun to listen to their labour leaders as evidenced by the selection of Mr. Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labour, to sit as head of the Commission on International Labour at the Paris Peace Conference. Working class men and women had gradually been 'buying in' to the Western liberal democratic political process as they took up positions in it.

The war, too, had brought working people's concerns to
the forefront. Veterans expected allowances and postwar jobs, widows wanted pensions, and disabled soldiers demanded compensation. Those who had found employment in war industries hoped that membership in a trade union would help them keep their jobs after the war. Women who had worked in men's jobs during the war wanted to vote like men after it was over. Young men who had interrupted their studies and their careers longed to take up where they had left off. Citizens, many of whom had paid income tax for the first time during the war, now demanded that their governments, at least in part, look after their needs. By 1919, ordinary people who had given so much to the war effort expected that the Peace Conference would make an effort to acknowledge their contribution by taking up working peoples' issues.

When Allied statesmen took up labour issues in Paris they were thus responding to two things: the relatively new influence of working people within political systems and the changed socio-economic fabric that the war had brought to Europe and America. To imply anything less would be a disservice to the memory of workers who had struggled so hard in the preceding decades. The fact that labour issues were dealt with at the Paris Peace Conference was a natural progression of the labour history of the industrialized West. It was not, as Mayer would have us believe, simply a frightened reaction to the seizure of power by Lenin's Bolshevik Party in Russia.

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53 Canadian and French citizens, beginning with the most affluent, first paid income tax in 1917. British income tax had been instituted earlier.
At the opening of the Versailles Conference in January 1919 delegates from the major Allied powers were ill-prepared to deal with Russia as Bolshevik Russia. Their images of Russia and their strategies concerning her were reflective of a former era and seemed to anticipate that Bolshevism was only a temporary phenomenon. There was relatively little time spent discussing Bolshevik matters, and the discussions did not become as emotionally charged as did those over postwar sea power and over allocation of resources. Mayer’s thesis is significantly weakened by an appreciation of just how little time and effort went into dealing with Bolshevik issues compared to other issues facing the peacemakers in 1919.
CHAPTER FOUR
CONCLUSION

Three arguments have been put forward to contradict Arno Mayer's claim that all of the deliberations made by the peacemakers at Versailles in 1919 "were designed to check Bolshevism." The first argument explored Lenin's actions and policies as leader of the new Bolshevik regime in Russia and found that he was notably straightforward and conciliatory in his dealings with the Allied Powers. Lenin repeatedly sought diplomatic and economic exchange with the Allies. He unilaterally appointed a diplomatic representative to Washington, and he left key American enterprises such as Westinghouse Air Brake and Singer Sewing Machine untouched inside Russia. In 1918 Trotsky went so far as to invite Allied officers into Russia to help with the organization of the Red Army. After the armistice with Germany ended Allied efforts to get Russia back into the Great War, there remained little, if anything, in the actions of Lenin's new Bolshevik regime that could influence the diplomats in Paris. Lenin responded favourably to various unofficial diplomats from the West; and, when the Peace Conference commenced, he agreed to meet with the Allies on Prince's Island. Eventually, Lenin even accepted an Allied demand that the Russian government recognize former Czarist debts to the West. This was in his proposal sent to Paris with William Bullitt in March 1919.

The second argument against Mayer's thesis examined some of the personal and official records kept by the men who

1 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 9.
attended Versailles. The records confirm that the peacemakers were not greatly concerned with Russian affairs and did not base Conference decisions on a strong commitment to root out Bolshevism. Lloyd George and Wilson in particular did not harbour ill feelings toward Lenin’s government. On the contrary, according to Tillman, “Anglo-American policy toward Russia in 1919 was almost a marvel of good intentions.”

It is true that if it was to their political advantage to do so, politicians in both eastern and western Europe manipulated the perception of Bolshevism. Anti-Bolshevik pronouncements were often a masquerade for nationalist sentiments, for territorial ambitions, and for political gain. Prime Minister Lloyd George, for example, used anti-Bolshevik campaign literature during the December 1918 election, but once out of the public eye he ridiculed Winston Churchill for being so frightened of Bolsheviks.

Mayer claims that the short-lived Hungarian Bolshevik regime was looked upon by the Allies as “a dangerous center for the political subversion” of central Europe. He maintains that the Allied Powers “readily agreed to take every necessary measure first to isolate and then to crush Béla Kun,” yet Mantoux’s records reveal that Wilson suggested leaving Bolshevik Hungary alone, as the country had been badly ‘in need’ of a revolution. In sharp contrast to Mayer’s understanding of the Hungarian situation, Miller reports that General Bliss would have favoured Kun’s Hungary.

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2 Tillman, Anglo-American Relations at Paris, 151.
3 Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy, 522.
4 Ibid., 562.
over Romania, if it had come to a contest.

A third argument against Arno Mayer measured the amount of time and paperwork devoted to Bolshevik issues in 1919 and found that not only Bolshevik issues, but all Russian issues were relatively minor concerns for the men in Paris. The perceived threat of German aggression or a Russo-German combination was far more worrisome to several statesmen. There are more entries for women’s issues than there are for Russian issues in the index to Miller’s Diary. Page for page, the documentary record of the Versailles Conference does not suggest that the issue of Bolshevism weighed heavily on the minds of the peacemakers in Paris.

The heated exchange between Lord Cecil and Colonel House over an American Naval Program that would challenge the supremacy of the Royal Navy suggests a fourth argument that might be pursued against Mayer. A closer look at the foreign policy goals of the Great Powers would likely establish that in 1919 they were far more concerned with checking each other’s strategic gains than with checking the strategic gains of the Bolsheviks. There was more emotion and urgency in the Cecil/House dispute than there was in any conversation about Bolshevism. Similarly, the Anglo-French debate over the future of Syria apparently became so charged, “that on 21 May 1919,” Clemenceau offered Lloyd George “the choice between the pistol and the sword.” Mayer, however, chooses

5 Perhaps a general history of the Treaty of Versailles will eventually be written to demonstrate the extent to which the decisions made by the men in Paris were founded upon a concern about the growing political power of women during these delicate years when women were quickly being enfranchised in the West!

6 Medlicott, review of Politics and Diplomacy, 146.
not to focus on these animosities between the victorious Allies, for if he did, his class-based analysis would be weakened. His traditional 'forces of order' might be seen to have some common national aspirations with the emerging 'forces of movement' in each country.

Further scholarship in this area would benefit by an overview of the foreign policy goals of the Great Powers vis-à-vis Russia both before and after the Bolshevik revolution. If continuity can be found, then the appearance of Bolshevism in Russia would diminish as a catalyst for the formation of Allied policy, whether in Paris or elsewhere.

The British Foreign Office, for example, had been busy for decades trying to keep Imperial Russia out of Persia and Afghanistan. The onset of Bolshevism did not make the British any more or less worried about Russian expansionism than they had been already. Similarly, American objectives in the Far East were well established before the Bolshevik Revolution. The U.S.A. demanded an 'open door' to facilitate trade and investment in China, Manchuria, Siberia, and throughout East Asia. By 1919 Japan had emerged as a rival to American interests in the Western Pacific and to American trade in the Far East. American and Japanese ambitions in the region did not evaporate with the coming of the Bolshevik Revolution, and both Japanese and American intervention in Siberia during the Russian Civil War may have had more to do with monitoring each other than with monitoring the movements of the Red Army. A careful look at the strategic objectives of all five of the major powers present at Versailles would
undoubtedly cast another shadow upon Mayer’s class-based history.

Although Japan was the fifth power at Versailles, and although she laid claim to German possessions in the Pacific, Mayer hardly mentions the Japanese situation. He must have realized that making an example of Japan would only hurt his case. The ‘forces of order’ and the ‘forces of movement,’ so central to his thesis, could not be so easily identified in Japan. A thorough examination of the Japanese position at Versailles would necessarily have to focus on national interests rather than on class interests. In Paris Baron Makino pushed hard for Japanese rights to former German colonies both on the mainland of China and in the Pacific, and for the acceptance of Japanese nationals as immigrants to other countries protected by anti-racist language in the Covenant of the League of Nations. A review of Japan’s resource and strategic objectives in 1919 likely would further damage Arno Mayer’s thesis.

Mayer’s is a provocative history of the Paris Peace Conference. It is a Cold War history, written during the twenty-five years after the Second World War when it seemed that the world was “splitting into two great hostile camps.” The apparent ‘collapse’ of the Soviet system and the transformations within Russian political life of the last ten years, however, have made it seem less so. Having now stepped outside of the most numbing Cold War years, it is easier to see causes other than class-based politics as having influenced the peacemakers in Paris. Mayer did not

have this advantage.

Lenin's revolution in Russia was profound. It marked a turning point in modern history, and it has become a monument for other societies and parties throughout the world. There is no doubt that it had a tremendous effect on the twentieth century. The statesmen of 1919 could not have known this. There can only be one underlying reason why the peacemakers at Versailles were not more influenced by events in Russia—they simply did not believe that the revolution would last. The opinion voiced by the Labour Party's Ramsay MacDonald, and shared by the American Inquiry as well as the British Foreign Office, was that Bolshevism was a temporary blight that would eventually be moderated into one form or another of liberal democracy. The peacemakers themselves appear to have accepted that view, and the documentary record of their thoughts and opinions in 1919 confirms it. There is little evidence in the official records, the letters, the diaries, or the memoirs of those present at the Paris Peace Conference to indicate that the most important statesmen of the day were unduly influenced in their deliberations by the appearance of a Bolshevik government in Russia. In his attempt to show that they were, Arno Mayer created a grand design that obscured the very details that collectively, and ultimately, make history.
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APPENDIX 1
BRITISH PEACE TERMS

This note was written on February 21, 1919 by Mr. Philip Kerr and then given to William Bullitt to be delivered to Lenin in Moscow. It outlines the British/American terms for peace between their troops and the Red Army. It was read before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate on September 12, 1919. It is taken from Bullitt's The Bullitt Mission to Russia: Testimony Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 1920, p. 37.

1. Hostilities to cease on all fronts.
2. All de facto governments to remain in full control of the territories which they at present occupy.
3. Railways and ports necessary to transportation soviet Russia and the sea to be subject to the same regulations as international railways and ports in the rest of Europe.
4. Allied subjects to be given free right of entry and full security to enable them to enter soviet Russia and go about their business there provided they do not interfere in politics.
5. Amnesty to all political prisoners on both sides: full liberty to all Russians who have fought with the Allies.
6. Trade relations to be restored between soviet Russia and the outside world under conditions which, while respecting the sovereignty of soviet Russia insure that allied supplies are made available on equal terms to all classes of the Russian people.
7. All other questions connected with Russia's debt to the Allies, etc., to be considered independently after peace has been established.
8. All allied troops to be withdrawn from Russia as soon as Russian armies above quota to be defined have been demobilized and their surplus arms surrendered or destroyed.
These terms for peace between the Red Army and the White/Allied forces, were handed to William Bullitt by Lenin during Bullitt’s March 1919 visit to Moscow. They are strikingly similar to Kerr’s terms and are even titled ‘Allied.’ In effect, Lenin re-wrote the Allied proposal and then asked that the Allies accept it. The terms are from William Bullitt, The Bullitt Mission to Russia: Testimony Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 1920, pp. 39-43. They have been left with their original spellings and punctuation.

TEXT OF THE PROJECTED PEACE PROPOSAL BY THE ALLIED AND ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS

The allied and associated Governments to propose that hostilities shall cease on all fronts... and that no new hostilities shall begin ...pending a conference ...to discuss peace on the basis of the following principles, which shall not be subject to revision by the conference.

1. All existing de facto governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland to remain in full control of the territories which they occupy at the moment when the armistice becomes effective, except in so far as the conference may agree upon the transfer of territories; until the peoples inhabiting the territories controlled by these de facto governments shall themselves determine to change their Governments. The Russian Soviet Government, the other soviet governments and all other governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire, the allied and associated Governments, and the other Governments which are operating against the soviet governments, including Finland, Poland, Galicia, Roumania, Armenia, Azerbaidjian, and Afghanistan, to agree not to attempt to upset by force the existing de facto governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire...

2. The economic blockade to be raised and trade relations between Soviet Russia and the allied and associated countries to be reestablished under conditions which will ensure that supplies from the allied and
associated countries are made available on equal terms to all classes of the Russian people.

3. The soviet governments of Russia to have the right of unhindered transit on all railways and the use of all ports which belonged to the former Russian Empire and to Finland and are necessary for the disembarkation and transportation of passengers and goods between their territories and the sea; detailed arrangements for the carrying out of this provision to be agreed upon at the conference.

4. The citizens of the soviet republics of Russia to have the right of free entry into the allied and associated countries as well as into all countries which have been formed on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland; also the right of sojourn and of circulation and full security, provided they do not interfere in the domestic politics...

   Nationals of the allied and associated countries and of the other countries above named to have the right of free entry into the soviet republics of Russia; also the right of sojourn and of circulation and full security, provided they do not interfere in the domestic politics of the soviet republics.

   The allied and associated Governments and other governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland to have the right to send official representatives enjoying full liberty and immunity into the various Russian Soviet Republics. The soviet governments of Russia to have the right to send official representatives enjoying full liberty and immunity into all the allied and associated countries and into the nonsoviet countries which have been formed on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland.

5. The soviet governments, the other Governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland, to give a general amnesty to all political opponents, offenders, and prisoners. The allied and associated governments to give a general amnesty to all Russian political opponents, offenders, and prisoners, and to their own nationals who have been or may be prosecuted for giving help to Soviet Russia. All Russians who have fought in, or otherwise aided the armies opposed to the soviet governments, and those opposed to the other Governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland to be included in this amnesty.

   All prisoners of war of non-Russian powers detained in Russia, likewise all nationals of those powers now in Russia to be given full facilities for repatriation.
The Russian prisoners of war in whatever foreign country they may be, likewise all Russian nationals, including the Russian soldiery and officers abroad and those serving in all foreign armies to be given full facilities for repatriation.

6. Immediately after the signing of this agreement all troops of the allied and associated Governments and other non-Russian Governments to be withdrawn from Russia and military assistance to cease to be given to antisoviet Governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire. The soviet governments and the antisoviet governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland to begin to reduce their armies simultaneously, and at the same rate, to a peace footing immediately after the signing of this agreement. The conference to determine the most effective and just method of inspecting and controlling this simultaneous demobilization and also the withdrawal of the troops and the cessation of military assistance to the antisoviet governments.

7. The allied and associated Governments, taking cognizance of the statement of the Soviet Government of Russia, in its note of February 4, in regard to its foreign debts, propose as an integral part of this agreement that the soviet governments and the other governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland shall recognize their responsibility for the financial obligations of the former Russian Empire, to foreign States parties to this agreement and to the nationals of such States. Detailed arrangements for the payment of these debts to be agreed upon at the conference, regard being had to the present financial position of Russia. The Russian gold seized by the Czecho-Slovaks in Kazan or taken from Germany by the Allies to be regarded as partial payment of the portion of the debt due from the soviet republics of Russia.

The Soviet Government of Russia undertakes to accept the foregoing proposal provided it is made not later than April 10, 1919.