

CANADA'S SIBERIAN POLICY

1918 - 1919

by

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this essay was to add to the extremely limited fund of knowledge regarding Canada's relations with Siberia during the critical period of the Intervention. The result hopefully is a contribution both to Russian/Soviet and Canadian history.

The scope of the subject includes both Canada's military participation in the inter-allied intervention and simultaneously the attempt on the part of Canada to economically penetrate Siberia.

The principal research was carried out at the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa during September and October, 1968. The vast majority of the documents utilized in this essay have never previously been published either in whole or in part. The only research difficulty experienced was in attempting to view the documents relating to the Canadian Economic Commission to Siberia. The documents in question were under the jurisdiction of the Department of Trade and Commerce rather than the Public Archives. In spite of persistent negotiations, it originally appeared dubious whether or not the Department would release the documents. The matter was finally satisfactorily resolved whereby the Department transferred the files of the Commission to the Public Archives on a permanent basis. These documents had never previously been available to researchers.

Two basic assumptions about Canada's Siberian policy for the period under study predated the actual archival research. The first was that regardless of Canada's 'colonial status' in 1918, she had been in fact largely independent of the United Kingdom and had agreed to join the military intervention in Siberia for reasons of strict national interest. The second was that one of the most important elements of Canada's agreement had been economic interest. The documents reviewed would suggest a substantial factual basis for these assumptions.

Various aspects of Canada's Siberian intervention are new to this essay. The questions of Canada's economic interest in Siberia; the relationship of the British and Canadian troops in Siberia; and the problem of disaffection in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia) have not previously been discussed.

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Robert N. Murby

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## INTRODUCTION

The Allied Intervention in Siberia has for a long period excited the curiosity and interest of a number of important scholars. Three works on the subject in the English language, significant both for their comprehensiveness and solid research which were found most useful as preparatory background for this essay were: John A. White's The Siberian Intervention;<sup>1</sup> George F. Kennan's two volume work Soviet - American Relations, 1917 - 1920<sup>2</sup> and Robert H. Ullman's two volume work Intervention and the War: Anglo - Soviet Relations, 1917 - 1921.<sup>3</sup>

It is however unfortunate that to date virtually no attention has been devoted to the interesting economic, military and political roles played by Canada in the Siberian Intervention. It is noteworthy and inexplicable that the numerically inconsequential Canadian participation in the Interventions both in North Russia and Transcaucasia have been so well reported,<sup>4</sup> whereas the Canadian Expeditionary Force to Siberia consisting as it did of nearly five thousand troops and in addition, an ancillary Economic Commission has been almost untouched as an area of historical research. The exceptions, however, should be noted.

J. A. Swettenham's Allied Intervention in Russia, 1918 - 1919: and the Part Played by Canada<sup>5</sup> perhaps presaged the beginning of an interest, at least by Canadian historians, in this question. Since Swettenham's study covers the whole scope of the Intervention in Russia, it goes without saying that the material dealing specifically with the Siberian

Intervention is not as comprehensive as a full-scale monograph on the subject might have been. Another useful essay was Gaddis Smith's "Canada and the Siberian Intervention, 1918 - 1919".<sup>6</sup> Even in these two isolated studies however there was no discussion of the role played by economics in the Canadian Siberian Intervention. It is, nevertheless, true that Canada made a serious attempt, through the medium of an Economic Commission sent to Siberia, to penetrate Siberia economically during the period of Civil War and Intervention in order to develop markets for Canadian manufactured goods.

A study of the role that Canada played in the Siberian Intervention is a vital area of concern for a number of reasons, the most important of which is that it represents a significant aspect of our nation's history, and as Canadians we should be aware of it.

Canada did not 'officially' gain full independence from Great Britain until 1931 with the passage of the Statute of Westminster<sup>7</sup> and as a result a misconception has grown up that until that date Canada was in every sense of the word a British colony. A study of Canada's participation in the Siberian Intervention demonstrates that this was not the case. Canada was clearly executing a national and independent policy with regard to the Siberian Intervention from the time of the initial negotiations until the withdrawal. The role played by Canada during the Siberian Intervention provides an excellent object lesson



on Canada's constitutional development. It could, admittedly, be alleged that it was the very important role that Canada played in World War I that demonstrated Canada's transition from colonial to national status. Although this may be true, World War I was, after all, a situation of national and world emergency. The Siberian situation, on the other hand, represented no real or immediate threat to Canada, and the Canadian decision to intervene, unlike the situation in Europe, was based principally upon cold political and economic calculation. The fact that it was Great Britain who initially made the request that Canada supply a contingent of troops for the Intervention, was not ultimately a consideration of paramount importance as far as the components of Canada's eventual decision were concerned.

A second misconception is that the British battalions in Siberia are popularly presumed to have been under the command of Major-General Alfred Knox, the Head of the British Military Mission. It is also presumed, falsely, that the British forces in Siberia were a separate national contingent. In fact the British battalions present in Siberia were only part of an Imperial contingent, the bulk of which was composed of the C.E.F.(S). In theory, at least, all the government bodies concerned recognized the fact that the British battalions were an integral part of this Imperial Force. This Imperial Force was under the command of Major-General J. H. Elmsley, the commander of the C.E.F.(S) and a Canadian.

It is extremely interesting to consider the massive Soviet polemic that has been mounted over the years against the British intervention in Siberia. Yet Canada's role is ignored by Soviet historians, or if mentioned, it is of the most cursory variety. Except for the fact that the Soviet historians are suffering from the general misconception that Canada was, during the period of the Intervention, little more than a colonial satrap of Great Britain, much of this Soviet propaganda should have logically been directed at Canada.

One of the principal difficulties of the study of the Intervention from the point of view of the American, British, French, and Japanese aspects, is that one cannot do so out of the context of the history of their political and economic relations with the Russian State. Taking merely the economic question alone, France and Britain particularly and the United States to a lesser extent had massive investments in Russia, both in the form of loans to the Russian Government and capital investment in the Russian economy. Naturally one of the motivating factors for these states as far as the Intervention was concerned was the protection of the investment. Although this economic aspect of the Intervention has largely been overshadowed by the political and military aspects, it is slowly being realized that it was a consideration of the utmost importance. J. A. White in his The Siberian Intervention makes this very clear as does Louis Fischer in The Soviets in World Affairs.<sup>8</sup>

Canada, on the contrary, had virtually no pre-intervention relations of any significance with Russia. Except for the unusual conditions created by World War I whereby Canada gained a share of the Russian market, under the more normal pre-war conditions, Canadian trade with Russia was minimal; for all intents and purposes there was no significant Canadian investment in Russia; and since Canada's foreign relations were at this time conducted by Great Britain, one cannot speak of any Russo-Canadian political or diplomatic relations. It is precisely because of this - the fact that Canada had 'no axe to grind' in Russia - that one can see the Canadian Intervention in Siberia as a microcosm of the Intervention generally. The political, military and economic considerations that induced Canada to intervene, and finally the factors that caused the Canadian Intervention to founder and eventually led to the withdrawal from Siberia, were by and large not peculiar to Canada but were general to all the participating powers.

In this essay, the two broad aspects of the Canadian Intervention are considered: the Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia) and the Canadian Economic Commission to Siberia. They were the principal components of Canada's Siberian policy in the period under discussion. The two topics are considered separately not because that was necessarily the most desirable, but rather because it was the only method possible. Although Canada's economic and military policies for Siberia derived from one common policy they were technically and administratively separate.

The C.E.F.(S) was under the jurisdiction of the Militia Department and the Economic Commission was under the jurisdiction of the Department of Trade and Commerce. The documentary basis of this essay was similarly divided. One set of archival files on the C.E.F.(S) and another on the Economic Commission. That both were the offsprings of one policy can, however, be sufficiently demonstrated from a review of a number of statements made by top-level cabinet ministers, principally Sir Robert Borden, in a number of key documents.

Major-General S. C. Mewburn, the Minister of Militia, in a letter dated 12th July 1918 to Sir Robert Borden regarding the formation of the C.E.F.(S) expressed rather clearly the relationship between the military and economic aspects of the Canadian intervention in Siberia.

It has been suggested that the trade conditions in this territory [Siberia] will be a vital factor... it might be advisable to have some Canadian representative accompany this force, [C.E.F.(S)] as far as Trade and Commerce goes. 9

In early August, 1918, Sir Robert Borden was in a veritable panic when he discovered that the despatch of economic commissions to Siberia from Great Britain and the United States was imminent.

United States and Great Britain are sending economic commissions to Siberia in connection with military expedition. I consider it essential that Canada should take like action. Hope Cabinet will give the subject consideration and reach favourable decision immediately...organization of proposed Commission should be made with least delay. 10

In a letter to Major-General Mewburn dated August 13, 1918 Borden stated the principal considerations that in his view justified Canada's despatch of a military force to Siberia. It is interesting to note that they have very little to do with aiding either the Russians or the Czechoslovaks or indeed the defeat of the Central Powers.

Intimate relations with that rapidly developing country [Siberia] will be of great advantage to Canada in the future. Other nations will make very vigorous and determined efforts to obtain a foothold and our interposition with a small military force would tend to bring Canada into favourable notice by the strongest elements in that great community. [Siberia] 11

The Order-in-Council of 21st October 1918 which established the Canadian Economic Commission to Siberia clearly stated that the economic and military aspects of the Siberian Intervention could not be divorced, and were merely the two expressions of an over-all Siberian policy.

Besides assisting in the protection and pacification of the country [Siberia] the purpose of the Allies is to assist the people of Siberia to reestablish their productive industries and reorganize their financial and commercial activities....<sup>12</sup>

Altruism, however, was not quite what the Cabinet had in mind. After a lengthy preamble the Order-in-Council finally gets to the principal point at issue, namely that Canada's interest in Siberia from a "...trade...point of view, both present and future, is undoubted." <sup>13</sup>

Later, when Borden was encountering cabinet opposition to the continuance of the C.E.F.(S) he advised Sir Thomas White, the Acting Prime Minister, that should the C.E.F.(S) be recalled "...the Economic

Commission which we have sent over would...be useless and would have to be recalled to our possible detriment in the future." 14

Borden in another document, dated November 20th, again emphasized the economic and military connection.

...Canadian Forces now in Siberia should remain until Spring and in absence of strong reasons to contrary that the additional forces...should proceed to Siberia for the purposes indicated as well as for economic considerations which are manifest. 15

The cabinet ministers who were, or eventually became, opposed to Canada's further Siberian involvement also clearly understood the economic considerations which underlay the inter-allied intervention generally and Canada's specifically.

Great Britain and France are immediately interested [in intervening] by reason of Russia's large indebtedness to them and the desirability of retaining stable Government in order that such indebtedness may be met. Canada has no such economic or business interest as will justify the employment of a Canadian force....16

## I. CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE (SIBERIA)

### A. Formation of Policy

The relatively extensive amount of research which has already been completed on the general subject of the Siberian Intervention precluded the necessity for further detailed background explanation. It is intended, therefore, to analyze the politico-military background only in so far as it had a direct bearing on the Canadian Government's decision to participate in the Intervention.

The collapse of the Provisional Government and of the Allied efforts to convince the Bolshevik Government to continue the struggle against the Central Powers put the Allied Powers, for a time, in a difficult military position on the Western Front. In view of the situation in Russia there existed a number of valid military arguments for some kind of intervention in that country: to attempt to reconstitute the Eastern Front; to secure the military stockpiles at Vladivostok, Murmansk, and Archangel and at the same time protect the Czechoslovak Legion, both of which were presumed to be threatened by armed prisoners of war of the Central Powers; and finally to secure vital areas of economic importance such as the Baku oil region.

The British Government felt that her troop commitments elsewhere made it impossible to make anything other than the most minimal troop contribution to any Siberian intervention. The idea of an Imperial

Force for Siberia with Canadians making up the bulk of the strength had early presented itself to British policymakers as a logical solution to the problem.

During the first week of July 1918, General Bridges, the British Military Representative in Washington, D. C. had met with Ottawa cabinet ministers and officers of the Canadian General Staff regarding the possibility of a Canadian contribution to a Siberian force. He was informed at the time that troops were simply not available, but that possibly two battalions of discharged soldiers might be raised.<sup>1</sup>

Major-General de B. Radcliffe (War Office Director of Military Operations) requested of N. W. Rowell (President of the Canadian Privy Council) in a letter of July 9th that the matter be brought to the attention of Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden and that his views on the matter be made known to the War Office prior to any official action being taken.<sup>2</sup>

Borden apparently did concur with the suggestion that Canada take part in the Siberian force and a consultation took place in London between Major-General de B. Radcliffe and Major-General S. C. Mewburn, Minister of Militia, on July 12th at which time firm agreement by Canada was given and the initial organizational details worked out. At that time it was agreed that the tentative strength of the Canadian contribution would be two infantry battalions (@ 1000 men each) plus supporting units. The British Government at the meeting promised to



contribute at least one battalion of infantry. The entire force, both the Canadian and British segments, was to be under the command of a Canadian officer. <sup>3</sup>

The meeting did not resolve the questions of the objectives of the expedition or of which nation was to have control of the force. These two questions, which later assumed crucial importance, were left in abeyance, to be resolved at a later date. <sup>4</sup>

In a secret memorandum from the General Staff of the Department of Overseas Military Forces of Canada to their Minister, Sir Edward Kemp dated July 19th it was stated that although the Japanese would make up the bulk of the proposed inter-allied Siberian force and carry out the bulk of the fighting "...it is necessary for each of the Allies to be represented for political reasons." The Memorandum went on to assert that:

If everything goes well, the Russian front will be re-established on the western side of the Urals, and if possible will link up with the force of Czechs which is operating from the port of Archangel, [sic] and fighting their way south. <sup>5</sup>

At this time, although the plans for Canadian participation in the Siberian intervention had been nearing finalization, the British Colonial Secretary, Long, for some unknown reason, on July 20th in a cable despatch to the Canadian Governor-General, the Duke of Devonshire, requested that the Canadian Government 'speed up' their final agreement. <sup>6</sup> The British Government had sent this message without prior

consultation with either Major-General Mewburn or Sir Robert Borden both of whom were at the time in London. Borden was not pleased at this somewhat high-handed action and in a cable to the Minister of Justice, Charles J. Doherty, Borden stated that:

Mewburn and I greatly surprised that British Government recently sent telegram to Governor General...without first consulting us.

...

I desire that no reply shall be sent...except through me. 7

The Canadian Government's decision to participate in the Siberian intervention was based primarily on three premises.

There was certainly a natural and genuine desire to aid, within limits, Great Britain and at the same time play a role in terminating the war. It cannot be seriously suggested that panic arising out of the German offensive of March - July 1918 was an important consideration for the Canadian policymakers. During the initial negotiations on the formation of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia) which had taken place during the first two weeks of July 1918, the German offensive on the Western Front had already ground to a halt and by August 8th the German forces were in full retreat. There was at this time in Ottawa an optimistic appraisal of the military situation in which the defeat of the Central Powers was looked to with confident expectation. The most that the German offensive had accomplished as far as Canadian political and military planners were concerned was that the prospect of victory in 1918 was no longer regarded as feasible. The Canadian Government had

every reason to anticipate ultimate victory. Canadian troops in Europe had not been attacked during the German offensive and with the exception of the fiasco of Passchendaele the Canadian Corps according to Borden was in excellent shape. <sup>8</sup> Moreover, by June 21st, Borden had at his disposal information that by August 1st, 1.2 million U. S. troops would be in France. <sup>9</sup>

The ultimate termination of the war, although a happy enough event in itself, would bring with it certain serious economic, and indirectly political problems. During the war, Canada had experienced an economic 'boom' of unprecedented proportions. Many existing manufacturing facilities had been expanded and numerous new ones had been established. Although of course, as long as the war continued, many of these were producing war materiel under government contract. The end of the war would see them quickly retooled for civilian peacetime production. What then would occur when the Canadian manufacturers began vastly overproducing for a civilian market? A depression the severity of which was unforeseen was forecast with massive unemployment - a serious liability for any government. There was also the danger of Bolshevism spreading among the jobless. The manufacturers themselves would be reluctant to see their profits decline and would look askance at any government that allowed this to take place. A solution to the problem was the enlargement of the foreign market for Canadian goods by establishing trading links in previously 'unexploited' areas. Siberia was such an area and the consideration

of Siberia as a market for Canadian exports was a factor of great importance in Canada's ultimate agreement to take part in the Siberian inter-allied intervention. It was a factor certainly present in the minds of Canadian policymakers throughout the negotiations for the establishment of the C.E.F.(S). 10

Finally, the Canadian role in the war, although an impressive one, caused Borden and certain of his political associates to gain an impression of a post-war Canada sketched in somewhat grandiose terms. N. W. Rowell, the President of the Privy Council, saw Canada coming out of the war in a pre-eminent economic position, but coupled with it political importance. He clearly saw the relationship between the two. In his view, both the United States and Canada jointly and singly would, in the post-war period be dominant in the Pacific. 11 This was a time, not the first or the last when 'Pacific rimism' was a basic tenet of Canada's economic and foreign policies. 12

Of the three bases upon which final agreement had been reached, at least to the Borden clique within the cabinet, the last two, namely Siberia as a market and the Pacific region as a region in which Canada might wield political influence were the most critical to final agreement to go ahead with the C.E.F.(S).

The agreement, however, was conditional. The British Government from the beginning had been agreeable to a Canadian being appointed commander of the projected Imperial Force. This did not go far enough

to satisfy the Canadian Government. They insisted upon Ottawa rather than the British War Office having control of the Force. Although the British Government did not take readily to this, since Canada was supplying the bulk of the Force and since the Canadian position was simply control and troops, or no control no troops, the War Office was forced to capitulate to Canada on this question. A meaningless face-saving formula was subsequently negotiated.

Those present at the August 13th War Office Conference regarding the Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia) were: Major-General J. H. Elmsley, who was subsequently appointed Commanding Officer of the Force; Major-General S. C. Mewburn, the Canadian Minister of Militia; and Major-General de B. Radcliffe, the War Office Director of Military Operations. The results of the Conference left the matter of command-channels for further negotiation. The British Government nevertheless in effect acceded to the Canadian position. Notes of the Conference state that agreement was reached that the Canadian Commanding Officer was: "To have right to appeal to his Government re any order from superior authority which he considers will be disadvantageous to his Force." 13

Also on August 13th Borden sent a letter to Mewburn in which he stipulated the command-channels and conditions which would be acceptable to the Canadian Government. In essence they were that as to matters of policy and operations there was to be direct communication between the

War Office and the Canadian Commanding Officer of the Force. Copies of all such communications were to be sent to the Militia Department, Ottawa. In all administrative matters the Canadian Government would have jurisdiction and would communicate directly with the Force Commanding Officer, copies of all such communications being sent to the War Office, London. Again, the question of ultimate appeal was critical, Borden's letter goes on:

...Canadian government has stipulated and Imperial Government agreed no disposition of Forces in Field shall be made nor such Forces committed any military operations without carrying judgment Canadian Commander and therefore latter shall at all times have right direct communication Canadian Government. 14

Therefore, although in theory the War Office had jurisdiction over policy and operations, this in fact was only meaningful in so far as Canada permitted it to be meaningful. Not only did the Commanding Officer have the right of appeal to Ottawa, but more important, although not mentioned, the Commanding Officer was after all a Canadian Army officer who owed his ultimate loyalty to Canada rather than to the British Government, and as a Canadian Army officer he was, in a direct sense, ultimately under the control of the Militia Department, Ottawa.

By August 7th the matter had been completely finalized and on that date Borden sent a cable to Ottawa requesting that the Cabinet pass an Order-in-Council immediately. 15

The originating Order-in-Council was passed on August 12th. 16  
The Order-in-Council authorized the mobilization and despatch of two

infantry battalions with supporting units. All ranks would constitute a force of approximately four thousand. Two subsequent Order-in-Councils passed on August 23rd<sup>17</sup> and September 5th<sup>18</sup> added other supporting units although over-all strength was to remain four thousand. It is interesting to note that the August 23rd Order-in-Council added one squadron of cavalry of the Royal North West Mounted Police.

It had originally been intended that the C.E.F.(S) would be raised by voluntary enlistment since the Military Service Act (1917) had already been the cause of much controversy and unrest. Major-General S. C. Newburn, the Minister of Militia, also pointed out that the detailing of conscripts to the Siberian Force would endanger the despatch of reinforcements to France.<sup>19</sup> Ultimately it was a combination of conscripts and volunteers that made up the Force.

On September 10th Major-General H. H. Elmsley, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., was appointed by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff as Commanding Officer of the Imperial Force (Siberia). The order stated that the immediate objective of the expedition was "...to support the Czecho-Slovak forces in their present positions." Any other objectives remained undecided. The order advised Elmsley that: "You will be kept informed of any further objective that may be decided upon."

Regarding operations, Elmsley was to be under the command of the Allied Commander-in-Chief, General K. Otani. General Otani was the Commander of the Japanese Force in Siberia which was the largest of the participating national contingents. Elmsley was ordered to "...carry

out loyally any instructions issued to you by the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces." Instructions were to be carried out except where "...any order given you appears to imperil...your force you will be at liberty to appeal to the British Government before executing such order."

In Item 6 of the Appointment Order, Elmsley was advised to "...keep in touch with Major-General Knox...." although their relationship was not further defined.

Item 7 stated that "...in political matters you will keep in touch with Sir Charles Elliot." 20 Sir Charles Elliot was the British High Commissioner in Siberia.

It will be recalled that one of the conditions stipulated by Canada during the negotiations regarding the C.E.F.(S) was that the objectives of the inter-allied intervention should be 'spelled-out' in specific terms and furthermore unanimously agreed to by the participating powers. During the negotiations these were left in abeyance since agreement at that stage had not been attained and indeed was never effected. Canada placed a great importance upon this matter for two reasons. Canada did not wish the C.E.F.(S) to become engaged in military activity without the support of the other national contingents, principally Japan and the United States, and hence have the C.E.F.(S) placed in an untenable situation by a superior force of opposition. It is also possible that Canada, in view of her post war plans for the Pacific, did not want to antagonize either the United States or Japan by embarking on a course of action not having the support of these two powers.



The British - Canadian controversy over the degree of commitment began to assume serious proportions when Major-General Elmsley and Major J. F. Lash sent a joint telegram to Major-General Mewburn on September 10th, the same day as Elmsley's appointment, recommending that:

...some reservation should be made preventing committal of Force to any plan of operation until whole scheme agreed upon and understood by Canada....having regard to uncertainty of intention of Japan and United States regarding extent and purpose of operation....21

B. Staging of the C.E.F.(S)

The two battalions which were mobilized for the C.E.F.(S), both by voluntary enlistment and conscription, were the 259th and 260th Battalions Canadian Infantry. There were, of course, in addition supporting units.

The principal staging area for the C.E.F.(S) was Willows Camp, just outside Victoria, B. C.

The first contingents of the Force arrived in Victoria in late September and early October 1918.

An interesting aspect of this early period of the Force's history concerned the so-called 'Russian platoons' which were attached to the C.E.F.(S). The Russian platoons played an important although unfortunate role within the C.E.F.(S).

During the course of World War I some four to five thousand Russian nationals had either enlisted or been conscripted into the Canadian Army.<sup>22</sup> The documents do not explain how these Russian nationals came to be in Canada, but possibly it can be assumed that they were simply immigrants brought over under the auspices of the Department of Immigration and Colonization or else under the C. P. R. scheme which is referred to in Chapter II of this essay 'Canadian Economic Commission to Siberia.' Apparently, however, most of the Russian nationals serving in the Canadian Army had come to Canada alone, leaving their wives and families in Russia.<sup>23</sup>

The proposal to organize the C.E.F.(S) had been initially agreed to by July 12th, however, it was only sometime later that the decision was reached to include Russian units within the Force.

The proposal was first made by a Lt. Col. Yourkevitch on July 18, 1918 in the course of an interview with a Capt. Bray of the Military Intelligence Section of the Canadian Army Headquarters in London.

Lt. Col. Yourkevitch, prior to the outbreak of war acted as the official representative of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture in Great Britain and France. At the outbreak of war he was appointed to the Russian Government Committee in London. In March 1917, he was given a commission as Captain in the Canadian Army. It is interesting to speculate how an official representative of the Russian Government and a Russian Army officer came to be given a commission in the Canadian Army. The documents leave this matter unexplained. His activity from March to November 1917, was not with the Canadian Army however, but rather with the Russian Military Mission in London where he acted as Deputy to General Yermolov. After the Bolshevik Revolution he joined the Canadian Army Headquarters in London. A suitable completion to his fantastic biography is to note that he was married to Princess Saliha, the niece of the Sultan of Egypt, who was attached to the Canadian Military Intelligence Section. 24

Yourkevitch suggested the possibility of forming a Russo - Canadian unit of division strength, utilizing the four to five thousand Russian nationals then in service with the Canadian Army, and approximately

ten thousand Canadians. He advised that Russian speaking officers be attached to the proposed Force. 25

Although the document does not specify whether Yourkevitch was then aware of the decision to send a Canadian force to Siberia, he nevertheless had it in mind that his proposed Russo - Canadian force should see service in some part of Russia. Capt. Bray notes that Yourkevitch "...was specially desirous of speaking of the possibility of forming a special brigade for service in Russia." 26

The War Office Conference of August 13, 1918 on the subject of the C.E.F.(S) makes note of the fact that there were in England at that time the numerical equivalent of three to four platoons of Russo - Canadian troops. The Conference concluded that the question of their utilization was to be left to the discretion of Major-General Elmsley. 27

Although the purpose of sending the Russian troops to Siberia was not defined, Major-General Elmsley did agree to their inclusion in the C.E.F.(S) and official approval on behalf of the Canadian Government was given by Major-General Mewburn, the Minister of Militia. 28 It was decided to organize only two platoons and by August 29th the process of selection and staging at Bexhill, England was taking place. 29

The main bulk of the Russian Force, consisting of one hundred and thirteen other ranks and two officers (Leuts. Ragosin and Englehardt) left England on September 30th. 30 By October 3rd a further nineteen other ranks and one officer (Lieut. Miller) had departed for Canada. 31 By October 21st the two contingents had arrived at the C.E.F.(S) staging area at Victoria, B. C. 32

It had previously been decided that the Russian platoons would be kept intact, and that one platoon would be attached supernumerary to the 259th Battalion and the other platoon attached to the 260th Battalion.<sup>33</sup> This was later modified, and it was decided to carry both platoons supernumerary to establishment of 259th Battalion.<sup>34</sup>

The later history of the Russian platoons was characterized by serious disaffection and the platoons were ultimately disbanded. (See Section F, Chapter I, 'Troop Disaffection in the C.E.F.(S)'.)

C. Post Armistice Government Policy

It had been possible to achieve cabinet consensus regarding the formation of the C.E.F.(S) while such an operation remained an aspect of the struggle against the Central Powers; the signing of the Armistice on November 11th however immediately brought about a schism in the cabinet ranks. Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden, then leader of a coalition government of Liberal and Conservative cabinet ministers, although himself a strong supporter of Siberian intervention eventually found it necessary to bow to the wishes of the non-interventionists in order to preserve cabinet peace.

A War Office cable to Major-General Mewburn sent just after the signing of the Armistice advised him that the War Cabinet was likely to continue to favour energetic Anglo - French action in Siberia. The cable went on to state that although "...lack of direction American and Japanese...renders it more difficult for French and ourselves, the advantage to British trade and prestige will be correspondingly greater." 35

The Ottawa cabinet ministers, however, as distinct from those who were in London, were definitely opposed to the sending of further troops to Siberia. Acting Prime Minister W. T. White advised Sir Edward Kemp, Minister of Overseas Military Service, on November 14th that it was the opinion of the cabinet that public opinion would not sustain the Government in continuing with the C.E.F.(S) and he urged that the troops already in Siberia should be recalled at the earliest opportunity. 36

Preparatory to a possible withdrawal, on November 15th Ottawa advised the War Office that it was their wish that Major-General Elmsley be ordered to hold all Canadian forces in Vladivostok. 37

An example of cabinet opposition is seen in a letter dated November 22nd from the Minister of Agriculture, T. A. Crerar to Acting Prime Minister White. He advised White of his absolute opposition to sending any additional troops and asked for the recall of those already there as soon as possible. He went on to state that:

The matter of how Russia shall settle her internal affairs is her concern - not ours. If France or Great Britain may desire, for what appears to them good and sufficient reasons, to maintain armed Forces in Russia...this is their affair. 38

Crerar was not the only minister so opposed; in a cable to Borden dated November 22nd White advised him that: "Many members of Council strongly opposed to our sending troops now ready to sail to Siberia and continuing expedition." 39 On November 24th the Militia Department advised the War Office that the sailings of the three troopships: S.S. TEESTA, S.S. PROTESLIAUS and S.S. JAPAN which had been designated to carry the bulk of the Force to Siberia, were cancelled pending advise to the contrary from Borden. 40

Borden, however, was very much opposed to the course of action that his Ottawa cabinet ministers had proposed. In a letter to White dated November 22nd Borden listed a number of reasons why he felt that Canada should proceed with her commitment. He emphasized that no military action other than the possible curbing of small, local disturbances was

contemplated. Although it was unlikely that military operations would be necessary, it was Borden's opinion that the mere presence of the C.E.F.(S) in Siberia would have a stabilizing effect and would assist the efforts of the newly organized Russian Government. He stressed the distinction that would accrue to Canada by having an Imperial Force under the command of a Canadian officer. Finally he stated that if the Force were withdrawn "...the Economic Commission which we have sent over would...be useless and would have to be recalled to our possible detriment in the future." 41

On November 24th Borden reiterated his position in a cable to White. He stated that "Canada's present position and prestige would be singularly impaired by deliberate withdrawing from definite arrangement..." He advised White that he did not hold with the argument that the sending of draftees to Siberia after the Armistice was inappropriate. "Draftees sent to take part in terrible fighting in France have much more right to complain than draftees sent to Siberia where no fighting is anticipated...." White was advised that the London based cabinet ministers: Sir George Foster, the Minister of Trade and Commerce; Arthur L. Sifton, the Minister of National Revenue; and Charles J. Doherty, the Minister of Justice, supported Borden's view of the problem. The resolution of the matter was left, however, to the discretion of White and the rest of the cabinet in Ottawa. 42

On November 25th White, who had not at this time received Borden's communication, despatched a lengthy cable to Borden detailing the cabinet's



reasons against the intervention. Among other items referred to, White detailed the fact that public opinion would not tolerate a continuation of the C.E.F.(S); that Canada had no economic interests in Siberia that would justify the employment of troops there; and that the expense would meet strong criticism both among politicians and public alike. <sup>43</sup>

Borden, on November 27th conferred with Major-General de B. Radcliffe, the War Office Director of Military Operations, regarding the difficulties that had arisen in Canada regarding the Force. Radcliffe had suggested to Borden that if it was found necessary to discontinue the despatch of troops and withdraw the troops in Siberia, perhaps it would be possible for Major-General Elmsley and a staff of approximately one hundred and fifty instructors to be permitted to remain in Siberia for training Russian troops. <sup>44</sup> On the same day Borden advised White of this 'out'. <sup>45</sup>

In a second cable sent to White on November 27th Borden reiterated that the whole question of the future of the Force was to be left for the cabinet to determine. <sup>46</sup>

In spite of the violent opposition of the cabinet to the continuation of the Force it is strange that they did not determine the question to their complete satisfaction, namely total withdrawal from the arrangement, since Borden had given them this prerogative, or failing that, to have acted to limit the Force to Major-General Elmsley and a small body of instructors, which would in small measure at least, have satisfied the War Office at that time. Neither was to be the case, however, for the cabinet now decided, out of deference to Borden's views, to continue

with the Expedition in its original conception. On November 27th White advised Borden that the cabinet "...desire to meet your wishes." <sup>47</sup> The only qualifying suggestion was that the time of service be limited until the following summer when, if continuation of the Force was necessary, it would be relieved by volunteers. <sup>48</sup> On November 29th Borden was definitely advised that the decision had been made to proceed with the Expedition, the time of service had been amended to one year's service after the signing of the Armistice (i.e. November 1919). White advised Borden that he might "...regard the matter as closed." <sup>49</sup>

Since a few days earlier the War Office had been faced with the prospect of no Canadian forces in Siberia, they were, of course more than ready to agree to the service limit of one year for those who did not wish to remain longer. Official War Office approval for the one year guarantee was given on December 6th. <sup>50</sup>

In spite of the Cabinet's decision to go ahead with the C.E.F.(S) they now proceeded to place various obstacles in the path of its useful utilization. In many respects, there was sufficient justification for this course of action. It will be recalled that one of the guarantees demanded by Canada and offered by the British Government during the preparatory stages of the C.E.F.(S) was that there was to be one Siberian policy to which all the allied participating partners were to subscribe. This guarantee had been one of prime importance to the Canadian policy-makers and had been an essential preliminary to final Canadian agreement. At the time of the formation of the C.E.F.(S) inter-allied agreement had

not been reached, and hence the non-fulfillment of the British guarantee had, for the time being, been left in abeyance. This did not, however, lessen the importance to the Canadian Government of the eventual satisfying of this condition.

In a December 6th communication to the War Office, Major-General Gwatkin, the Chief of the Canadian General Staff stated that:

...arrangements in Siberia lack co-ordination and control, that the railway system is in a condition seriously disorganized, that among Allies there is no general agreement, that Americans are inactive, that Japanese, bent on commercial penetration, are subsidizing insurgent elements.

Major-General Gwatkin went on to state that because of this prevailing state of affairs in Siberia it was felt that Major-General Elmsley and the Canadian Force might be placed in a difficult position and that the Canadian Government was loath to see the Canadian Force undertake any course of action which might have disastrous consequences. Although the War Office was advised that the despatch of Canadian troops to Vladivostok would continue, no movement of Canadian troops inland from Vladivostok was to take place and "...it may be necessary to recall them to Canada unless their mission is made clear." 51

It is apparent that at this time the Cabinet had arrived at the decision, albeit justified, to use the issue of non-Allied agreement, as the pretext for Canada's non-active participation and eventual withdrawal.

In a cable to Borden on December 6th Acting Prime Minister White

reminded Borden that the British guarantee had not been met. Neither the British singly, nor the Allies jointly had come forth with any definite policy regarding operations in Siberia. Furthermore, no likelihood of inter-Allied agreement existed and in view of this White suggested that the Canadian Government should remain uncommitted. 52

Borden in two messages to White sent on December 9th virtually 'washed his hands' of the whole question. White was advised that the War Office "...thoroughly understands difficulties which have arisen in Canada and you are free to act accordingly." 53 In the second message Borden advised White that the Cabinet had at its disposal information that he [Borden] did not have and that Ottawa was therefore better able to make a decision on the matter. White was advised to "...dispose of matter without further reference to us." 54

The following date, December 10th White had suggested to Major-General Newburn, the Minister of Militia, that no further troopships should be despatched to Vladivostok and that arrangements should be immediately made for the withdrawal of those already in Siberia. 55 This was not acted upon although the documentation is not clear as to the reason.

The War Office, no doubt goaded into action by the stance taken by the Canadian Government regarding inter-Allied agreement, had made recommendations to the Imperial War Cabinet to bring the strongest pressure to bear upon the Japanese "...to secure cessation of their obstructive attitude"; and upon the Americans and Japanese in order to effect a solution of the Siberian railway crisis. 56 At the time, although the

War Office appreciated the reluctance of the Canadian Government to send any troops inland until such time as United States - Japanese agreement had been obtained, the nevertheless pressed for the personal movement of Major-General Elmsley and some of his staff to Omsk to take over effective control of the British battalions there. 57

The Canadian Government was unwilling to meet even this apparently modest request. In messages both to the War Office and to Major-General Elmsley dated December 22nd the Canadian Government advised that although for the present the despatch of troops would continue they were to return to Canada by the Spring of 1919. Orders were given that the Canadian troops in Siberia were neither to move inland nor were they to engage in any military operations. Major-General Elmsley was ordered not to personally proceed to Omsk until such time as his infantry commander, Brigadier-General Bickford should arrive in Vladivostok. 58

In addition to the political grounds stipulated by the Canadian Government for disallowing the movement inland of the C.E.F.(S) there were, according to Major-General Elmsley, justifiable physical and military reasons for retaining the Canadian Force at Vladivostok.

In a letter to Major-General Alfred Knox, the Head of the British Military Mission at Omsk, dated 21st December, Major-General Elmsley stated that even in the event of the Canadian Government changing its policy regarding the movement of the Canadian contingent to Omsk, he, as commander of the Force would not feel justified in moving the troops unless his lines of supply via the Trans Siberian Railway could be

guaranteed. Elmsley told Knox that it was his intention prior to any movement to Omsk to seek a joint guarantee from all the Allied commanders in Siberia to secure his lines of supply to Omsk.<sup>59</sup> Knox replied that such an inter-Allied guarantee was an impossibility because:

...neither the Americans nor the Japanese wish us to go on, the first because President Wilson is advised by Jews who sympathise with Bolshevism and the second because they want a weak Russia rather than a strong one.<sup>60</sup>

In a further letter of December 27th Knox stated that he hoped that "...they [the Canadian Government] will...go the whole hog. If they only think of playing the American-Japanese sitting game in the Far East, I honestly don't see much use in their coming at all."<sup>61</sup>

This apparently was precisely the feeling of the War Office. In a cable dated January 4th Ottawa was advised that in view of the Canadian decision not to allow the movement inland of the C.E.F.(S) the War Office had no recourse but to recommend to the War Cabinet the withdrawal of the two British battalions and all Canadian forces.<sup>62</sup> Major-General Elmsley was appalled at the War Office action and requested them on January 8th to ask the Canadian Government to hold the matter in abeyance pending the results of the Paris Peace Conference. He suggested that the withdrawal "...may have disastrous effects on a situation... already critical: and may neutralize any decisions arrived at by Peace Conference...."<sup>63</sup> It was finally determined that pending a decision of the Russian question by the Peace Conference the Canadian troops would, for the time being, remain in Siberia.<sup>64</sup>

In a cable to Major-General de B. Radcliffe, the War Office Director of Military Operations, Major-General Elmsley advised on January 19th against the appointment of General Janin as Commander-in-Chief in Siberia (west of Lake Baikal) "...an American C. in C. would go far to win American support and guarantee to whole world...unselfish and democratic attitude to Russia." Elmsley suggested that Great Britain should adopt "...a more tactful and conciliatory attitude towards America, Japan and Canada. Modern nations can be led but cannot be driven...." 65

Borden advised White by cable on January 28th that the War Office had no objection to the immediate demobilization of those troops designated for the C.E.F.(S) who had not yet been despatched to Siberia. 66 The following day, January 29th, the War Office advised Major-General Elmsley that pending the results of the Peace Conference it was preferable that he not go forward to Omsk in spite of the fact that Brigadier-General Bickford had by this time arrived in Vladivostok. 67

In a personal letter to Major-General Radcliffe dated February 11th, Major-General Elmsley gave a candid analysis of the course that the intervention had taken to date. Elmsley stated that initially it had been possible for the Allied powers to subscribe to one agreed-upon policy regarding Siberia as long as such intervention was part of the struggle against the Central Powers. The signing of the Armistice, however, had caused the United States, Japan, the Czechoslovaks, and Canada to adopt an inactive position. The changed situation necessitated a new policy and though the Bolsheviks may be a threat, they were

nevertheless a threat separate and distinct from that of the Central Powers. Elmsley criticized Britain and France for attempting to subvert the intervention into an anti-Bolshevik crusade without the mandate or consent of the participating powers. It was Elmsley's opinion that the policy of the British and French became particularly arrogant in the light of their minimal troop commitment in Siberia. Furthermore, Elmsley made reference to the Kolchak coup d'etat and the extremely unfavourable impression it had made on most of the participating powers, particularly the Czechoslovaks. Whether justified or not as far as the other powers were concerned, the British were associated with the collapse of the Directorate, and that de facto if not de jure the British and French had recognized a regime which not only did not have the support of the other allied powers, but which to the average Russian had very little more, if any, to offer than the Bolsheviks. Elmsley added that "Canada is hostile to intervention unless this intervention is part of a policy agreed to and supported by U. S. and Japan." He continued:

...America, Japan, Canada and the Czechs were in accord and understood each other's attitude, and furthermore awaited some reconstructed policy which, known and agreed to by all, would meet the new situation created by the signing of the armistice and the recognition by the Allies that Bolshevism was a menace to the peace of the world. 68

It is worthwhile noting that when Elmsley spoke of United States - Japanese accord he referred only to their joint unwillingness to become parties to the Anglo-French brand of intervention. There were few other examples of such 'accord'.



Superficially at least, it would seem that Major-General Graves, the commander of the U.S.E.F., and Elmsley viewed the Siberian situation in much the same way. This, however, was not quite the case. Although, like Graves, Elmsley may have found the Kolchak regime to be abhorrent, he was not in principle opposed to intervention. He was only opposed to a commitment of his forces as long as inter-allied agreement did not prevail. Graves, on the other hand, both on the basis of personal conviction and on the basis of the Aide Memoire which was his government's instructions regarding the use of his force, was opposed to intervention on behalf of any particular Russian political group. 69

On February 13th Borden advised White that it was extremely unlikely that the Peace Conference would decide on a Russian policy in favour of intervention and that accordingly orders should be issued withdrawing the C.E.F.(S) in April. 70

In a March 17th letter to Borden, Winston Churchill, the Secretary of State for War, stated that:

In view of the very decided attitude taken up by Canada regarding the withdrawal of her troops from Vladivostok, the War Office have no option but to acquiesce, as they have felt it impossible to continue to urge the Dominion Government to share, against its will, in a task of much difficulty and anxiety. 71

A final communication on the question of the intervention was a further letter from Churchill to Borden in which Churchill made a strong plea to allow members of the C.E.F.(S) to volunteer for service in Siberia with the British Military Mission. 72 This was finally agreed to by the Canadian Government. 73

D. The C.E.F.(S) in Siberia

The first body of Canadian troops arrived in Vladivostok on October 26, 1918 via the S.S. EMPRESS OF JAPAN.<sup>74</sup> On October 30th they requisitioned the Pushinskaya Theatre on Svetlanskaya Street for use as a headquarters building.<sup>75</sup> The Theatre was owned by the Commercial - Industrial Society of Vladivostok. The Society carried on numerous cultural, charitable, and educational activities in Vladivostok and they were understandably disturbed to find their centre requisitioned as C.E.F.(S) Headquarters. A resolution of protest was passed by a meeting of the Society on November 1st.

All the Allied Forces entering Russia assured all the world of their policy of complete non-intervention in the internal affairs of Russia. In reality, however, we see just the reverse: on every side the interests of Russian citizens are being trampled upon....

...in this case the Canadian command have occupied the premises of the society and have thus deprived its members and their families...of the possibility of continuing their...activities.<sup>76</sup>

Also on October 30th arrangements were completed regarding the take-over of Gornostai Barracks, about eight miles from the city centre.<sup>77</sup> Gornostai Barracks were the principal Canadian infantry encampment. By the time the entire Force had arrived in Vladivostok, the C.E.F.(S) occupied nine military camps of varying sizes in different sectors of the city and the immediately surrounding area.<sup>78</sup>

For all intents and purposes it can be said that the full contingent of Canadians had arrived in Vladivostok by February 27th, 1919. Five troopships had been involved beginning with the Advance Party arriving on the S.S. EMPRESS OF JAPAN on October 26 with 62 officers and 618 other ranks.<sup>79</sup> It was followed by the S.S. MONTEAGLE which reached Vladivostok on December 5 with 30 officers and 395 other ranks.<sup>80</sup> Third was the S.S. TEESTA making Vladivostok on January 12 with 43 officers and 824 other ranks.<sup>81</sup> Fourth was the S.S. PROTESLIAUS, arriving three days later on January 15 with 96 officers and 1,669 other ranks.<sup>82</sup> Finally arriving on February 27 was the S.S. JAPAN with 18 officers and 298 other ranks.<sup>83</sup>

The C.E.F.(S) operated six different hospitals in Siberia for the use of the C.E.F.(S), the British and in one case the Russians. The total bed capacity was 535.<sup>84</sup> Four of the hospitals were in the Vladivostok vicinity and had a 410 bed capacity.<sup>85</sup> One hospital of fifty bed capacity was situated at Omsk principally for the British forces stationed in that city.<sup>86</sup> One seventy-five bed hospital was located on Russian Island for the use of the British operated Russian Officers Training School.<sup>87</sup>

Regarding the operation of the Russian Island Hospital there arose a serious conflict between the Canadian medical officers and the Russian medical officers as to who had control of the Hospital. The chief Russian medical officer claimed to be in charge of the Hospital according to orders issued by General K. Sakharov, the School Commandant.<sup>88</sup>

A Canadian Medical Officer investigating the conflict recommended that:

...as it is absolutely impossible to run an efficient Military Hospital under dual control, it is strongly urged that the Russian Medical Officers be informed that they have absolutely no authority...in the Hospital.... This was the original arrangement, and if it is not found advisable to have it enforced, I would recommend that the Canadian Personnel be withdrawn. 89

Shortly thereafter, General Sakharov informed Major-General Knox of his complete accedence to the Canadian demands. 90

In spite of a number of claims as to the exemplary behavior displayed by the Canadian troops in Siberia, 91 there exist a number of documents which would suggest that this assessment was not entirely correct.

There were numerous complaints received by the Headquarters of the C.E.F.(S) from the Russian authorities regarding various actions of members of the Force.

Daily Routine Order 49 dated 18 December 1918 referred to a complaint from Russian authorities regarding the theft of Russian property from the Russkan barracks occupied by the C.E.F.(S). 92

In a letter to Elmsley dated February 17th, Colonel Butenko, the Vladivostok Commandant referred to the damage to Russian premises caused by the Canadian troops occupying them. 93

In a letter to the editor, appearing in Golos Primorya of March 7th a group of Russian officers complained regarding the comic impersonation by a Canadian of a Russian officer at a Y.M.C.A. function on February 23rd

which they implied was designed to bring discredit to the Russian officer corp.

...one of them dressed up in the uniform of a Russian lieutenant, wearing the Military Cross of St. George and five campaign stripes played the fool and hooligan. 94

A final example of these representative complaints is a letter to the Canadian Chief of Staff, C.E.F.(S) from the Czech Town Major.

I have received a note from the Russian Militia complaining about Canadian and American soldiers gathered always on the trottoir...(at...Canadian Y.M.C.A. Hall)

These soldiers...hinder the free passage of the public and accost...passing women making them different propositions. 95

The documentation on the C.E.F.(S) is quite clear on one point - namely, that aside from the small advance party of Canadians at Omsk consisting of eight officers and forty-seven other ranks, no Canadian troops were employed outside of Vladivostok and its environs.

A number of cables from Ottawa, both to Elmsley and to the War Office reiterate the order that the Canadian troops were expressly forbidden to move 'up country'. 96

On the basis of this documentary evidence it could be assumed that certainly no Canadian troops were engaged in guarding the railway from Vladivostok to Omsk. A War Office cable to Elmsley dated March 20, 1919 only emphasizes this point when it states that "Canadian troops are of course not available for the defence of the railway...." 97 There exists not a single suggestion in the documents reviewed that this order was ever abrogated or contravened.

It is possible, however, in this case that the documents misrepresent the true state of affairs, since a number of other sources, some of them eye witness reports state that in fact Canadian troops were guarding the railway or were otherwise engaged 'up country'.

Carl W. Ackerman, the correspondent for the New York Times reported that while he was at Manchouli Station (at the end of November or first half of December, 1918) four hundred Canadian troops had already left Vladivostok and their arrival at Manchouli Station was imminent. 98

The Vladivostok daily Golos Primorya reported in its January 5, 1919 issue that "...echelons of Canadian troops are passing through Harbin every day." 99

Captain W. E. Dunham, an officer of the C.E.F.(S) in an article he wrote on the Force for Maclean's Magazine stated that small "...units [of Canadians] are stationed elsewhere along the line between the base at Vlady and the 'front' at Omsk...." 100

Officers returning to Canada via the S.S. MONTEAGLE (arrived Victoria, B. C., May 5, 1919) told reporters of the Daily Colonist: "A few Canadians went as far as the Omsk frontier, where they are engaged in guard duty, and others were distributed along the line of the Trans-Siberian Railway." 101

Finally, A. D. Braithwaite, a member of the Canadian Economic Commission to Siberia in describing the trip he undertook to Omsk stated that all the railway stations between Vladivostok and Omsk "...are guarded by Chinese, Russian, Czecho-Slovak or Japanese troops. Occasionally English, American and French soldiers are in evidence, and now and again a Canadian". 102

The one and only incident in which Canadian Forces nearly became engaged in armed conflict with alleged Bolshevik forces occurred in April 1919.

On April 11th an armed guerrilla force began threatening the region around the village of Shkotova, which was thirty miles north of Vladivostok. The situation was a serious one principally since Vladivostok's source of coal, the Souchan Mines were located in the same area.<sup>103</sup> On April 12th, General K. Otani, the Allied Forces Commander-in-Chief had despatched two Japanese battalions under the command of Colonel Isobayashi.<sup>104</sup> General Otani by Army Order 64 on the 13th April ordered all the Allied Forces, with the notable exception of the U.S.E.F.(S), to supply specified contingents. Canada was ordered to supply one infantry company and eight machine guns. They departed at 1 P.M. on April 13th from Vladivostok Station. According to Army Order 64 upon their arrival at Shkotova the entire inter-allied force would come under the command of Colonel Isobayashi.<sup>105</sup>

Major-General Elmsley's action in carrying out Otani's order was contrary to at least one previous order from Ottawa which had specified that the "...Dominion Government cannot permit them to engage in military operations...."<sup>106</sup> On April 13th following the despatch of the Shkotova force, Elmsley advised the War Office of his action.<sup>107</sup>

The Canadian contingent was under the command of Major Hart, and a second Canadian officer Lt. Col. James acted as Liaison Officer between

the inter-allied commanders and the Japanese commander, Col. Isobayashi,

By April 19th, most of the Bolshevik forces had disappeared, though some remnants surrendered without a struggle to a Japanese-Canadian column under the command of Major Hart, 108 The enemy base camp at Novo-Rossiskaya was reached on April 19th but no enemy forces were encountered. 109

The Canadian troops who had taken part in the inter-allied force returned to Vladivostok during the period April 21 - 24. On April 24th there was a march past and review of the troops by the Allied Commander-in-Chief, General Otani, 110

By April 1st, 1919 all of the Advance Party C.E.F.(S) at Omsk had been ordered to turn over their facilities there to the British Military Mission and return to Vladivostok, 111

In accordance with Canada's agreement with the War Office, those officers and men who wished to volunteer for service with the British Military Mission were allowed to do so. Eventually, only ten officers and thirteen other ranks elected to do so, 112 In addition, eleven officers resigned their commissions in Siberia 113 and it is possible that some of this number may also have found employment with the British.

One officer and eighteen other ranks had died while on duty with the Force and at least four other ranks had deserted, 114

As for the various premises and facilities occupied by the C.E.F.(S) they were turned over to the various Allied contingents remaining. The Force Headquarters Building, the Pushinskaya Theatre was on June 2nd



turned over to the French Military Mission. <sup>115</sup> The British Military Mission received most of the hospitals, ordnance and supply facilities. <sup>116</sup> The three important C.E.F.(S) camps were divided among the Italians, the British, the Japanese and the Russians in the following manner. The Italians received the prize of Gornostai Barracks. <sup>117</sup> The Russians and Japanese shared possession of the barracks at Second River. <sup>118</sup> The East Barracks went to the 1/9 Battalion Hampshire Regiment. <sup>119</sup>

The C.E.F.(S) returned to Canada in four troopships: S.S. MONTEAGLE which departed Vladivostok on April 21st, S.S. JAPAN departed May 9th, the S.S. EMPRESS OF RUSSIA departed May 19th, <sup>120</sup> and finally the S.S. MONTEAGLE which left Vladivostok on its second voyage June 5th and arrived at Victoria, B. C. June 28th. <sup>121</sup>

E. The British Battalions and the Issue of Command

As soon as Allied agreement had been reached regarding the Siberian intervention, Britain had transferred to Siberia the 25th Btn. Middlesex Regiment from Hong Kong on August 3rd 1918. <sup>122</sup> They had been immediately moved inland to Omsk. Though most of the Middlesex were in fact medically unfit for service and due for discharge <sup>123</sup> they were, at that time, the only British troops available. They were later replaced by the 1/9th. Btn. Hampshire Regiment.

According to the founding documents of the C.E.F.(S), the 25th. Btn. Middlesex or a battalion to replace it were to be an integral part of the Imperial contingent, <sup>124</sup> and as such, were to be under the command of Major-General Elmsley.

The orders, dated 10th September 1918, appointing Elmsley commander of the Imperial Force, were explicit on the matter of command. Item 3 of the order states: "One British Battalion, which will form part of your force, is at present in Siberia....This Battalion or another to replace it, will come under your orders on your arrival." <sup>125</sup>

It is true that initially Canada had given tacit agreement to the movement of Elmsley and the bulk of the C.E.F.(S) to Omsk where the 25th Middlesex was stationed. The terms of appointment, however, do not specify Elmsley's arrival in Omsk as the point at which he would take over the Battalion, it merely states "...on your arrival." Elmsley interpreted this as to mean his arrival in Siberia.

At this point, Major-General Knox, the Head of the British Military Mission, was not in any sense the commander of the British troops in Siberia. On August 26th 1918 he had been appointed by the War Office as Head of the British Military Mission. Command of the British Battalions was not one of his duties as enumerated in his letter of appointment. The War Office informed Knox, in the same letter, in precise terms that "Major General J. H. Elmsley will command the British Imperial contingent...." 126

Elmsley and the Advance Party of six hundred and eighty all ranks had arrived in Vladivostok on October 26th via the S.S. EMPRESS OF JAPAN. 127 One of the first situations with which he was confronted was the coup d'etat in Omsk on November 18th whereby Admiral Kolchak took over the reins of power and assumed the title 'Supreme Ruler'. This event was of tremendous significance, largely because of the hostility that it generated in the Czechoslovak Legion and the U.S.E.F.(S), and as a result changed the whole complexion of the intervention. Any likelihood of accord and common policy which may have existed earlier was dissipated by this event. The coup d'etat immediately brought into sharp focus the question of Elmsley's command of the 25th Middlesex since the British troops became involved in the coup d'etat unknown to their 'commander-in-chief', General Elmsley. The extent of their involvement remains in some doubt, what can, however, be said with certainty is that Lt. Col. John Ward, the Battalion Commanding Officer, did provide guards to escort

the Social Revolutionary members of the overthrown Directory out of the country. 128

Sometime later, in response to a request from Elmsley, 129 Colonel Morrissey, the Commanding Officer of the Canadian Advance Party at Omsk and the 'theoretical' Acting Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces at Omsk investigated the matter. 130

Ward had originally justified his action by saying that the escorting of the prisoners had taken place on orders from Knox and with the approval of Sir Charles Elliot, the British High Commissioner. He further stated that Knox had command of the Battalion at that time. 131 Knox, during the course of the Morrissey investigation denied that Ward had been ordered by him to escort the prisoners. Knox stated "...that the guard had actually left before he got the telegram advising him of the fact." Knox did admit that approval of the action had been given post factum by Elliot and himself. 132 Morrissey concluded that Ward had acted on his own authority. 133 Even if Knox had not been entirely candid with Morrissey and had in fact ordered Ward to provide the escort as Ward alleged then Knox was clearly acting outside his prerogatives. Just the day previously, November 17th, the War Office had send a cable (No. 70984) confirming that the 25th Middlesex was under orders of Major-General Elmsley. 134

The replacements for the 25th Middlesex, the 1/9th Btn. Hampshire Regiment arrived in Vladivostok via the S.S. DUNERA on November 27th 1918.

The force consisted of thirty-two officers and nine hundred and forty-five other ranks. 135

The Advance Party of the C.E.F.(S) under the command of Lt. Col. Morrissey, eight officers and forty-seven other ranks left Vladivostok for Omsk on December 8th. 136

On December 10th, the Chief of the Canadian General Staff, Major-General Gwatkin received authorization from the War Office to despatch the 1/9th Hampshires to Omsk immediately. They began to entrain for Omsk on December 15th and the last of them had departed by December 20th. 137

On December 16th, Major-General Elmsley cabled the War Office for new orders regarding the British Battalions as previous "...instructions regarding my force have apparently been modified or cancelled by the Armistice. Request fresh instructions...stating if...any distinction between commitment of English and Canadian troops." 138

In reply, sent December 18th, via Major-General Gwatkin, the War Office stated that: "We consider it of urgent importance...that Elmsley should move west [i.e. to Omsk] without delay...to take charge of the Middlesex and Hampshire Regiments." 139

The Canadian Government, however, had in the meantime decided that Elmsley and his staff were not to leave for Omsk until the arrival in Vladivostok of Brigadier-General Bickford, the C.E.F.(S) infantry commander.

The Chief of the Canadian General Staff had advised Elmsley of this decision by cable on December 23rd. <sup>140</sup>

In a War Office cable dated January 6, 1919, Elmsley was advised that the British Battalions would come under his command at such time as he arrived in Omsk "...but not before". <sup>141</sup> The War Office further informed Elmsley by cable on January 29th that he should remain in Vladivostok pending clarification of Allied Russian policy at the Peace Conference. <sup>142</sup>

A War Office cable of February 2nd apparently merely confirmed the issue when it advised Elmsley that for "...the present the 25th Middlesex and 1/9th Hampshire Regiments will remain under General Knox." <sup>143</sup> A copy of this cable had been sent to the British Military Mission at Omsk. On February 6th, Brigadier-General J. M. Blair, Knox's Chief of Staff, queried the War Office regarding the cable.

Your telegram No. 74870 of 2nd February to General Elmsley is not understood. The Hampshire Regiment has never been under General Knox and the Middlesex Regiment was only under the Mission till the arrival of Canadian staff here.

The Mission has no Supplies or Administrative Services for taking over Troops....<sup>144</sup>

The War Office apparently conceded their error and the correctness of Blair's objections. The British troops were again officially recognized by the War Office as being under Major-General Elmsley's command, thus ipso facto nullifying War Office cables of December 18th, January 6th and February 2nd. The War Office sent Knox a cable (No. 75107) dated February 8th confirming Elmsley's command. <sup>145</sup> Knox in turn

advised Elmsley of the situation by letter on February 21st. "In view of...Telegram 75107 of 8th February I take it these Battalions remain under your command...." 146

This was the situation until April 1919. The War Office and the British Military Mission, however, were only willing to accept Elmsley's command as long as it was convenient to do so.

In a War Office cable to Elmsley dated March 20th he had been advised that the Hampshires were not to leave Omsk. 147 In April, however, Brigadier-General Blair had requested of Elmsley permission to move the Hampshires to Ekaterinburg due to the fact that Russian Army General Headquarters had moved to that city from Omsk. 148 He had been advised by Elmsley in reply that "I have no objection provided C.E.F. is not responsible for administration," 149 In spite of the fact that the War Office had never advised Elmsley that he was no longer responsible for the Hampshires, they did nevertheless make the move to Ekaterinburg, presumably under orders of Major-General Knox. Upon learning of the movement of the Hampshires, Elmsley in a cable to the War Office dated May 2nd abdicated his command of the Battalion. "As the First Ninth Hampshires are now moving to Ekaterinburg under orders from the British Mission I cannot accept any further responsibility in regard to their command or administration." 150

The Middlesex were being gradually moved to Vladivostok preparatory to being shipped out of Siberia. Elmsley continued to command this Battalion until the C.E.F.(S) was withdrawn. On June 19th the command of the remaining Middlesex was passed to the British Military Mission. 151

F. Troop Disaffection in the C.E.F.(S)

It is particularly appropriate to attempt an assessment of the degree of disaffection in the C.E.F.(S). That it was relatively widespread can be documented. Its prevalence in the Force was due to a combination of factors. The Military Service Act (1917) which had established conscription in Canada had been enacted only in the face of overwhelming opposition. Elsewhere in Canada the resentment had been largely verbal and passive; in Quebec, however, the opposition had been violent. 152

While people were willing to acquiesce in conscription as a part of the struggle against the Central Powers, they were not willing to do so in order that Canada should interfere in Russia's internal affairs. The only acceptable basis for the Siberian intervention was to re-establish the Eastern Front and with the signing of the Armistice this justification for the C.E.F.(S) disappeared. Furthermore, in the minds of many, the justification for further conscription under the Military Service Act similarly disappeared since, according to Sir Robert Borden, the purpose of the Military Service Act had been solely for the purpose of providing reinforcements for the Canadian troops in Europe. 153

By 1917 - 1918 the general state of the collective Canadian psyche was one of intense 'war weariness'. This would apply both within Canada



itself and among the Canadian forces overseas. One element of this may have been due to the possible spreading influence of socialist and Bolshevik doctrines.

In March, 1919 there had been serious rioting among the Canadian forces in England and France who were awaiting demobilization.<sup>154</sup> Also in March a mutiny of Canadian troops had taken place at Murmansk in the North Russian Expeditionary Force.<sup>155</sup> These disturbances were not unique to Canada or Canadians; it is generally well known that similar disturbances were common occurrences in the latter part of the war and the immediate post-Armistice period.

The C.E.F(S), especially as it had been organized so late in the war, had a number of encumbrances against it from the moment of its inception. A significant number of the troops making up the Force had been conscripted and a large proportion of them had been Quebecois, among whom the Military Service Act was a particularly odious instrument of governmental oppression. The official and publicized basis for the C.E.F.(S) had been to fight the Central Powers. The signing of the Armistice on November 11th found the vast majority of the approximately five thousand troops making up the Force still in Victoria, B.C. It was the opinion of the men that since the justification for the Siberian intervention no longer existed that they would be demobilized. This, of course, did not take place. The effect of this development on the men can perhaps best be ascertained by noting that two of the most serious

examples of disaffection in the Force occurred within the one and one-half month period immediately following the signing of the Armistice.

On Sunday night, December 9, 1918 a large rally had been held at the Columbia Theatre in Victoria. The meeting had been organized under the auspices of the Federated Labour Party. The purpose of the meeting had been to protest Canadian participation in the Siberian intervention. The Daily Colonist noted in their report of the meeting that the audience "...held a large proportion of soldiers from the Siberian Forces." <sup>156</sup> The War Diary of the C.E.F.(S) records that the following day, December 10th, Brigadier-General Bickford addressed all ranks on the subject of propaganda against the C.E.F.(S). <sup>157</sup> It can be assumed that the military authorities were seriously concerned about the effect of such anti-intervention propaganda upon troop morale otherwise the 'pep talk' by Bickford would have been unnecessary.

The two Russian platoons consisting of three officers and one hundred and thirty-two other ranks had officially been taken on strength by the 259th Battalion on October 24th 1918. <sup>158</sup>

One of the members of this Russian Force was a Serb passing for a Russian. He related to one of the Canadian officers of the C.E.F.(S) that not only was the reading of Bolshevik propaganda widespread among the Russians but moreover that:

...his comrades are saying that they were not asked in France or England whether they wished to fight the Bolsheviks but only whether they wished to go to Russia. They will fight Germans but not their own countrymen. If they get a chance...they will join the Bolshevik Army. <sup>159</sup>

This intelligence regarding the state of disaffection in the Russian platoons reached Major-General Gwatkin, the Chief of the Canadian General Staff, who wrote to Major-General Leckie, the General Officer Commanding Military District 11, on November 4th.

It was understood that the Russians...before being returned to Canada...were carefully selected, but it is possible that amongst them there are some of an undesirable type, and I ask you to get rid of any whom you have good and sufficient reason to suspect. 160

On the same date Major-General Gwatkin sent a letter to Major-General Elmsley that after their arrival in Vladivostok, the Russians in the C.E.F.(S) were to be kept under close observation. 161

The actual form the investigation took at Victoria is not documented, however, the War Diary of the 259th Battalion states that on November 16th, thirty-nine Russian other ranks were transferred to Work Point Barracks, in Victoria, pending disposal. 162 On November 20th, forty-eight further Russian other ranks followed them. 163 The reason given in the War Diary for the transfer was that "...these men not being anxious to proceed to Siberia." 164

As a result of this development which decimated the Russian Force by approximately sixty-seven percent it was decided, in an effort to limit the spread of the disaffection among those Russians remaining, to break up the Russian platoons and distribute the members of the force evenly throughout the 259th Battalion and 260th Battalion. 165

It was the opinion of the Chief of Staff, Major-General Gwatkin that the Russian officers should have been discharged also or in his

own words "...I would bow them out." <sup>166</sup> This was not acted upon.

The Russians transferred to Work Point Barracks according to the Discharge Certificates were discharged on account of 'Demobilization'. <sup>167</sup> It can be assumed that no legal action was taken against them. However, on January 29th 1919, the Minister of Militia, Major-General Mewburn ordered, through Major-General Gwatkin: "That those Bolsheviks who were discharged 'on demobilization' but for misconduct, are not to receive war gratuities...." <sup>168</sup> This would suggest that there was actual though unspecified misconduct in addition to their having Bolshevik sympathies. This is the only document that specifies 'misconduct', the other documents allude only to Bolshevik tendencies among the men or else to their disinclination to go to Siberia.

It is extremely difficult to determine, due to the paucity of documentation, what exactly happened to the remained of the erstwhile Russian platoons after they reached Siberia. It is apparent, however, that many of them either retained or acquired a sympathy for the Bolshevik cause. It is not possible to determine the number of Russians who deserted in Siberia from the C.E.F.(S). There were at least four, and because of the incompleteness of the Nominal Rolls, the number could have been greater. Lt. Col. Cartwright, the C.E.F.(S) Assistant Provost Marshal stated that "...in every case the men who deserted are Russian subjects." <sup>169</sup>

As recorded earlier the Military Service Act had been most vociferously opposed within the Province of Quebec. Though the actual number is not known a large proportion of the men composing the 259th Battalion C.E.F.(S) were French-Canadiens who had been conscripted for service in Siberia. The initial resentment of the men must have been compounded after the Armistice had been signed.

On December 18th, 1918, Sir Lomer Gouin, the Premier of Quebec, had received the following cable from Victoria; because of its significance it is quoted in its entirety:

Over 300 loyal French Canadians of the 16th. Brigade, S.E.F., which were willing to do their duty to annihilate the Hun menace energetically protest against being sent to-day in Siberia, contrary to their will, in an expedition which is not justified and useless for our Country. As first citizen of our Province and worthy representative of our race, we beg that your influence may be used to prevent such an injustice.

(Sgd) 259th. Battalion 170

The cable had been passed on to Major-General Mewburn, the Minister of Militia, but no action had been taken.

Three days later, on December 21st, the 259th Battalion was due to embark for Vladivostok on the S.S. TEESTA. On the march from Willows Camp to the dock a mutiny had taken place involving French-Canadien troops. The disturbance was quelled and the men taking part were placed under arrest and forcibly transported to Vladivostok. <sup>171</sup> The actual form the mutiny took is not known. It can be determined, however, that

as a result of the events of December 21st, a Field General Court Martial held in Vladivostok on January 28th found five men were guilty of 'joining in a mutiny in forces belonging to His Majesty's Auxiliary Forces'. They were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment ranging from six months to three years. Two men were found guilty of 'disobeying in such a manner as to show wilful defiance of authority'. They received terms of one year and ninety days. Two men were found guilty of 'disobeying a lawful command' and were sentenced to twenty eight days and thirty days. 172

The documents do not suggest that the disturbance was any wider than involving the nine individuals noted. It may, however, be the case that the documents do not tell the complete story. On June 25, 1919, Joseph Archambault, Member of Parliament for Chambly and Vercheres, brought up in the House of Commons the fact that he had recently interviewed some of the men of the 259th Battalion who had returned from Siberia. Archambault related that the men stated they had originally been "...forced to board a train to Victoria against their will. They were forced to embark on a boat for Siberia at the point of the bayonet. Some of them resisted and were court-martialled." 173

One of the factors which led to troop dissatisfaction and demoralization was the failure of the Government to develop new policy to justify the need for the Force in the immediate post-Armistice period.

The unrest was particularly evident among those troops remaining in Victoria, who did not know if they were to be demobilized or despatched to Siberia.

On January 21, 1919, Major-General Leckie, the Commanding Officer, Military District 11, sought from Major-General Gwatkin, the Chief of Staff, clarification of Canada's Siberian policy. "Could some information be forwarded with regard to probable disposal of Siberian Forces....A certain amount of uneasiness exists...but if some early decision could be given it would relieve situation." 174

As for the actual extent of disaffection among the troops in Siberia it is extremely difficult to gauge from the available evidence. However, it is possible to determine that the troops were becoming increasingly demoralized. Such words as 'fed-up' and 'homesick' perhaps best describe their condition.

In a letter to a friend in Vancouver, one member of the C.E.F.(S) wrote on December 29, 1918: "Now that the war is practically over, we are more or less fed up....Most of us feel we are here now because the politicians say so." 175

At the Peace Conference on January 21, 1919 there took place a discussion of the Russian question. Notes of the Conference describe British Prime Minister Lloyd George's expressed sentiments:

Now Canada had decided to withdraw her troops, because the Canadian soldiers would not agree to stay and fight against the Russians. Similar trouble had also occurred amongst the other Allied troops. And he felt certain that, if the British tried to send any more troops there, there would be mutiny. 176

Although no substantiative evidence was found, the Chief of Staff, Major-General Gwatkin on February 13th cabled Elmsley that he [Gwatkin] had received reports of serious discontent among the Canadian forces in Siberia. 177

Although there had apparently been no overt acts of discontent, Major-General Elmsley undoubtedly was in error when he replied on February 18th that there was "...no discontent and troops quite happy." 178

By March 1, 1919 discipline among the C.E.F.(S) had deteriorated to the extent that Elmsley had been forced to prepare a special Daily Order on the subject.

Attention is again directed to the slackness of Other Ranks...in regard to saluting.

It is necessary that the reputation for good discipline which has been achieved by the Canadian Army in Great Britain and France be maintained... in Siberia. 179

Certainly one member of the Force, Rifleman J. Penner (260th Battalion) was not only German but a self-confessed Bolshevik of long standing who had been conscripted into the C.E.F.(S). His sister-in-law stated proudly to an investigating police officer that "...we are sure he will help the Bolsheviks in Siberia if he gets the chance...." 180 Rifleman Penner's brother, Jacob Penner, later became one of the most important figures in the early development of the Communist movement in Canada. 181

The first shipload of returning soldiers of the C.E.F.(S) was carried on the S.S. MONTEAGLE. It had left Vladivostok on 21st April



and arrived at Victoria on May 5th. During the course of the journey at least one case of looting had occurred and at least one officer's life had been threatened. 182

In the last shipload of C.E.F.(S) troops out of Siberia, there were, according to intelligence received by the British Military Mission, some men of the 260th Battalion who "...had in their possession... a large quantity of Bolshevik propaganda, printed in English, for distribution in Canada and the United States." 183

## II. CANADIAN ECONOMIC COMMISSION TO SIBERIA

### A. Formation of the Commission

Prior to the outbreak of World War I, the feasibility of Canadian trade with Russia was severely limited for a number of reasons. One of them was the extremely strong position occupied by German interests in the import-export trade with the major population base of European Russia.<sup>1</sup> This situation arose not only because of the foresight and business acumen displayed by the German entrepreneurs, although this undoubtedly played a part, but rather more specifically because of Germany's geographic proximity. None of the nations on the Pacific rim: Canada, the United States, or Japan could have hoped to compete with the more favourable freight rates enjoyed by German business houses.

Although any of these nations, Canada included, could have competed favourably in Siberia, German interests there had virtually monopolized the Siberian market long before the outbreak of World War I. This was true not only in banking as in the case of the Russo-Asiatic Bank and the Siberian Bank of Commerce where German influence was strongly felt, but of more importance for purposes of this study in the import-export trade and the wholesaling and retailing of consumer goods, all of which were so effectively controlled by the German firm of Messrs. Kunst & Albers.

It was only with the outbreak of war and the resultant decline of German economic influence <sup>2</sup> that Canada saw her opportunity. Canadian manufacturers benefited from war contracts let by the Russian Government both directly to Canada, and the seconding of contracts originally let to British firms.

Canada in 1916 appointed two Trade Commissioners to Russia: Mr. C. F. Just to Petrograd in April, and Mr. W. D. Wilgress to Omsk in July. <sup>3</sup> In July 1918, owing to the political instability of the Russian capital, Just was recalled to Canada; Wilgress however remained at his Omsk post. <sup>4</sup>

As early as October 9, 1917, Major J. Mackintosh-Bell, a Canadian attached to the British Intelligence Mission to Russia, and well known to the Borden cabinet, wrote to Loring C. Christie, Borden's Special Executive Assistant, that:

...the Americans continue to make every effort here to obtain the mining concessions and trade interests which the Germans lost, and which in great part Great Britain is unable to maintain owing to present conditions. It is a wonderful chance for Canada. <sup>5</sup>

On December 13, 1917, the British Consul in Vladivostok, R. M. Hodgson, wrote to Mackintosh-Bell stressing the benefits Canada could derive from trade in Siberia and strongly recommended the appointment of a Trade Commissioner to Vladivostok. <sup>6</sup> This letter was passed on to the Prime Minister and several of the more important

cabinet ministers. Arthur Meighen, Minister of the Interior, wrote to the Prime Minister on January 29, 1918 regarding the recommendation and suggested the transfer to Vladivostok from Petrograd of C. F. Just.<sup>7</sup> This suggestion, however, was not acted upon and Just subsequently returned to Canada.

Except for the transfer and appointment of Wilgress from Omsk to Vladivostok in July 1918<sup>8</sup> as an interim measure, the whole subject of Canada's economic relations with Siberia was left temporarily in abeyance. Important plans to send a Canadian military force to Siberia were being finalized in London. Firm agreement between Canada and Great Britain on Canada's troop commitment probably had been reached 'unofficially' by the end of June, and official agreement was reached on July 12, 1918.<sup>9</sup>

Borden, in London at this time, immediately realized that the positioning of a large Canadian military force in Siberia could be of significant economic usefulness. It was his view that Canada should not be caught 'napping' and upon learning of the pending departures of Economic Commissions to Siberia from Great Britain and the United States, he advised Acting Prime Minister W. T. White and the cabinet in Ottawa by cable on August 8th that Canada should take like action without delay.<sup>10</sup> Five days later, Borden was advised of the cabinet's approval by cable, on August 13th.<sup>11</sup>

For reasons not yet ascertainable, two individuals: Col. J. S. Dennis and Mr. R. Martens, seem to have had predominant influence regarding the composition of the proposed Commission. Col. J. S. Dennis, on leave from the Canadian Pacific Railway and engaged in 1918 at the Headquarters of the British and Canadian Recruiting Mission in New York, was requested by the Hon. J. A. Calder, the Minister of Immigration and Colonization, to provide suggestions regarding the Commission. Dennis, like Mackintosh-Bell and the Prime Minister, recognized the disadvantages to Canada of United States activity in Siberia. In his reply dated August 17th he stated:

As you are aware, the United States is organizing a very strong Trade and Propaganda Commission to accompany or follow their military expedition, and I feel that unless Canada follows suit, we will be left in the cold. 12

Briefly, Dennis' proposal was that the Commission should consist of representatives of four or five special interest groups. The most important of these were to be: the Canadian Bankers Association, the Canadian Manufacturers Association, transportation interests (in view of his antecedents he undoubtedly had the Canadian Pacific Railway in mind). Prior to the war the C. P. R. agents in Russia had conducted a campaign for immigrants until the Russian Government had terminated this activity. 13 In the brief, Dennis suggested that this movement of Russian immigrants to Canada could now be reactivated and for that reason suggested that the Department of Immigration and Colonization

should appoint a representative to the Commission. Moreover, Dennis emphasized the importance of having two or three Russians attached to the Commission. One of the persons he recommended was Count L. L. Tolstoi, the son of the famous novelist, then in the United States on a lecture tour.<sup>14</sup> The Minister, however, did not act upon this particular suggestion.

In addition to Colonel Dennis, a gentleman apparently having considerable influence with the cabinet was Mr. R. Martens, of the firm Messrs. R. Martens & Co. Ltd. of London, a large Anglo-Russian trading company having numerous outlets in Russia. Martens or his representatives on numerous occasions throughout the summer of 1918 conferred both with the Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden and the Minister of Trade and Commerce Sir George Foster.<sup>15</sup>

Martens put forward his proposals to Foster in the form of a letter dated October 8th and as is mentioned in the letter did so at the request of Colonel Dennis. It is not surprising, then, to find his suggestions in the main mirroring those of the earlier Dennis brief of August 17th.

The Martens' proposals called for a commission composed of:

(a) a transportation man (b) an agricultural expert (c) a mining specialist (d) a financial expert, and (e) direct government representation for whom he recommended W. D. Wilgress, the Trade Commissioner at Vladivostok, and C. F. Just, the former Trade Commissioner at Petrograd.<sup>16</sup>

Although cabinet approval for the creation of the Commission had been reached on or before August 13th,<sup>17</sup> the 'Canadian Economic Commission to Siberia' as it was officially designated, was not formally created by Order-in-Council until October 21st.<sup>18</sup> It is interesting to compare the similarities between the Order-in-Council and the proposals submitted by Dennis and Martens previously noted.

The Order-in-Council named to the Commission: C. F. Just, W. D. Wilgress, Colonel J. S. Dennis, who at this time was in Vladivostok as Liaison Officer for the C.E.F.(S), and Ross Owen, also in Vladivostok as C. P. R. representative.<sup>19</sup> The Order-in-Council further recommended the future enlargement of the Commission by the addition of representatives of Banking, Mining, Agriculture and Manufacturing.<sup>20</sup>

The Order-in-Council stated:

...similarity of natural conditions between Siberia and Western Canada, as well as the problems connected with agriculture and transportation, mining and fisheries are factors which enable Canada to cooperate...in the supply of the commodities urgently required and also from experience and adaptability to afford practical assistance by advise and instruction along the lines particularly vital to Siberian reconstruction, whilst her [i.e. Canada's] interest in the trade and economic point of view, both present and future is undoubted.<sup>21</sup>  
(Emphasis added)

The terms of reference of the Commission as set forth in the Order-in-Council were particularly broad, and the divergent interpretations of the Commission's functions later became a source of serious conflict.

Basically, the role of the Commission was to be an investigative one. Studies were to be undertaken into various facets of the Siberian economy with emphasis on the agricultural, mining, forest and fishing industries to determine the commodity needs that could be supplied by Canadian industry. In view of the instability of the rouble and its lack of easy exchangeability, the possibilities for barter arrangements with Siberian cooperatives, municipalities and trading corporations were to be investigated. The financial system was to be studied in order to determine the possibilities for credit arrangements. Finally information was to be gathered, and recommendations made, on the commodities to be supplied and arrangements formulated for their shipment and sale. 22

The final item, referring as it does to the supply, transport and sale of Canadian imports, was the crucial one, and the desired end result of all those proceeding. It was the abrogation by Ottawa of this Commission function that was largely responsible for the disagreement between Ottawa and the Commission that was to result in the Commission terminating its activity. The Commissioners believed that in order for sales and transportation to be arranged in the most efficacious manner, the Commission must be something more than a purely investigative body. They argued that in addition the Commission must take upon itself the attributes of a trading corporation. 23 The



Order-in-Council itself sets forth this view in fairly concise terms.

Two of the named Commissioners: W. D. Wilgress and Ross Owen were already in Vladivostok; C. F. Just and the Commission secretary, Mr. Kohn arrived on January 12th.<sup>24</sup> Dennis arrived on February 2nd.<sup>25</sup>

During this period, in accordance with the Order-in-Council, or more specifically, in direct accordance with the proposals of Dennis' brief of August 17th, the Department of Trade and Commerce contacted the Canadian Bankers Association and asked them to recommend the appointment of a representative. On November 1st, Mr. Pease, the Association President, recommended Mr. A. D. Braithwaite, formerly Assistant General Manager of the Bank of Montreal.<sup>26</sup> The Acting Minister of Trade and Commerce recommended to the cabinet on December 19th the appointments of A. D. Braithwaite and a C. J. Curtin of Vancouver (representing British Columbia mining interests).<sup>27</sup> The Council approved Braithwaite's appointment, but for some unspecified reason left Curtin's appointment pending. Braithwaite arrived in Vladivostok via the S.S. JAPAN on February 27, 1919.<sup>28</sup>

The Department of Trade and Commerce also contacted (presumably in November 1918) Mr. Murray of the Canadian Manufacturers Association for a recommended appointee of that body. The Department, however, was advised that no member of that Association was willing to accept the post.<sup>29</sup>

This apparent lack of interest on the part of the Canadian Manufacturers Association at this critical point was in direct contradiction to the affirmed policy of the Association since 1915. The opportunities in Siberia for Canadian manufacturing interests were a constant editorial theme in the Association's organ 'Industrial Canada'.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the Association maintained through 1919 a sub-committee specifically delegated to study the Siberian situation. Unfortunately, this contradiction must remain unexplained.

B. Commission Activity in Siberia

1. Mercantile Activity

Prior to the arrival in Vladivostok of the full commission, Wilgress and Owen had leased office premises at 57, Svetlanskaya Street, formerly occupied by the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. <sup>31</sup> The office was in convenient proximity both to the Canadian Expeditionary Force Headquarters and the Canadian Red Cross.

Until the arrival of the other commissioners, Owen and Wilgress occupied themselves with the collection of background data for the consideration of the Commission. Dennis, who arrived on February 2nd, was elected by his fellow Commissioners to the position of Chairman, thus replacing Just who had previously been acting as interim Chairman. <sup>32</sup>

To those unfamiliar with bureaucratic models, this Commission of five members, then performed a seemingly fantastic maneuver - they established four sub-committees "...for the purpose of prompt and efficient consideration of some of the more important questions...." <sup>33</sup> A better example of rigid and extreme compartmentalization would be difficult to find. A look at the sub-committees nevertheless allows us to determine the types of problems with which the Commission was

concerned. The sub-committees were: (a) Transportation, (b) Markets and Supplies, (c) Business Register, and (d) Financial Conditions and Credits. <sup>34</sup>

The Commission was, at least initially, suffering from a number of delusions regarding the state of conditions in Siberia in the sense that without basis of fact they presumed the existence of the essential prerequisites such as an operative transportation system. They did, in spite of inadequate information, immediately concern themselves with those matters which were, in essence, their raison d'etre - the development of Siberian-Canadian trading relations.

Dennis in his report of February 20th informed the Minister of Trade and Commerce that numerous inquiries had been received relative to Canadian ability to supply farm machinery in large quantity to meet the needs of Siberian agriculture. <sup>35</sup> Definite orders had been received by the Commission and these had been directly communicated to the appropriate Canadian manufacturers. It was only subsequently that the Commission arrived at the belated conclusion that two factors prevented this venture from being brought to fruition - the congested condition of the Vladivostok port facilities and the impossibility of arranging distribution to the interior due to the chaotic condition of the railway system. <sup>36</sup>

Three projects were, however, viewed as feasible. Recommendations were made to the Department of Trade and Commerce to ship a few thousand

pounds of vegetable seeds to Siberia, to be sold by the Commission to Zemstvos and other cooperative organizations. It was the view of the Commission that not only would this have met a basic need in Siberia for high quality seed, but would have served as an initial step in Siberian-Canadian trade. 37

The viability of the proposed trade link depended upon its development on a bilateral basis. This being so, the Commission did what it could to develop bilateral trade. For example, the Commission determined the availability for export of a quantity of flax stored in Vladivostok (75,000 poods). The Commission considered the question of its purchase and shipment to Canada for use by Canada's textile industry. 38

The Commission received information from official Omsk sources about the urgent need for 7.5 million pounds of binder twine to meet the requirements of the following season's crop. They were advised that a Canadian manufacturer of this commodity had a large supply on hand. The Commission, therefore, initiated negotiations for Canada to supply one million pounds to be sold and distributed through the medium of the Commission. 39

These are merely a few examples of the actual commodity problems with which the Commissioners were occupied.

In addition to the purely economic considerations discussed above, the Commission saw an aspect of their function to be in public relations

in order that the Siberian populace might become more aware of Canada. Prior to the arrival of the full Commission, Wilgress had recommended to the Minister of Trade and Commerce the absolute necessity of informing the Siberian population about Canada. He had already commenced a series of articles on Canada which were being published throughout Siberia in the newspaper media. He suggested that these be reprinted in pamphlet form. He also suggested the widespread use of movies. <sup>40</sup>

Dennis, in his February 20th report to the Minister reiterated both of these proposals. <sup>41</sup>

As part of its promotional activity, the Commission considered the possibility of arranging a series of fact-finding tours of Canada by various Siberian economic and professional groups. These were to be financed by the Canadian government and aimed at enabling the Russian visitors to study Canada and Canadian methods. This proposal was met with great enthusiasm from the Siberian groups with whom the proposal was broached. <sup>42</sup> One of the concrete proposals put forth along this line was to have been a tour of Canada by a group of Siberian dairymen to study Canadian methods of cheese making, butter preparation and stock care. <sup>43</sup>

Due to the short-lived existence of the Commission, it is safe to assume that none of these worthwhile proposals were seriously considered by Ottawa.

## 2. Messrs. Kunst & Albers

Among the most interesting and important aspects of the Commission's activity were those directed toward effecting the expropriation and acquisition by Anglo-Canadian interests of the Siberian based, German controlled firm of Messrs. Kunst & Albers. Long before the Commission had even been considered, both the British Consular Service in Russia and the Canadian Trade Commissioners quickly focused their attention on this firm as an excellent means for economic penetration. In May 1917 the Russian Government passed an Order-in-Council ordering the sale of the firm, because of its German affiliations. The Order-in-Council stated that Russian, Allied, or Neutral nationals would be acceptable purchasers, with the one proviso that regardless of the purchaser, the firm must be kept in a state of continuous operation both during the negotiations for the sale and after the sale had been effected. <sup>44</sup>

This is clear evidence of the extreme state of dependency of the Siberian population on the services provided by the company. The company, extremely large by any standards, possessed an extensive organization. It can perhaps best be compared to the Hudson's Bay Company both as to its scope of activities and its importance.

The firm operated twenty-five branches and agencies throughout Eastern Siberia. <sup>45</sup> Operations included multifarious activities, the

principal base of which was the retail-wholesale trade. The goods carried by their outlets were exclusively of German origin, the purchase and shipment of which was handled by what was, in essence, their parent house in Hamburg. In addition they operated a number of sawmills and also a coal mine on Sakhalin. Prior to the war the firm carried on a lucrative business as a government contractor and was the principal bunkering outlet for Vladivostok. <sup>46</sup> Just states in his report to Foster that the firm "...has been for years the greatest stronghold of German commercial influence in the Russian Far East and along the Eastern Asiatic Coast." <sup>47</sup>

The firm's retail turnover in 1913 was 150,000,000 roubles and in spite of the chaos of war and civil war the turnover in 1918 remained a substantial 40,000,000 roubles. <sup>48</sup>

An appraisal of the firm's assets by a Mr. Lipovsky on behalf of the interested British - Canadian parties, placed the value as of March 1919 at 200,000,000 roubles or 3,900,000 £ (1£ = 50 roubles). <sup>49</sup> Mr. Sandford who had been negotiating on behalf of his firm of Messrs. Denny, Mott & Dickson for the acquisition of the Kunst & Albers property, related to Just that a tentative figure of between 3,000,000 £ and 4,000,000 £ had been suggested. <sup>50</sup> Sandford speculated that had the purchase been effected in 1917 shortly after the promulgation of the Order-in-Council, the terms would have been substantially better. <sup>51</sup>



It cannot be said to be the fault of either the British or Canadian representatives that an earlier purchase had not transpired. In the above noted report dated August 29th to the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Sir George Foster, Just states that overtures had early been made both to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and to the Hudson's Bay Company to purchase and take over the operation of the firm. Interest had also been elicited from the British Board of Trade which had sent out a Commissioner to investigate the prospects for British business interests. 52

The British and Canadian officials acted for all intents and purposes as a team in their efforts to acquire the firm. It was obviously intended to be a joint venture of British and Canadian capital. Just in his August 29th report to the Minister suggested that:

...it might be possible to interest an organization with English and Canadian capital in acquiring the concern...so that the purchasing requirements of the company, which are enormous might be directed to Canada and England. 53

Mr. R. M. Hodgson, the British Consul in Vladivostok was very active in the Kunst & Albers negotiations. He regarded a joint British - Canadian combination as an ideal solution to the question. His thinking on the subject was that "...the adjustment of English and Canadian interests in such a proposition could take place naturally and with fewer points of difference." 54

The British firm of Messrs. Denny, Mott & Dickson (Vladivostok) had, in 1916, even before the promulgation of the May 1917 Order-in-Council,

opened negotiations with representatives of Kunst & Albers. They had maintained their keen interest and had been endeavouring to organize a consortium to handle the purchase. This proposed consortium, as they envisaged it, was to be a purely British one.<sup>55</sup> However, Messrs. Denny, Mott & Dickson had, early in February 1919, received a cipher message from the British Foreign Office in which they were advised that 'His Majesty's Government' was extremely interested in the matter being brought to a satisfactory solution, but that the desired solution was to be one based upon a combination of British and Canadian capital with Russian participation to "...anticipate any unfavourable local criticism of foreign exploitation."<sup>56</sup>

The negotiations foundered for a number of reasons. The stock of the firm was controlled by a Mr. Albers and a Mr. Dalton.<sup>57</sup> Dalton, a Vladivostok resident, was willing to sell, however, he was the junior partner in the firm.<sup>58</sup> The whereabouts of Mr. Albers who had effective control had not be ascertainable since July 1918.<sup>59</sup> Technically the purchase would have been difficult without his concurrence. In spite of the fact that the firm was under theoretical control of a Comptroller appointed by the Provisional Government, the Order-in-Council had lost much of its relevance with the collapse of the issuing authority.

It is possible that in the earlier stages of the negotiations certain Petrograd officials were reluctant to cooperate and did not press

for the execution of the Order-in-Council. Just alleges that this was, in fact, the case when he states that "Messrs. Kunst and Albers succeeded... at a time when pro-German influences were gaining ground...in bringing about a postponement of the liquidation order." 60

Finally, with the exception of the British firm of Messrs. Denny, Mott & Dickson, there was no documentation available on the response of private British and Canadian business interests. It may well have been the case that the response was something less than enthusiastic. Certainly, Braithwaite, the financial expert on the Economic Commission on March 10th advised against such a commitment of Anglo-Canadian capital.

I do not think it would be possible to interest, nor could I advise endeavoring to interest capitalists to consider the purchase of this business...involving as it would such a large tie up of capital in Vladivostok Real Estate. 61

### 3. Siberian Supply Company

The area of disagreement between the Commission and Ottawa alluded to earlier centered in Ottawa's relations with an Anglo-Siberian trading corporation designated the 'Siberian Supply Company'. The fact that the Department of Trade and Commerce entered into an agreement with this company in direct opposition to the advice proffered by the Commissioners, and that this agreement severely limited the scope of the Commission's activity was perhaps the principal reason for the Commissioners terminating their activity and returning to Canada in a fit of pique.

In view of the importance of the Siberian Supply Company's role in any discussion of the Commission it is necessary to say something about the background of this firm.

In the list of dramatis personae, the name of Leslie Urquhart is of key importance. An Englishman of considerable experience in Russia, by 1917 he found himself in effective control of a syndicate consisting of three Anglo-Russian mining companies and one Russo-Canadian mining concern: Kyshtim Corporation Limited, Tanalyk Corporation Limited, Irtysh Corporation Limited and the Russo-Canadian Development Corporation Limited. Together they comprised the single largest mining syndicate

in Russia possessing concessions to the extent of 2,500,000 acres in the Urals and Western Siberia. <sup>62</sup> Moreover, not only did Urquhart have friends in the right places in the British Government, but also had even better connections in the Kolchak regime. His connections within the Siberian Government ranged from Kolchak himself who was a personal friend, <sup>63</sup> to A. L. Fedoseev who was at the same time the Managing Director of Urquhart's mining syndicate and Chairman of the Extraordinary State Economic Conference. <sup>64</sup> At least one historian sees in Fedoseev an 'eminence grise' behind the Supreme Ruler. <sup>65</sup>

Sir Albert Stanley, the President of the Board of Trade and acting for the British Government, entered into an agreement with Urquhart on 25th September 1918. <sup>66</sup> The basis of the Agreement was that Urquhart was to perform the functions of an import-export agent in Siberia on behalf of the British Government on a cost-plus basis. Urquhart's profit was to be one half of one percent of the gross value of the transactions. <sup>67</sup> The terms of reference were such that the geographical area in which the Agreement was operative included Siberia proper plus the Governments of Perm and Orenburg west of the Urals. <sup>68</sup>

The Agreement further specified that the agent [Urquhart] was to act:

- '(1) in the acquisition, handling, distribution and sale of goods and other commodities in stock at Vladivostok or elsewhere in Siberia and Russia;

- (2) in the procuring and fulfilling of orders for goods and other commodities to be supplied from the United Kingdom;
- (3) in procuring and importing goods and other commodities from Canada, Australia, India or other sources;
- (4) in obtaining and exporting goods and other commodities which may be available in Siberia and Russia.' 69

In order to carry out the terms of the Agreement, Urquhart and his associates organized and incorporated the 'Siberian Supply Company.'

The first intimation that the British Government was considering entering into an agreement of this sort was received by the Canadian Government in a confidential despatch dated September 6th, 1918, from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor-General of Canada. 70

The news of the Agreement was received with misgivings in Siberia. The earliest mention of the scheme in the Siberian files appears in a letter of complaint from the British Commercial Association of Siberia to Wilgress dated 5th October 1918. Among other matters dealt with, F. I. Gade on behalf of the Association stated:

We consider that the Agreement...constitutes a menace to British interests, and view with apprehension the grave results which may follow if it is allowed to go into operation without effective control from this side. 71

The main complaint of these British firms was not so much that they were ignored by the terms of the Agreement, but rather that Urquhart would establish his own machinery, precluding any opportunity for the British firms to take part in the trade. 72

Wilgress in a letter to the Deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce dated October 10th passed along the complaints of the British firms but did not support them, on the contrary he admitted that the local British firms did not possess an organization adequate to handle the projected scale of supplies. 73

Wilgress favoured at this time that Canada should take an independent position and he urged that a Canadian commission be sent to Siberia to function somewhat along the lines adopted by the United States. 74

Wilgress was not aware at the time that the Economic Commission had already been approved, albeit 'unofficially' by the Government.

In his report to the Department of Trade and Commerce of October 29th, Wilgress reiterated and added to the list of complaints of the local British firms against the Urquhart scheme. The new charges were that Urquhart would build up his own distributing organization rather than use the organization of the existing firms not because of their size but from motives of pure greed since he would find it to be "...to his personal interest...." They also alleged that he would favour "...a small

group of manufacturers and suppliers to the detriment of others...." 75

Wilgress, for some reason, was at this time supremely confident that Canada would not become a party to the Siberian Supply Company Agreement.

The terms of the contract specifies Canada among the British Dominions over which Mr. Urquhart is to act as exclusive agent for the British Government, but I do not think that our Government will bind itself to such an agreement. 76

Although Wilgress had originally recognized that the local British firms were not in a position to duplicate Urquhart's proposed activity, his position was undergoing a rapid transformation. By November 7th he was more sympathetic to the local British firms and was hardening his stand against Urquhart.

A major matter of concern to the Siberian based British firms was the fear that the Urquhart - Stanley Agreement would preclude them from importing goods from Britain because of the exclusiveness of the Agreement and they were, as a result, looking to Canada as an alternative source. They were anxious that Canada should not associate herself with the Siberian Supply Company or any similar undertaking and thereby cut off that avenue of supply. 77 Again in his letter of November 7th Wilgress confidently related that he believed Canada would not become a party to any such agreement. 78



The Department of Trade and Commerce at this time seemingly had made a commitment to act only through the Commission, but again it was merely a matter of the proverbial right hand not knowing what the left was doing. In a cable to Wilgress (sent between November 7 - 19) the Department advised him that export permits would be granted to individual firms upon the recommendation of the Commission.<sup>79</sup> In the light of this cable a meeting subsequently took place between Sir Charles Elliot, the British High Commissioner, Mr. Porter, the British Commercial Commissioner, and Mr. Wilgress. Wilgress reports on this meeting the following:

...we have come to the conclusion on the basis of the cable that the Canadian Government is going to leave economic relief in Siberia in the hands of private traders, the Government only assisting through the medium of the Commission in the granting of licenses and in the securing of tonnage.<sup>80</sup>

Unknown to them, however, this was not to be the policy of the Canadian Government for throughout this period, Sir George Foster, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, was in London, and throughout November had a series of interviews with British officials regarding the Siberian Supply Company. On November 25th he addressed a letter to Alexander MacLean (the Acting Minister) in which he raised the question of Canada's association with the Siberian Supply Company and expressed his support for the proposal. He requested MacLean to bring the matter up before the cabinet.<sup>81</sup>

Basically his proposal was that the Canadian Government would financially stand behind Canadian exports to Siberia as the British Government did for British exports and that Canada would have a representative on the board of directors of the Siberian Supply Company. 82

As a result of the Foster interviews in London, the Hon. B. E. Hubbard, who had been appointed by the British Government as Comptroller of the company, and Mr. D. P. Mitchell, a Director of the company, had a series of interviews with Ottawa based cabinet ministers. The two officials of the company were in Canada and the United States most of January and part of February awaiting transport to Vladivostok. 83

Hubbard offered four tentative proposals should Canada adhere to the plan: that Canada should appoint a Commissioner to Vladivostok to supervise the Canadian aspects of the company; that Canada should appoint one or more directors to the board of the company; that the Canadian Government would financially stand behind the Canadian aspects of the company's operations; and finally he suggested that should Canada adhere to the Agreement the British Government would accept all roubles that Canada acquired as a result of her Siberian transactions. 84

Upon receiving the first intimation of Canada's pending adherence to the Urquhart agreement, the Commission on February 12th despatched a strongly worded cable to Ottawa. There were three premises upon which

the protest was based. They were that the Agreement was prejudicial to the development of independent trade and shipping between Canada and Siberia; that established British and Russian firms in Siberia opposed the Agreement and that Russian public opinion opposed the formation of a foreign trading monopoly.<sup>85</sup> The Commission threatened that if Canada became a party to the Agreement the continuance of the Commission activities would be seriously hampered.<sup>86</sup>

The reply from Ottawa dated February 17th advised the Commission that Canada's association with the Siberian Supply Company was "...practically decided upon."<sup>87</sup> Apparently Ottawa saw the principal advantage to be that goods could be sold in Siberia for roubles and that the British Government would exchange these for pounds.<sup>88</sup>

The Government officially committed itself to the Agreement by Order-in-Council on February 20, 1919. The plan was that the Canadian Trade Commission in Ottawa would purchase and arrange shipping for the goods to be exported to Siberia and to this end the Order-in-Council established a credit of \$1,000,000. The disposal of the goods in Siberia would be through the aegis of the Siberian Supply Company. W. D. Wilgress was appointed to supervise the Canadian aspects of the company. Profits over the one half of one percent gross due to the company, would accrue to the Canadian Government.<sup>89</sup>

The Commission was goaded into action and in a despatch to the Department of Trade and Commerce dated February 24th not only were the previously presented misgivings reiterated but the opinion was expressed that the contract would have the most disastrous effect upon British and Canadian business interests in Siberia. The cable went on to state that the Commission:

...are strongly of the opinion that the necessity of their continued activity in Siberia...is entirely nullified by the contract entered into with the Siberian Supply Company, and that the need for their continued activity will have practically ceased as soon as the terms of the contract...become operative. 90

#### 4. The Braithwaite Mission

The Commissioners felt that prior to their final departure from Siberia it would be desirable for an analysis to be made of the situation in the interior of Siberia generally and in Omsk specifically. A. D. Braithwaite was chosen by the Commission to carry out this investigation. He subsequently left Vladivostok on March 16th and reached Omsk nine days later.

While in Omsk, Braithwaite interviewed a large number of Russian officials including Kolchak himself, P. P. Gudkov, the Minister of Trade and Commerce and most important, I. A. Mikhailov, the Minister of Finance, of whom Braithwaite relates: "I cannot say that I was very much impressed with Mr. Michayloff's knowledge of financial matters...." <sup>91</sup> Braithwaite was not alone in his assessment of Mikhailov's competence. <sup>92</sup> In addition to the purely governmental officials, he dealt and conferred with many of the prominent figures among the Omsk banking and commercial community.

After spending approximately five days in Omsk Braithwaite returned to Vladivostok and during his return journey very narrowly escaped an alleged Bolshevik bullet. <sup>93</sup>

The results of his investigation were pessimistic. The currency situation reflecting the deteriorated economy was particularly chaotic. Inflation was out of control. Currency of every description including those of the Romanov, Kerensky, Siberian and Bolshevik regimes was in circulation in Siberia. The total value of outstanding notes of all varieties was estimated by the Ministry of Finance to be 126.5 billion roubles. At the same time, the reserves of the State Bank amounted to a mere 200 million roubles. <sup>94</sup>

Due to the virtually complete stoppage of exports as a result of the impossibility of obtaining transport the Government had no means of obtaining foreign exchange. Furthermore, most states, including Canada, had passed laws forbidding the importation of roubles. <sup>95</sup> Braithwaite found no bank, foreign or Siberian, willing to sell bills of exchange for roubles. <sup>96</sup> The Omsk Government thus had no means at its disposal to finance an import program and the only alternative, a system of barter arrangements was precluded by the state of the transportation system.

Complicating the issue still further, Omsk had inadequate local revenue sources to meet its needs. As an expedient the printing presses were kept busy churning out paper of ever decreasing value.

In order to stop the spiralling inflation and put the Siberian currency on a firm footing, Braithwaite proposed a six point formula.

He recommended the organization of Siberia as a separate geographical and political entity completely separate from the rest of the Russian Empire. This was to be followed by Allied recognition of the Kolchak regime, a step basic to the regularization of Allied - Siberian financial relations. He proposed the establishment of an inter-allied financial committee to have complete control of Siberian finances. Braithwaite suggested that together with this committee be established a Siberian State Bank, distinct from the Russian State Bank. This bank would be the sole currency issuing authority. The bank would receive all government revenues and would hold all state reserves. The bank's capitalization, which Braithwaite suggested should be approximately £10,000,000, was to be subscribed partly from within Siberia and partly from within the participating Allied nations. The various currencies in circulation would be redeemed by the bank with twenty year bonds. Finally, Braithwaite suggested that the allied nations should make loans to the Omsk Government after the foregoing had been accomplished in order that badly needed commodities might be imported. 97

A draft memorandum on the Siberian currency situation dated April 1919 and prepared for the British Government by its Vladivostok Trade Commissioner, W. J. Hinton, drew heavily upon the Braithwaite report. 98 However, there is no evidence that either the Braithwaite or Hinton report had any impact on their respective governments.

By the time Braithwaite returned to Vladivostok, the other Commissioners with the exception of Wilgress who was now associated with the Siberian Supply Company, had already departed and toward the middle of April 1919 Braithwaite departed also. 99



### III. THE DISENGAGEMENT - AN APPRAISAL

The Canadian Government's Siberian policy, as it was officially formulated in the period July - August, 1918, was an extremely ambitious one. The policy encompassed both military intervention in Siberia and the establishment of Canadian - Siberian economic links through a government-appointed Economic Commission. The issue of consequence at this juncture is to delineate the reasons for the government's volte face vis-a-vis Siberia within the short space of a few months.

It must be emphasized that at the time the Canadian Government agreed to take part in the military intervention in Siberia, the struggle against the Central Powers had not been concluded. During the course of the war approximately one-half million Canadians had been mobilized. Against the large numbers of Canadian troops in Europe, the proposed five thousand man Siberian force appeared in perspective extremely insignificant. At the same time, the Government was able to justify such a force on the grounds of military exigency. However, what had, prior to the Armistice, been militarily and numerically inconsequential, after the Armistice and the end of fighting became an issue of great importance to the Canadian public.

The C.E.F.(S) became the focal point of critical attention by a significant number of Canadians. The best organized and vociferous were the labour unions. The wholesale demobilization of the Canadian forces following the Armistice together with the cessation of war contracts for Canadian industry had resulted in a general recession of which a depressed labour market had been an important facet.<sup>1</sup> The massive unemployment coupled with the unstable economic conditions led to a radicalization of the labouring class. Soviet Russia with its government 'by the proletariat' or a Canadian model of it was seen as a panacea for all Canada's economic and social ills.<sup>2</sup> It was logical, therefore, that labour should have been opposed to the C.E.F.(S) which they regarded, in spite of Government protestations, as being directed against the Bolshevik Government.

Labour's agitation against the Siberian intervention made itself most effectively felt in Canada's western provinces. Protest meetings were common. A typical resolution of protest was that passed by a meeting which was held in the Rex Theatre in Vancouver on December 22, 1918 under the auspices of the Federated Labour Party:

THEREFORE, be it resolved that this meeting...does protest against the Canadian Government sending forces to oppose the workers and soldiers of Russia, in the interests of the exploiting classes.<sup>3</sup>

The Convention of the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress held at Quebec City (September 16 - 21, 1918) passed a relatively mild resolution of protest against intervention in Russia:

Resolution No. 32 - RESOLVED that this Congress goes on record as being opposed to any intervention on the part of the Allies in the internal conditions in Russia, in the belief that in the best interests of democracy every nation should have the right to determine its own destiny. 4

The moderateness of the resolution brought into sharp focus the estrangement of radical labour in Western Canada from their more temperate eastern counterparts. The western delegates decided to hold their own splinter convention. Designated the Western Labour Conference, it was held in Calgary, Alberta, March 10 - 13, 1919. They did not suffer from the restraint exhibited in Quebec. They went much farther than token opposition to intervention. The Conference declared "...its full acceptance of the principle of 'proletarian dictatorship'". The Conference placed "...itself on record as being in full accord and sympathy with the aims and purposes of the Russian Bolshevik and German Spartacan revolutions." 5

By the Spring of 1919, the spread of radicalism, particularly among labour ranks in Western Canada, had reached such serious proportions that the Acting Prime Minister, T. W. White made his, by now, famous request for a British cruiser to Borden in a cable dated 16 April 1919.

Bolshevism has made great progress among workers and soldiers here. We cannot get troops absolutely dependable in emergency....Plans are being laid for revolutionary movement...would immediately bring about serious disturbances in Calgary and Winnipeg where socialism rampant. We think most desirable British Government should bring over cruiser from China Station to Victoria or Vancouver. 6

Borden quickly squelched what was an ineffectual if not ludicrous solution. Instead he suggested utilization of "...Royal North West Mounted Police who, I presume, would be entirely reliable....increase their forces by judicious enlistment." 7

The labour unrest reached its zenith during the Winnipeg General Strike which lasted for forty-two days, from May 6th to June 25th, 1919. 8

William Rodney in his History of the Communist Party of Canada, 1919 - 1929 makes the assertion that:

The chief achievement resulting from the general unrest and dissatisfaction echoed by radicals and labour groups, was that it pressured the Borden government into insisting upon Canada's withdrawal from the Russian expedition. 9

The statement is partially if not wholly inaccurate. There is no documentation in the archives studied that would suggest the withdrawal of the C.E.F.(S) was solely as a result of radical pressure, nor does Rodney provide any documentation for the statement. In spite of its importance, the spread of radicalism was but one of a multitude of reasons, the most important of which will be discussed. It is possible

to go even further - on the basis of radicalism alone it is extremely doubtful that the Canadian forces in Siberia would have been withdrawn.

One of the most critical reasons, alluded to earlier, was the fact that the Canadian Government at this time was a coalition government. The coalition of the majority Conservative Party and a portion of the Liberal Party had been proposed in 1917 by Sir Robert Borden in an effort to effect some sort of political consensus over the issue of conscription and at the same time strengthen his personal position. Coalition, or as it was termed 'Union Government', came into effect in October, 1917. The Unionists were successful in the General Election of December, 1917. In the interests of national unity a Conservative - Liberal coalition had been feasible as long as the war continued. Following the Armistice, however, centrifugal political forces again became operative. Borden found himself forced to deal very gingerly with cabinet dissidence. Out of a cabinet of seventeen members at least five ministers were outspoken in their opposition to the C.E.F.(S) <sup>10</sup> and only four, including Borden, were solidly in favour of it. <sup>11</sup> Borden could have undoubtedly forced the issue, however, being an astute politician and in view of the other anti-intervention influences present, he was reluctant to do so.

In addition to the purely Canadian political, economic and social forces operating against continued Siberian intervention, there were equally important extraneous factors which forced on the government the same non-interventionist decision.

The principal of these factors was the lack of agreement and decisive policy by the other participating powers regarding the intervention in Siberia. Not only was there lacking concurrence as to Siberian policy but also firm national policies by the intervening powers were largely absent. The subject is outside the scope of this essay but it can reasonably be suggested that the other nations were experiencing the same social and political anti-interventionist forces as was Canada. As early as December 30, 1918 the Imperial War Cabinet agreed to a 'Prinkipo Island' proposal for a meeting of the various political elements in Russia, the end result of which would have provided an honourable basis for withdrawal.<sup>12</sup> The policy of withdrawal was affirmed by the Imperial Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference on January 20, 1919.<sup>13</sup> Although the Prinkipo Conference set for February 15th did not take place, the non-intervention policy of the Peace Conference did not undergo alteration.

It has already been amply demonstrated that one of the most important reasons for Canada's agreement to militarily intervene in Siberia was economic consideration.

The government had proclaimed loudly that its intention in sending troops both to Murmansk and to Siberia, was solely to help the Russian people. Its real aims were revealed, however, by the "economic missions" that went along with the troops.<sup>14</sup>

Major-General Alfred Knox stated the issue even more succinctly in a November 4th, 1918 telegram to the War Office. "I...want as many British or Canadian troops sent here...as we can spare. Every British soldier here is as much a factor of trade and empire as Clive's men were." 15

The Canadian Economic Commission to Siberia had been born under the most auspicious political circumstances. It had been blessed with enthusiastic support from Borden, senior cabinet ministers and the upper echelon of the Department of Trade and Commerce. It should be noted that the Commission, unlike the C.E.F.(S) was not officially withdrawn from Siberia. The Commissioners dissolved the Commission of their own volition. What is obvious from a study of the Commission documents is that in spite of the Government's initial enthusiasm, it quickly lost all interest in the Commission. Commission communications were ignored by the Government. It would be difficult to produce a Commission request or recommendation that was acted upon by the Government. In addition, the Government failed to keep the Commission advised regarding governmental action affecting the Commission except on a post factum basis. This was evident not only in the negotiations with the Siberian Supply Company, but also in the decision to withdraw the Canadian forces in Siberia.

There are two possible explanations for the Government's changed attitude toward the Commission.

The explanation favoured is that the Government logically lost interest simultaneously both in the Commission and Siberia as a 'land of economic opportunity' when it became apprised that the conditions in Siberia, principally the chaotic transportation system and unstable financial structure, precluded any development of Siberian - Canadian trade except in the most distant future. Since economic considerations had been an important basis for Canada's decision to intervene, it can be presumed that the lack of opportunity in Siberia was an equally powerful reason for withdrawal from Siberia. Since Borden had originally pressed for intervention on economic grounds, his later 'coolness' to the Siberian intervention may thereby be explained.

The second explanation is related to the possibility that factors other than economic caused the Government to withdraw from Siberia. It is possible that in the minds of the top government officials, including Borden, the success of Canada's attempts to gain an economic foothold in Siberia depended upon the presence of a Canadian military force in Siberia. Consequently, when the Government began to have second thoughts about the continued stationing of Canadian troops in Siberia, and began planning for their eventual recall, a reappraisal of the Government's economic policies for Siberia was a logical corollary. The members of the Government possibly believed that without the leverage of military presence, economic endeavours in Siberia would prove futile.

It is difficult to conclude definitively whether the decision to militarily withdraw preceded the change in Canada's economic policy for



Siberia or whether the knowledge of the unpromising economic conditions in Siberia preceded and were an aspect of Canada's decision to withdraw.

The inactive stance adopted by the C.E.F.(S) has resulted in the Force being regarded as a largely inconsequential element in the Siberian kaleidoscope. Although this is not totally accurate, it nevertheless seems incongruous that the withdrawal of the C.E.F.(S) was, in the final analysis, an event of possibly greater significance to the concluding history of the Intervention, than the totality of C.E.F.(S) activity in Siberia.

The British had been enabled to assume and maintain their leadership position in Western Siberia largely because of the potential of Canadian military support. The Canadian Government was well aware of the potential, if not actual, support the British garnered by the presence of the C.E.F.(S) in Siberia.

...if the Canadian troops, which form the major portion of the British Force in Siberia, are withdrawn, the British Government have no course left open but to recommend the withdrawal of the two British battalions, which would otherwise be isolated. 16

The withdrawal of the C.E.F.(S) in a very real sense set into operation a process which was the 'death knell' of anti-Bolshevik intervention in Siberia. The British forces were withdrawn in September, 1919 a mere four months after the final Canadian departure.

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- 7 The Statute of Westminster, passed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom on December 11th, 1931.
- 8 See for example: White, Siberian Intervention, p. 112 and Louis Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs, 2-Vols., Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1951, pp. 107, 217, 223.

- 9 Letter, Mewburn to Borden, d/12 July 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', Public Archives of Canada (hereafter cited as P.A.C.)
- 10 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Aug. 8, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 11 Letter, Borden to Mewburn, d/Aug. 13, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 12 Order-in-Council No. P.C. 2595 dated 21 October 1918, p. 1.
- 13 Ibid., p. 2.
- 14 Letter, Borden to White, d/Nov. 20, 1918, as cited in: Sir Robert Laird Borden, Memoirs, Toronto, The Macmillan Company, 1938, Vol. II, p. 869.
- 15 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Nov. 20, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 16 Letter, White to Borden, d/Nov. 25, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.

#### CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Letter, Radcliffe to Rowell, d/Jul. 9, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Memorandum Re. Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia), d/Jul. 28, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 3, P.A.C.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Letter, Brig. Gen. 'H. F. McD.' to Kemp, d/Jul. 19, 1918, Attmt. 3 entitled 'Vladivostok Force', Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.
- 6 Canada, Department of External Affairs, Documents on Canadian External Relations, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1967, pp. 206 - 207.

- 7 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Jul. 25, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 8 Sir Robert Laird Borden, Memoirs, Toronto, The Macmillan Company, 1938, Vol. II, p. 810.
- 9 Ibid., p. 817.
- 10 See: Letter, Mewburn to Borden, d/Jul. 12, 1918; Letter, Borden to Mewburn, d/Aug. 13, 1918; Telegram, Borden to White, d/Nov. 20, 1918, (all) Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C. (Refer to: Introduction, pp. 6 - 8 for direct quotations).
- 11 The Daily Colonist, Victoria, B. C., Sept. 28, 1918, p. 5.
- 12 'Pacific Rimism' was a basic tenet of the foreign and economic platform of the Progressive Conservative Party during the 1968 General Election.
- 13 Notes on Conference Re. Siberian Expeditionary Force (Canadian), d/Aug. 13, 1918, p. 1, Siberian Records, Parcel 10, File 27 'Mobilization - General', P.A.C.
- 14 Letter, Gow to Mewburn, d/Sept. 4, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 15 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Aug. 7, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 16 Order-in-Council No. P.C. 1983 d/Aug. 12, 1918.
- 17 Order-in-Council No. P.C. 2073 d/Aug. 23, 1918.
- 18 Order-in-Council No. P.C. 2151 d/Sept. 5, 1918.
- 19 Memorandum Re. Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia), d/Jul. 28, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 3, P.A.C. (also) Letter, Mewburn to Kemp, d/Aug. 13, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 20 Order, War Office to Elmsley, d/Sept. 10, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.
- 21 Letter, Gow to Mewburn, d/Sept. 10, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.

- 22 Report of Interview. Lt. Col. Yourkevitch and Capt. Bray, d/ Jul. 18, 1918, p. 2, Siberian Records, Folder 5, File 41 'Russian Political Parties', P.A.C.

It is interesting to speculate why the number of Russians who either enlisted voluntarily or were conscripted into the Canadian Army during World War I was so small. There are three possible explanations. The Military Service Act which made conscription law in Canada was not brought into effect until 1917. In 1911 there were 89,984 Russian citizens resident in Canada, however, of this number only 46,018 were over 21 years of age, and of this group a proportion would have fallen outside the upper age limit set by the M.S.A. [Canada, Department of Trade and Commerce, The Canada Yearbook, 1916 - 1917, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1917.] A final explanation is that following the Bolshevik Revolution the Russians in Canada may have been regarded by the authorities as being politically suspect. An Intelligence Officer for the Department of Militia and Defence, investigating the political reliability of Russian nationals in the Winnipeg area with the aim of enforcing the Military Service Act among them stated in his report dated August 7th, 1918 that "...I am not in a position at the present time to give you the name of any person of Russian Nationality whom I would call thoroughly reliable in this Military District....my experiences in this connection have been such that I am inclined to look upon all Russian Subjects as being untrustworthy for any position of trust." [Letter, Lieut. D. A. Campbell, Acting District Intelligence Officer, M. D. 10 to A.J.A.G., M. D. 10, (Winnipeg, Man.), d/Aug. 7, 1918, Siberian Records, H.Q. File 762.10 'Situation of Russian Subjects, M. D. 10', P.A.C.]

- 23 Yourkevitch - Bray Interview, Ibid., p. 2.
- 24 Ibid., pp. 1-2.
- 25 Ibid., p. 1.
- 26 Ibid., p. 1.
- 27 Notes on Conference Re. Siberian Expeditionary Force (Canadian), d/Aug. 13, 1918, p. 2, Siberian Records, Parcel 10, File 27, 'Mobilization - General', P.A.C.
- 28 Telegram, Kemp to Mewburn d/Aug. 28, 1918, Siberian Records, H.Q. File No. 762-11-1, P.A.C.
- 29 Letter, Adj. Gen. (O.M.F.C.) to H.Q., C.E.F.(S), London, d/Aug. 29, 1918, Siberian Records, Parcel 10, File 27 'Mobilization - General', P.A.C.

- 30 Telegram, H.Q., C.E.F. (London) to Militia Dept., Ottawa, d/Sept. 30, 1918, Siberian Records, H.Q. File No. 762-12-5 (Vol. 1), 'Mobilization of Infantry Battalions', P.A.C.
- 31 Telegram, Kemp to Mewburn, d/Oct. 3, 1918, Siberian Records, H.Q. File 762-12-5 (Vol. 1) 'Mobilization of Infantry Battalions', P.A.C. (and) Telegram, Adj.-Gen. (Ottawa) to Officer Commanding (Quebec, P.Q.), d/Oct. 9, 1918, Siberian Records, H.Q. File 762-12-5 Vol. 1, 'Mobilization of Infantry Battalions', P.A.C.
- 32 Telegram, G.O.C., M.D. 11 (Victoria, B. C.) to Adj.-Gen. (Ottawa) d/Oct. 21, 1918, Siberian Records, H.Q. File 762-12-5 (Vol. 1), 'Mobilization of Infantry Battalions', P.A.C.
- 33 Adj-Gen. (Ottawa) to G.O.C., M.D. 11 (Victoria, B. C.) d/Oct. 11, 1918, Siberian Records, H.Q. File 762-12-5 (Vol. 1), 'Mobilization of Infantry Battalions', P.A.C.
- 34 Telegram, Gen. Ashton to General Gwynne, d/Oct. 14, 1918, Siberian Records, H.Q. File 762-12-5 (Vol. 2) 'Mobilization of Infantry Battalions', P.A.C.
- 35 Telegram, Mewburn to Kemp, d/Nov. 13, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 19, 'Cables-Out, C.E.F.(S)', P.A.C.
- 36 Telegram, White to Kemp, d/Nov. 14, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C. It should be noted that the first contingent of C.E.F.(S) had arrived in Vladivostok on October 26, 1918 via the S.S. EMPRESS OF JAPAN. The Advance Party had consisted of 62 officers and 618 other ranks.
- 37 Telegram, Ottawa to War Office, d/Nov. 15, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 9 'Cables Received - General Staff Branch, C.E.F.(S)', P.A.C.
- 38 Letter, Crerar to White, d/Nov. 22, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 39 Telegram, White to Borden, d/Nov. 22, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 40 Telegram, C.G.S. to War Office, d/Nov. 24, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 19, 'Ciphers and Cables - Out', P.A.C. It should be noted that the cancelled troopships did eventually sail, S.S. TEESTA sailed 21 Dec. 1918. S.S. PROTESLIAUS sailed 26 Dec. 1918. S.S. JAPAN sailed 12 Feb. 1919.

- 41 Letter, Borden to White, d/Nov. 22, 1918, as cited in:  
Sir Robert Laird Borden, Memoirs, Toronto, The Macmillan Company,  
1938, Vol. II, p. 869.
- 42 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Nov. 24, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 43 Telegram, White to Borden, d/Nov. 25, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1), 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 44 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Nov. 27, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Nov. 27, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 47 Telegram, White to Borden, d/Nov. 27, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Telegram, White to Borden, d/Nov. 29, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 50 Telegram, C.G.S. (Ottawa) to War Office, d/Dec. 4, 1918;  
(Reply) Telegram, War Office to C.G.S., d/Dec. 6, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 51 Telegram, C.G.S. to War Office, d/Dec. 6, 1918, Siberian Records,  
Folder 19 'Ciphers and Telegrams - Out', P.A.C.
- 52 Telegram, White to Borden, d/Dec. 6, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 53 Telegram, Borden to White, No. 56303, d/Dec. 9, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 54 Telegram, Borden to White, No. 56304, d/Dec. 9, 1918, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.

- 55 Letter, White to Mewburn, d/Dec. 10, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 56 Telegram, War Office to C.G.S., d/Dec. 18, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Telegram, C.G.S. to War Office, d/Dec. 22, 1918 (and) Telegram, C.G.S. to Elmsley, d/Dec. 22, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 59 Letter, Elmsley to Knox, d/Dec. 21, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 3, P.A.C.
- 60 Letter, Knox to Elmsley, d/Dec. 26, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 3, P.A.C.
- 61 Letter, Knox to Elmsley, d/Dec. 27, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 3, P.A.C.
- 62 Telegram, War Office to C.G.S., d/Jan. 4, 1919, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 63 Telegram, Elmsley to War Office, d/Jan. 8, 1919, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 64 Letter, Gwatkin to Dennis, d/Jan. 9, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 19 'Cables and Telegrams - Out', P.A.C.
- 65 Telegram, Elmsley to Radcliffe, d/Jan. 19, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.
- 66 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Jan. 28, 1919, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.  
It should be noted that on Jan. 8th approximately 1,100 troops remained staged [Telegram, C.G.S. to War Office, d/Jan. 8, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 19, 'Cables and Telegrams - In', P.A.C.] however, of this number a further 378 were despatched to Siberia, principally on the S.S. JAPAN which departed on Feb. 12th. Therefore approximately 722 were demobilized.
- 67 Telegram, War Office to Elmsley d/Jan. 29, 1919, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.  
Brig. Gen. Bickford had arrived at Vladivostok on Jan. 15th via the S.S. PROTESLIAUS.



- 68 Letter, Elmsley to Radcliffe, d/Feb. 11, 1919 as cited in:  
Appendix VIII of J. H. Elmsley, "Report. Russian Military and Political  
Situation", dated June 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 18, P.A.C.
- 69 See: Major. General W. S. Graves, America's Siberian Adventure,  
1918 - 1920, New York, Peter Smith, 1941.
- 70 Telegram, Borden to White, d/Feb. 13, 1919, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 71 Letter, Churchill to Borden, d/Mar. 17, 1919, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 72 Letter, Churchill to Borden, d/May 1, 1919, Borden Papers,  
File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 73 Returns of Strength for C.E.F.(S), Siberian Records, H.Q. File  
762-11-25, P.A.C.
- 74 War Diary Base H.Q. (Sib.), 1-10-18 to 5-6-19. R.G. 9, Vol. 477,  
File 961.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Golos Primorya, Vladivostok, Nov. 3, 1918, p. 4.
- 77 War Diary Force H.Q. (Sib.), 11-10-18 to 31-12-18. R.G. 9, Vol. 476,  
File 957.
- 78 (a) Second River (b) Gornostai Bay (c) Egerscheldt, (Canadian Ordinance  
Depot) (d) East Barracks (e) West Barracks (f) No. 11 Stationary  
Hospital, Russian Island (g) H.Q. - Pushinskaya Theatre (h) Fortress  
Annex (i) Monte Carlo Barracks.
- 79 War Diary Force H.Q. (Sib.), 11-10-18 to 31-12-18. R.G. 9, Vol. 475,  
File 957.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 War Diary A.A. & Q.M.G. (Sib.), 1-12-18 to 29-5-19. R.G. 9, Vol. 477,  
File 961.
- 82 Ibid.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Letter, A.D.M.S. to Commissioner, Canadian Red Cross, d/Feb. 12, 1919,  
Siberian Records, Parcel 14, File 3-O, 'Administration - General', P.A.C.

- 85 Letter, A.D.M.S. to Commissioner, Canadian Red Cross, d/Feb. 12, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 14, File 3-O, 'Administration - General', P.A.C.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Letter, A.D.M.S. to A.A. & Q.M.G., C.E.F.(S), d/Feb. 18, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 14, File 3-O, 'Administration - General', P.A.C.
- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Letter, Sakharov to Knox (no date), Siberian Records, Parcel 14, File 3-O, 'Administration - General', P.A.C.
- 91 See: The Daily Colonist, Victoria, B. C., Jun. 21, 1919, p. 2 (and) Capt. the Rev. Norman Rawson, "The Syren or North Russian Expeditionary Force to Murmansk", Selected Papers, The Canadian Military Institute, Toronto, No. 26 (1929), p. 60.
- 92 Daily Routine Order No. 49, d/Dec. 18, 1918, Siberian Records, Daily Routine Orders, G.O.C., C.E.F.(S) No. 12 d/2-12-18 to No. 84 d/31-12-18. P.A.C.
- 93 Letter, Butenko to Elmsley, d/Feb. 17, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 6, File BH 36-1 'Complaints. Misc. Correspondence', P.A.C.
- 94 Golos Primorya, Vladivostok, March 7, 1919, p. 7.
- 95 Letter, Town Major to Chief of Staff, C.E.F.(S), d/Mar. 8, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 6, File BH 36-1, 'Complaints. Misc. Correspondence', P.A.C.
- 96 Telegram, C.G.S. to War Office, d/Nov. 15, 1918, Siberian Records, Folder 9, P.A.C. (and) Telegram, C.G.S. to Elmsley, d/Dec. 22, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia' (and) Telegram, C.G.S. to War Office, d/Dec. 24, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 97 Telegram, War Office to Elmsley, d/Mar. 20, 1919, War Diary G.S., C.E.F.(S), 1-3-19 to 31-3-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 476, File 959, P.A.C.
- 98 Carl W. Ackerman, Trailing the Bolsheviki, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919, p. 222.
- 99 Golos Primorya, Vladivostok, Jan. 5, 1919, p. 5.

- 100 Capt. W. E. Dunham, "The Canadians in Siberia", Maclean's Magazine, Vol. XXXII, No. 5 (May 1919), p. 93.
- 101 The Daily Colonist, Victoria, B. C., May 6, 1919, p. 5.
- 102 A. D. Braithwaite, Report of Visit to Siberia, (undated, typescript) p. 13, Archives, Bank of Montreal, Montreal, P.Q.
- 103 Letter, H.Q., Allied Forces to Elmsley, d/Apr. 26, 1919, War Diary G.S., C.E.F.(S), 1-4-19 to 19-6-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 476, File 959, P.A.C.
- 104 Order No. 64 d/Apr. 13, 1919, Otani to Elmsley, War Diary, G.S., C.E.F.(S), 1-4-19 to 19-6-19, R. G. 9, Vol. 476, File 959, P.A.C.
- 105 Ibid.
- 106 Telegram, C.G.S. to War Office, d/Dec. 22, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(1), 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 107 Telegram, Elmsley to War Office, d/Apr. 13, 1919, War Diary, G.S., C.E.F.(S), 1-4-19 to 19-6-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 476, File 959, P.A.C.
- 108 Letter, Isobayashi to Elmsley, d/Apr. 26, 1919, War Diary, G.S., C.E.F.(S), 1-4-19 to 19-6-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 476, File 959, P.A.C.
- 109 Ibid.
- 110 War Diary, Base H.Q. (Sib.), 1-10-18 to 5-6-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 477, File 961, P.A.C.
- 111 War Diary, A.A. & Q.M.G. (Sib.), 1-12-18 to 29-5-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 477, File 961, P.A.C.
- 112 Returns of Strength, C.E.F.(S), Siberian Records, H.Q. File 762-11-25, P.A.C.
- 113 Ibid.
- 114 Ibid.
- 115 Letter, French Military Mission to C.E.F.(S) d/Jun. 2, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 5, File BH 25-16, P.A.C.

- 116 Letter, B.M.M. to C.E.F.(S) d/Jun. 2, 1919 re. No. 11 Stationary Hospital and Fortress Annex Hospital. Letter, B.M.M. to C.E.F.(S), d/Jun. 2, 1919 re. ordnance facilities. Letter, B.M.M. to C.E.F.(S), d/Jun. 2, 1919 re. Base Supply Depot. Letter, B.M.M. to C.E.F.(S), d/Jun. 2, 1919 re. Egerscheldt Supply Depot. (all) Siberian Records, Parcel 5, File 25-16, P.A.C.
- 117 Letter of Receipt (Italian) d/Jun. 4, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 5, File BH 25-16, P.A.C.
- 118 Letter of Receipt (Japanese) d/Jun. 4, 1919 and Letter of Receipt (Russian) d/Jun. 4, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 5, File BH 25-16, P.A.C.
- 119 Letter of Receipt, d/Jun. 2, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 5, File BH 25-16, P.A.C.
- 120 War Diary, A.A. & Q.M.G. (Sib.), 1-12-18 to 29-5-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 477, File 961, P.A.C.
- 121 War Diary Force H.Q. (Sib.), 11-10-18 to 31-12-18, R.G. 9, Vol. 475, File 957, P.A.C.
- 122 John Swettenham, Allied Intervention in Russia, 1918 - 1919: and the Part Played by Canada, Toronto, The Ryerson Press, 1967, p. 126.
- 123 A medical board determined on January 25, 1919 that 255 of 329 other ranks to be medically unfit for service. War Diary A.A. & Q.M.G. (Sib.), 1-12-18 to 29-5-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 477, File 961, P.A.C.
- 124 Order, War Office to Elmsley, d/Sept. 10, 1918, p. 1, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.
- 125 Ibid.
- 126 Telegram, War Office to Knox, d/Aug. 26, 1918, p. 1, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.
- 127 War Diary, Force H.Q. (Sib.), 11-10-18 to 31-12-18, R.G. 9, Vol. 475, File 957, P.A.C.
- 128 N. D. Avksentiev, V. M. Zenzinov, A. A. Argunov and E. F. Rogovsky had been arrested on the night of Nov. 17/18 [Elena Varneck and H. H. Fisher (Editors), The Testimony of Kolchak and Other Siberian Materials, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1935, p. 254] They had been escorted out of the country Nov. 20 under a guard escort of the 25th Bttn. Middlesex Regt. Letter, Ward to G.O.C., China Command, Hong Kong, d/Nov. 21, 1918, p. 3, War Diary, 25th Bttn. Middlesex Regt. (Siberia), 14-1-19 to 30-4-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 477, File 963, P.A.C.

- 129 Telegram, Morrissey to Elmsley, d/Jan. 14, 1919, War Diary, G.S., C.E.F.(S), 1-1-19 to 31-1-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 476, File 959, P.A.C.
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 Ibid.
- 132 Ibid.
- 133 Ibid.
- 134 War Diary, Force H.Q. (Sib.), 11-10-18 to 31-12-18, R.G. 9, Vol. 475, File 957, P.A.C.
- 135 Ibid.
- 136 War Diary, Advance Party, C.E.F.(S), 8-12-18 to 12-4-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 477, File 963, P.A.C.
- 137 War Diary, A.A. & Q.M.G. (Sib.), 1-12-18 to 29-5-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 477, File 961, P.A.C. One platoon of 2nd coy, Hampshires remained in Vladivostok to serve as instructors at the Russian Officers School.
- 138 Telegram, Elmsley to War Office, d/Dec. 16, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2), 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 139 Telegram, War Office to C.G.S., d/Dec. 18, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 140 Telegram, C.G.S. to War Office, d/Dec. 23, 1918, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 141 Telegram, War Office to Elmsley, d/Jan. 6, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.
- 142 Telegram, War Office to Elmsley, d/Jan. 29, 1919, Borden Papers, File OC 518(2) 'Expeditionary Force to Siberia', P.A.C.
- 143 Telegram, War Office to Elmsley, d/Feb. 2, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.
- 144 Telegram, Blair to War Office, d/Feb. 6, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.
- 145 Letter, Knox to Elmsley, d/Feb. 21, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.

- 146 Letter, Knox to Elmsley, d/Feb. 21, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 17, Secret File No. 1, P.A.C.,
- 147 Telegram, War Office to Elmsley, d/Mar. 20, 1919, War Diary, G.S., C.E.F.(S), 1-3-19 to 31-3-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 476, File 959, P.A.C.
- 148 Letter, Blair to Elmsley, d/Apr. 25, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 10, File 27-9 '1/9th Hampshire Regt.', P.A.C.
- 149 Letter, Elmsley to Blair, d/Apr. 25, 1919 (Handwritten reply cited on: Letter, Blair to Elmsley, d/Apr. 25, 1919, Siberian Records, Parcel 10, File 27-9 '1/9th Hampshire Regt.'), P.A.C.
- 150 Telegram, Elmsley to War Office, d/May 2, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 10 'Cables - Outgoing, G.S., C.E.F.(S)', P.A.C.
- 151 Telegram, Elmsley to War Office, d/May 26, 1919, Siberian Records, Folder 10 'Cables - Outgoing, G.S., C.E.F.(S)', P.A.C.
- 152 Riots had taken place in Quebec City between the period March 29 to April 1, 1918 over federal efforts to enforce the Military Service Act. Sir Robert Laird Borden, Memoirs, Vol. II, pp. 786-788.
- 153 Ibid., p. 698.
- 154 Ibid., p. 919.
- 155 Colonel G. W. L. Nicholson, (Army Historical Section), Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914 - 1919, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, (Published with authority of the Minister of National Defence), 1962, p. 516.
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- 157 War Diary, 16th Infantry Brigade, C.E.F.(S), 23-10-18 to 30-4-19, R.G. 9, Vol. 477, File 961, P.A.C.
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## CHAPTER TWO

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### CHAPTER THREE

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During research at the Archives, a total of 112 document pages were extracted from the files and photocopied.

Canadian Economic Commission to Siberia. The documents consist of two Department of Trade and Commerce files numbered 21916 and 22804. The files were transferred by the Department of Trade and Commerce to the Public Archives of Canada on October 14, 1968. The files are a nearly complete collection of documents relating to the Commission's activity in Siberia for the period 1918 - 1919. A total of 139 document pages were photocopied and utilized in this essay.

Foster Papers, (Manuscript Group 27) Papers consist of the complete collection of personal and official documents of Sir. George Foster, the Minister of Trade and Commerce. The only file utilized was No. 75 entitled 'Aid to Siberia, 1918'. 22 documents were photocopied.

Siberian Records (Record Group 9). This collection consists of all the records, both from the Department of Overseas Military Service of Canada and the Department of Militia and Defence relative to the Canadian Expeditionary Force to Siberia, except for the War Diaries (see below). Several hundred files are involved encompassing the complete history of the C.E.F.(S) from the time of organization to withdrawal and demobilization. The documents cover all phases of the Force's operation. Some of the documents relating to policy matters are copies of documents found in the Borden Papers. A total of 185 document pages were photocopied and used in the preparation of this essay.



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