

SOVIET-GERMAN RELATIONS: 1918-1926

by

Emanuel Goldberg

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Curriculum Studiorum

I was born in Swislocz, Poland, on February 2, 1916 and attended a Hebrew-Polish High School until 1933. After 1933, I attended a State Seminary for Hebrew Teachers in Warsaw, Poland, from which I graduated in 1938, receiving a Teacher's Diploma.

In 1950, I entered Sir George Williams College in Montreal, and graduated in 1955 with a B.A. In 1957, I successfully completed a Summer Course in Graduate Studies given by the Department of History in Columbia University, New York. In the fall of the same year, I received a position as Director of Education of the Hebrew Schools in Ottawa and entered the University of Ottawa for a course of Studies leading to an M.A. degree in history.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	V
CHAPTER I	- Aftermath of War: New Policies Emerge ..	1
	a) Soviet-Union	
	b) Germany	
	c) Poland	
	d) General International Situation	
CHAPTER II	- The Roads to Rapallo	24
	a) The Diplomatic Course	
	b) Russia's Political Intervention in Germany	
	c) The Military Underground	
	d) Trade - Expectation and Reality	
CHAPTER III	- The Significance of Rapallo.....	56
	a) Economic Aspects	
	b) Diplomatic and Political Aspects	
	c) Military	
CHAPTER IV	- Conclusion	96
APPENDIX A	- Treaty Regarding Solutions of General..	107
	Problems, Rapallo, 1922.	
APPENDIX B	- Agreement Regarding Neutrality and ...	110
	Non-aggression with exchange of notes.	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	-.....	110

PREFACE

Soviet-German relations from 1918 evoke considerable interest from every student of modern history, and especially from myself, a former Polish citizen. The literature on the subject is extensive and shows no sign of abating, while the problem is still far from being exhausted.

To ignore the question or even to relegate it to a minor position is to distort the history of Europe in the years immediately following the end of the Great War. The signing of the Rapallo agreement (on April 16, 1922) shocked the political circles of Europe. It was strongly suspected that Soviet Russia and the Weimar Republic had entered into a cabal aimed at the destruction of the Versailles Settlement.

The importance of this Soviet - German agreement, while far from being insignificant, at the time was nevertheless greatly exaggerated. After the elapse of time and on the basis of more and better known facts we now can more realistically evaluate the Rapallo pact as a product of a specific and distinct political reality. The political conditions in Europe in the early Twenties made it natural for the two

defeated, ruined and isolated outcasts Russia and Germany, to join forces for their mutual benefit. Rapallo was thus a corollary of Versailles. The Russians wanted to divide their potential enemies and to neutralize Germany. The Germans were interested in using Russia against France and vice versa. Berlin also wanted to gain more political initiative and freedom from the Allies.

However the areas of incompatibility between Germany and Soviet Russia were so many and so deep that it is not surprising that they eventually asserted themselves. Indeed, the collaboration between Soviet Russia and Germany, even in its heyday, was rarely marked by sincere mutual trust. With the change of the political atmosphere in Europe, especially from 1924, when Germany began to stabilize her economy and to regain her political freedom of action, while Russia, after "the Year of Recognition", was less isolated, a definite and steady decline set into their relationship.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the various aspects of Soviet-German relations, preceding and following Rapallo. I have attempted to trace the development of the collaboration between Moscow and Berlin, from the downfall of their respective imperial governments until the Treaty

of Berlin in 1926.

The first chapter provides the background for the event which led to the Rapallo agreement. The more lasting aspects of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty are given, as well as the situations of both Russia and Germany in the early Twenties. Since neither Germany nor Russia lived in a vacuum, the international situation is touched upon as well. Here, special attention is given to the Polish problem, as seen by Moscow and Berlin and how it affected the Soviet-German collaboration. The so-called Polish problem merits thought for its substantial role in cementing the Soviet-German relationship. Thus, a canvas is given on which the next events will be unfolded.

The second chapter deals with the roads leading to Rapallo. A description of the diplomatic relationship between Moscow and Berlin is also given. This course ran parallel to, and was influenced by, the vast Communist activities inside Germany. The great trade expectations by both powers and how they materialized in reality are also analyzed. Last but by no means least, a description is given of the growing contacts between the military leaders of both countries. While all these aspects are interrelated, they are examined separately, for a clearer appreciation of

their respective importance.

The Third Chapter deals with the Rapallo Treaty and its nature. The purpose of this chapter is to show that there was really nothing extraordinary in the collaboration between Russia and Germany. Even the highly secret military collusion did not produce anything which could have upset the military balance of Europe. As soon as Germany regained political freedom of action and relative economic stability, her keen interest in Russia subsided, a further proof that Rapallo was indeed the product of the unique conditions created by Versailles.

Finally comes the Conclusion which if stated in its simplest form is: that a partnership existed between the Soviet Union and Germany only as long as it was mutually convenient for both parties to keep it. In other words Rapallo was no unholy alliance: collaboration not alliance was the essence of the relationship.

By way of Appendix, I have reproduced the full text of the Rapallo agreement and of the Berlin Treaty of April 1926.

E. Goldberg

CHAPTER I

AFTERMATH OF THE WAR: NEW POLICIES EMERGE

An enormous cluster of problems beset Soviet Russia in the first period of her existence. Essentially these were problems of survival, as it was clearly reflected at the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918. The Brest-Litovsk negotiations, the first great encounter of the Soviet infant state with Imperial Germany, became the anvil on which the theory and practice of Soviet foreign policy were hammered out. While the importance of Brest-Litovsk lies chiefly in the context of the political situation of the period of November 1917-November 1918 (a period by itself of no insignificant meaning), some of its aspects clearly indicated the trend for years to come. One of the most basic and successful Soviet tactical weapons in the field of foreign relations, tested and applied at Brest-Litovsk, was to try to insure the assistance of one capitalist group of states against another. While the idea that the enemy of my enemy can be regarded at least as a temporary friend is as old as diplomacy itself, the novelty here was its practical application by the Russian Communist State in regard to its mortal enemies, which according to Marxist theory were all the capitalist states. Friendship with any capitalist state was until that time anathema to the Communists. This sacrifice of theory to practical reality found its theoretical justification in Lenin's well-known

theory of exploiting the contradictions among the capitalist states.¹ The Soviet State, stripped of any military power, was forced to negotiate in complete isolation with the German military leaders at Brest-Litovsk, as a result of the Allies' refusal to negotiate the Soviet peace proposals.² The Germans could, and did, dictate their terms from a position of overwhelming military strength. The Bolshevik delegates at Brest-Litovsk, frustrated by the severe conditions set by the Germans, refused to accept them. At that critical moment in their early history, the Bolsheviks had entered into negotiations simultaneously with the Allies,³ des-

¹v. I. Lenin, O Vneshney Politike Sovetskovo Gosudarstva, Moskva: Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo Politicheskoy Literatury, 1960, p. 29.

²Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. I, Moscow, 1957, p. 25. See also John W. Wheeler-Bennet, The Forgotten Peace, p. 73.

³Three Allied agents are well known: R. Robins was the head of the American Red Cross Commission in Petrograd. J. Sadoul was a member of the French military mission in Petrograd and Bruce Lockhart who "arrived in Petrograd as an unofficial British agent" - E.H. Carr: The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, p. 45. These men maintained contacts with Soviet Commissars, which were tolerated by their respective embassies in spite of the fact that "The boycott of the new regime by the embassies of the Allied Powers in Petrograd was absolute". E.H. Carr: The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, p. 21.

perately trying to secure British, French and American assistance not only against a "Tilsit peace"¹, but against what seemed to be even much worse, the threatened renewal of a German invasion,² on a completely defenseless Soviet Russia. Such tactics of taking maximum advantage of rivalries among her enemies were used by Moscow throughout the period 1918 - 1926 and with greater success than at Brest-Litovsk.

The Allied response to the desperate Soviet appeals was quite ominous to the Soviets and indeed showed the trends for the future. Paris, London, and Washington were contemplating the destruction of what they regarded as Moscow's

¹ Lenin, calling the Peace of Brest-Litovsk "the Tilsit peace" referred to the Peace which was offered by Napoleon to Prussia at Tilsit in 1807. See: Lenin: 0 Vneshney Politike Sovetskovo Gosudarstva, Moscow: State Publishing House of Political Literature, 1960, p. 69.

² Ibid., p. 28 and p. 52; as a result of this uncertainty the government decided to transfer the capital from Petrograd to Moscow. See: Michael T. Florinsky, Russia, A History and Interpretation, Vol. II, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1958, pp. 1473-1474, and John Wheeler-Bennet, The Forgotten Peace, pp. 252-253.

den of revolutionaries. Robin's, Lockhart's and Sadoul's exhortations got an icy reception in their respective capitals.¹ This was further evidenced by the miserable failure of Kamenev's mission to London.² Military intervention in Russia had already been considered. However, even after the foreign intervention in Soviet Russia failed, its aim, the destruction of Soviet Russia, was not entirely discarded. It lingered on as an important factor and asserted itself in the history of international relations in the period of 1918-1939.

The inimical policy of Germany and the Allies towards the Bolshevik regime obliged the new rulers of Russia to intensify their revolutionary propaganda. Revolutionary propaganda and revolutionary activity became inexorably connected with Soviet diplomacy. This Communist weapon added a new and startling dimension to Soviet foreign policy. It was used profusely at Brest-Litovsk and later in the Twenties, particularly in relation to Germany. Early Soviet diplomats like Trotsky, Radek, Yoppe were accomplished revolutionaries, and initially agitators rather than diplomats.

¹Louis Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs, New York: Vintage Books, 1960, p. 47. See also John W. Wheeler-Bennet, The Forgotten Peace, p. 303. Wheeler-Bennet writes: "...Raymond Robins was sitting on the steps of the platform. Lenin beckoned to him:

"What have you heard from your government?"
 "Nothing," "What has Lockhart heard from London?"
 "Nothing", answered Lenin.

²John W. Wheeler-Bennet, The Forgotten Peace, pp. 284-286.

At that period of Soviet history, the demarcation line between diplomacy and revolutionary propaganda was blurred.¹

The early Bolshevik rulers of Russia were deeply convinced that a socialist revolution in Western Europe and particularly in Germany was imminent. They believed that only such a revolution could assure the survival of the revolution in backward Russia.² This aspect of Soviet policy was fully exposed during the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. The Bolsheviks did not regard it as an academic problem only. To them it had wide practical implication. Every step taken by the Communist leaders of Russia in the field of foreign relations was weighted against this cardinal criterion: how would it affect the prospects of "the imminent revolution in Germany?"³

There were two schools of thought. Nicolai Bukharin, a leading Communist theoretician and important member of the

¹G. V. Chicherin: Vnyeshnaya Politika Sovetskoi Rossii za dva goda, Moscow, 1920, p. 31. Quoted by L. Kochan: Russia and the Weimar Republic, Bowes and Bowes, Cambridge, 1954, p. 25.

²Lenin, O Vneshney Politike Sovetskovo Gosudarstva, p. 79 and see: E. H. Carr, German-Soviet Relations between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939, Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1951, p. 26.

³See: Lenin, O Vneshney Politike Sovetskovo Gosudarstva, p. 59.

Political Bureau of the Russian Communist Party, was ready to sacrifice the Russian revolution for the sake of the German. Bukharin thought that the acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty would enormously increase the prestige and power of the German Imperial Government and in the same degree diminish the chances of a revolution in Germany. Consequently, he felt, that the Soviet government should reject the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in order to increase the chances of a revolution in Germany, even if this would cause the destruction of the Bolshevik regime in Russia. The realist, Lenin violently opposing Bukharin, based himself on the same premise, on the paramount importance of a revolution in Germany.¹ Lenin, arguing only from a different angle, believed that the collapse of the revolution in Russia would deal a mortal blow to the prospects of a Communist revolution in Germany.² After a bitter struggle, Lenin's view prevailed. For him, as for the majority of the Bolshevik leaders, the basic goal of early Soviet diplomacy was to insure the survival of the Soviet state. This argument was often used as a justification for signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.³

1v. I. Lenin, O Vneshney Politike Sovetskogo Gosudarstva, Moskva: Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo Politicheskoy literature, 1960, p. 187. See also: Isaac Deutscher, Lenin, New York: Vintage Books 1960, p. 187.

²Ibid, p. 57.

³Ibid, p. 59.

Within five months of the ratification of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the Soviet Union was engulfed by the Civil War and intervention. This completely absorbed her energies and threatened her very existence. The fear of German Intervention haunted the Bolshevik leaders. This threat passed only with the failure of the German offensive in the west the subsequent allied military advance, the contemporaneous collapse of the German home front which obliged the German government to accept the armistice of November 1918. The Soviet government swiftly (Nov. 13, 1918) renounced the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and the Red Army began to advance westward reaching the border of East Prussia in February 1919. A real respite came only in November 1920, with the end of the civil war after the defeat and withdrawal from the Crimea of Admiral Wrangel's contingent, the last of the anti-Bolshevik forces.

Russia's long war with Germany (1914-1917), the revolution, intervention and the civil war ruined the Russian economy and exhausted the population. The Russians were craving for peace, bread and the reconstruction of their economy. The economic blockade operated by the Entente from the fall of 1918, aided by the policy of the Cordon sanitaire around Russia, aggravated the situation. Desperate, prostrated Russia looked for help. It was unrealistic to expect Soviet Russia to express at that time sufficient confidence in her ability to solve her enormous problems simply

8

by her own unaided effort. It was equally unrealistic to expect help or sympathy, which might have expressed itself in the form of economic or political agreements, from France, Great Britain, the United States or any other power. Curiously the idea gradually formed that assistance could come from Germany, which so recently had been her most threatening adversary.

GERMANY

At Brest-Litovsk, Germany seemed to achieve the pinnacle of her power. There, in that sleepy town on the River Bug, some optimistic German leaders saw the old "Lebensraum" dream coming true. Yet within eight months the dream had vanished. Defeat and revolution overtook Germany, as it had Russia the year before. The shock of the catastrophe was great, overwhelming. When Berlin regained the power to reflect, the first question was bound to be: How to recover? The Social Democrats, the apparent new masters of Germany did not lose hope. True democrats and sincere friends of the West, they hoped that a life line would soon be tossed to them, to lift them up. They consistently refused the blandishment heaped on them by the Soviets. Indeed for months they refused to have any contact with them, so great was their dislike and distrust of what they saw in Moscow. However, to their utter dismay and severe disappointment the West refused to take notice of their real friends. The saving rope failed to come.

Then, Berlin, like the Kremlin, ^(or forced) was to evolve its foreign policy faced by a hostile world. Yet, whereas in Russia such policy was quickly decided by the only source of power and wisdom, by the Politburo, in the Weimar Republic, where no single party obtained a majority, and where the army occupied a privileged position, it was a far more complicated matter. The political outlooks and interests of the various parties and groups, which exerted power in the Republic, could not be ignored, and the process of shaping German foreign policy was far from being easy. An analysis of these parties and groups which shaped the foreign policy of the Weimar Republic will explain why Germany concluded with Soviet Russia the Rapalle Treaty.

From November 11, 1918 the German Democratic Republic, born in Compiègne and proclaimed without enthusiasm by the Social Democratic leader Philipp Scheidemann,¹ began its brief, stormy, and ill-omened life.

The Social Democratic Party was the largest and best organized single political party in Germany. In the elections of 1919, the Social Democrats obtained 38% of the total

¹ The Encyclopedia Britannica, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., William Benton, Publisher, Chicago, 1965, Vol. X p. 326.

veto¹ and became the main political power in the Weimar Coalition Cabinet of Social Democrats, Democrats and Centerists. However, its power was more apparent than real.

Since its first congress at Gotha (1875), the Social Democratic Party ^{has} increased steadily in numbers and influence, and by 1912, had ¹¹⁰ deputies in the Reichstag.² Inner dissent grew simultaneously, however, and became more serious after 1910. While dogmatic and radical in its official theories and Party congress resolutions (strongly endowed with internationalism and pacifism), it was very moderate in action as shown when on August 4, 1914, it voted for the war budget in the Reichstag. The Social Democrats even acquiesced to the violation of Belgian neutrality, identifying themselves to some extent, with the Kaiser's war. Naturally, such policies alienated the radicals in the party. In 1917, the SDP split and the more radical wing organized the Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD) under the leadership of K. Kautsky--the great Marxist theoretician, and Hugo Haase--veteran socialist leader.

¹ Ibid, p. 327.

² The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. XII, The Era of Violence (1898-1945). Edited by David Thomson. Cambridge, at the University Press, 1960, p. 62.

On coming to power, the Social Democrats did not even attempt to curb the strength of the industrial and financial tycoons. They did not decrease the power of the old army officers, civil service, the old imperial judiciary, all of whom were lukewarm towards the new republic, to say the least. The Social Democrats did not dissolve the private armies of the extreme right, which were hostile to the Democratic Republic. They were impotent in action, except in rare cases e.g. the Kapp Putsch (March, 1920) and were barren in leadership, ideas and vision. There was no Gunnar Myrdal in Germany and no Per Albin Hansson¹ among the leaders of the Social Democratic Party to provide the crucially needed economic theory and action. The workers, the main support of the Social Democratic Party were disunited and confused. The Social Democratic Party saw in the parliamentary democracy the only way of carrying out its humanitarian programme, but failed to find a way to make it work. Too many Germans associated defeat, humiliation and economic chaos with the leadership of the Social Democrats, not only because the Weimar Republic with which the "DP" identified itself was born of defeat, but also because the

¹Albin Hansson was a leader of the Social Democratic Party of Sweden and Professor Gunnar Myrdal, a leading economist, whose economic views were similar to Lord Keynes, see: The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. XII. The Era of Violence (1898-1945). Edited by David Thomson. Cambridge, at the University Press, 1960, p. 70.

social Democrats failed to create imaginative democratic ideas and carry them out. The fact that the Social Democrats had assumed leadership in Germany in periods of political and economic crisis (February 1919-June 1920), which they failed to solve, helped to identify them in the minds of the German masses, with failure. The Social Democratic party was a bewildered giant, being attacked by both the right and left, until it finally fell prey to the right.

The military caste ruling the Reichswehr and the owners of German heavy industry and finance continued to exert an enormous influence over the Weimar Republic's internal and external destinies.¹ Germany's defeat in the World War, the revolution at home and the establishment of the Weimar Republic shook the German military caste. To be sure, the German army officers had always been nationalistic, and democratic principles or loyalties were rare among them. General Reinhardt, chief of the Heeresleitung, who was ready in the crisis of the Kapp putsch to commit the army in order to save the democratic republic had been a rare exception.² But the army officers and generals were sharply divided over the ways and means to be used in order to achieve Germany's

¹See E. H. Carr, German-Soviet Relations, Baltimore, 1951, pp. 10-12.

²P. von Rabenau, Jeschk--Aus seinem Leben 1918-1936, Leipzig, 1940, p. 221.

military greatness. One group, the so-called old guard which included Ludendorff, Hoffmann, von der Goltz, and Max Bauer, agreed at least on one point. They considered military intervention against the Communist regime in Russia and the re-establishment of a monarchy there as an indispensable prerequisite for a firm German-Russian military alliance.¹ The old guard generals, being rigidly conservative monarchists, could not overcome their anti-Soviet feelings and cooperate with the Bolsheviks, even on a temporary basis. In addition, they believed that in the long run cooperation between the two systems was quite impossible. The second group of German officers of a more flexible frame of mind had quite different views about Soviet-German relations. To this group belonged General Hans von Seeckt, General Haase, von Schleicher and von Hammerstein.² They firmly believed that Germany must ally itself politically and militarily with Russia. That Russia was ruled by the Bolsheviks did not deter them. As von Seeckt said:

We must make Russia see that our mutual interests are too great to be sacrificed in a bitter struggle over our different political systems.³

¹ E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, p.309.

² See Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, Harvard University Press, 1948. p. 528.

³ The papers of Gen. Hans von Seeckt--quoted by A. L. Smith, The German General Staff and Russia 1919-1926, Sov. Studies, 1956, p. 126.

14
explain who

For a while, it was not certain which military group would dominate the Reichswehr. Both factions disliked each other intensely as it is so clearly evidenced by Breckdorff-Rantzau's categorical request to Trotsky to cease all contacts with Colonel Bauer, a member of the Ludendorff group.¹ The collapse of the Kapp putsch in 1920 ensured the complete dominance of the Seeckt group. Kapp's failure compromised the old guard generals, who retired from the political scene. General von Seeckt, the Chief of the Reichswehr, became one of the most powerful personalities in Germany, and from behind the scene, the arbiter of the Republic.² Seeckt in his capacity as the Chief of the Army Command, had a powerful influence over Germany's policy towards Russia in the early years of the Republic.³

The second group which had great influence in post-war Germany was composed of the powerful industrial and financial tycoons. After the war, Germany's industry underwent some important changes, as the growing concentration and monopolization of the industrial and financial power in Germany

¹See G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, Appendix B, p. 256.

²John W. Wheeler-Bennet, The Genesis of Power, Macmillan and Co., London, 1953, pp. 109-110.

³See E. H. Carr, German-Soviet Relations, Baltimore, 1951, p. 23.

found its organizational expression in a new framework, the Union of German Industry. This new Union reflected the growing power of Germany's heavy industry.¹ Germany's financial and industrial lords vehemently disliked the Soviet system, but they could hardly afford to ignore the abundance of Russian raw materials and Russian markets, especially when the bulk of the German export to the Soviet Union had always consisted of machinery,² an item produced only by heavy industry. On the other hand, the industrialists were well aware that Germany's economic recovery depended on Western, particularly American, capital and investments.³ Economic considerations dictated a careful political course of balance between East and West even if it frequently required an acrobatic way of walking on a tight rope. This was well reflected in ^{explains} Stresemann's foreign policy. Stresemann gave his support to the limited objectives of General von Seeckt, while restraining him in his wider aims.⁴

¹Ibid., p. 12.

²Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 166, and see E. H. Carr, German-Soviet Relations...1919-1939, p. 79.

³For evidence, see: Carr, German-Soviet Relations Between the Two World Wars. 1919-1939, Baltimore, 1951, pp. 78-79, and Arthur Rosenberg, Geschichte Der Deutschen Republik, Verlagsanstalt Graphia, Karlsbad, 1935, pp. 189-190 and p. 257.

⁴Hilger, Incompatible Allies, pp. 92-93, and Seeckt's Memorandum to Wirth, given fully by G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, pp. 133-138.

The leaders of the German Army and German Industry favoured the West, especially the furtherance of good connections with England, while keeping basically intact the importance[†] alliance with the East. But of decisive importance was the fact that both were for a policy of collaboration with Russia as long as it strengthened their position towards the Western power, and thus the Rapallo Alliance lasted for ten years, in spite of the flows and ebbs, conditioned by the changing political situations.

The Social Democratic Party did not shape German foreign policy, although they were not without a certain influence.

POLAND

The emergence of the independent Polish state immediately after World War I had an enormous impact on Soviet-German relations. World War I created many unexpected situations, and one of these was the miracle from east and west of the Vistula: Imperial Germany and the Russian Empire, both historic enemies of Poland, defeated and ruined, made possible the rise of a new Polish Republic (Nov. 3, 1918).

Poland, from the very beginning of her independent life, incurred the intense enmity of both Soviet Russia and Germany. Russia could not forgive Poland for her claiming control over the Eastern territories which had belonged to

Poland before 1772,¹ large parts of which she had to surrender to Poland, with their population of several million White Russians and Ukrainians. The ingathering of Polish lands resulted in severe tensions with her western neighbour—Germany, as well, as large parts of West Prussia, Posen, areas in the region of Upper Silesia and the Polish corridor to the Baltic, with a large German population found themselves in the new Polish state.

The Versailles territorial settlement made a political-military alliance of Poland with France inevitable. When the U.S. withdrew from active commitments in Europe and Britain reverted to a pacifist attitude, France regarded herself "as gendarme of Europe, ... the maintainer of the public order established by the Peace Treaties".² Paris needed Poland to check a German revival. Poland also had to be a barrier against the spread of Communism. Thus, Poland became the bulwark of the Versailles system in Eastern Europe. Poland's two neighbours were eager to destroy her³ and while

¹Josef Karbel, Poland Between East and West. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1965, p. 35.

²H. A. L. Fisher, A History of Europe. London, Edward Arnold and Co., 1945, p. 1171.

³H. W. Gatzke, "Russo-German Military Collaboration During the Weimar Republic," The American Historical Review, April, 1938, Vol. LXIII, No. 3, p. 596.

doing so, to wreck the whole Versailles edifice. Soviet and German diplomats frequently discussed the "Polish danger", as J. Korbai writes:

Otto Gessler, the Minister of Defense, spoke in the closed sessions of the Reichstag Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a close German-Soviet cooperation and "expanded freely, particularly on his favorite theme, the Polish danger," records the prominent witness, Ruth Fischer. "Against the Poles," she continued, "all nuances of German nationalism were united; even those nationalists who rejected any compromise with Bolshevism on domestic issues recognized the worth of Gessler's argument that against the new Polish state, against this French stronghold in Eastern Europe, German interest could be best served by a German-Russian alliance."¹

Intense hostility to Poland caused General Seeckt to seek cooperation with Russia, as he stated:

To save Poland from Bolshevism--Poland, this mortal enemy of Germany, this creature and ally of France, this thief of German soil, this annihilator of German culture--for that not a single German arm should move. And should Poland go to the devil, we should help her go. Our future lies in union with Russia, whether we like the present situation or not. No other road is open to us.²

On another occasion, General von Seeckt wrote:

With the Polish danger on our eastern border, our thoughts must travel further east to Russia. Here

¹ Josef Korbai, Poland Between East and West. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1963, p. 113. Quoted by the author from Ruth Fischer's book: Stalin and German Communism, op. cit., pp. 533-34.

²Ibid., p. 73.

lies the key to the development and fate of the entire Eastern European area. Because of her geographical position, Germany belongs more to the East than to the West. Geopolitically, such an arrangement would also prevent any solidifying of Russo-English relations. The problem between Russia and Germany is that neither of us can escape from our politics. I am also aware that there are strong elements in Germany, with French and Polish support, who want to fight Russia, but I hope I will be spared the sight of the Reichswehr under the command of General Weygand and Marshall Pilsudski--what do we have to win if we achieve a victory over the Bolsheviks?¹

In order to lure Germany into a military alliance, Moscow never hesitated to play the "Polish Card"--what E. H. Carr called "to harp on fears of Poland".²

The German leaders of the Reichswehr were more than willing to play this card, as W. Goerlitz writes: "The Polish question was the godmother of that alliance between the Reichswehr and the Red Army".³ Seeckt was not alone. He was assisted by German politicians. Chancellor Wirth told Brockdorff-Rantzau, the newly appointed German ambassador to Moscow:

¹The papers of General Hans von Seeckt, Washington, D.C., National Archives, 1949, Microcopies, Roll 21, quoted by a. L. Smith, The German General Staff and Russia, 1919-1926, Sov. Studies, 1956, p. 125.

²E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-1923, London, Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1953, Volume III, p. 364.

³See: Walter Goerlitz: History of the German General Staff 1657-1945, p. 229.

Poland must be disposed of. My policy is set towards this goal... On this point I am in complete agreement with the military especially with General von Seeckt.¹

Poland, the basis of the French system of alliance in Eastern Europe, became the special target for destruction by her two neighbours. They were biding their time to translate their words into action.

GENERAL INTERNATIONAL SITUATION.

The Versailles settlement, which followed the great World War, was basically a compromise between French and English interests, and like many compromises, failed to satisfy even its promoters.

The peace settlement did not create the necessary conditions to insure peace. The League of Nations, the realization of President Wilson's idealistic dream, was deprived of any effective power. Moreover, its principles were in contradiction to reality. The League was a political institution and did not deal with economic problems, which were essential for political and social stability. The League was based on an internationalist philosophy when the political reality of the period had turned to morbid nation-

¹Cited in Herbert Helling, "Die Moskauer Mission des Grafen Brockdorff-Rantzau" in Forschungen zur Osteuropaischen Geschichte (edited by H. Jaronowski and W. Philippi) Berlin, 1954, Vol. II, p. 306. Quoted by The New Cambridge Modern History, edited by David Thomson, Volume XII, pp. 469-470.

alism. The League proclaimed disarmament and pacifism when political reality required rearmament against aggressive states. In addition, the U.S.A. and Soviet Russia were not even members of the League. The U.S.A. had also refused to sign the Versailles settlement. Britain's economic, Imperial and Commonwealth interests diverted her from the League. All these factors made the League, as the prophet Jeremiah liked to say "a broken reed", on which peace could not find proper support.

The peace settlement caused great disappointment not only among the vanquished countries but even among the victors. The U.S. saw the Versailles Peace Settlement as a betrayal of Wilson's 14 points and refused to sign it. Because of British opposition, France was unable to achieve her military and economic objectives in Germany. Germany had been weakened but not to the extent making a military revival impossible. Italy was bitter that Yugoslavia and Albania had obtained the Adriatic sea-shore, a region refused to Rome, and a factor which later fostered fascist propaganda. Among the vanquished states, Austria, Hungary and Turkey were especially bitter, as they suffered much more from the territorial settlement than Germany itself. Germany, on the other hand, putting her hope on Wilson's 14 points, expected a mild settlement but did not get it. Many German leaders grossly exaggerated the injustices of Versailles and thus

prepared the ground for the massive support for German unbridled nationalism--Nazism. The Kapp revolt in 1920, the Hitler-Ludendorff revolt in Bavaria in 1923--these showed the trend. Europe would soon be polarized between Bolshevism on one hand and Fascism on the other. The new countries could not create stable regimes and various dictatorships took over country after country.

A new problem cropped up. national minorities of millions of Germans, Hungarians and Russians who found themselves citizens of countries to which they felt no attachment. This gave an excuse for frequent border clashes among Poles, Russians, Lithuanians, Romanians, Bulgarians and Hungarians.

To top all this came the economic chaos, which for four years (1919-1923) created havoc in Europe. With the end of military hostilities, the war industry had to be drastically curtailed, and industry had to be geared to normal conditions, a process which by itself created serious difficulties. The traditional world trade had to be re-established but this was quite impossible as the United States and Japan had taken over the European overseas trade markets. This enormously accelerated American and Japanese industrial development and wealth and brought them into direct competition with Europe. Economic nationalism--the national tariff barriers added to the difficulties. Inflation was rife and endemic in Germany, Poland, France, Hungary and Austria.

The peace settlement did not provide any economic assistance to the vanquished countries nor to the newly established nations. There was no Marshall Plan, so much needed in post World War I Europe. This consequently aggravated the political situation. Austria wanted to join Germany and when this became impossible, she wanted to lean on Italy; Hungary also looked to Italy for help. The economic crisis in Germany helped push the ruined middle class into Nazism.

Such were the political and economic conditions in Europe from 1918 until 1926 and it is little wonder that so many revolutions from the extreme left to the extreme right sprang up and replaced democratic regimes in many European countries.

The political and social scene for the period which preceded and followed the Rapallo settlement was difficult, confused and complex. The European waters were very troubled and Rapallo was born from these murky and menacing waves.

CHAPTER II

THE ROADS TO RAPALLO

A. The Diplomatic Course

Bolshevik Russia and Imperial Germany became deeply involved in each other's affairs, despite their formal commitments not to interfere in internal matters.¹ Yophe, the Russian ambassador to Berlin, provided large sums of money and other assistance to the German revolutionary movement and thus helped to undermine the Kaiser's regime.² Imperial Germany, on the other hand, organized anti-Bolshevik military formations³ and ruined the economy of the Russian provinces.⁴

As the German military position deteriorated, Russia even dared to withhold the payment of the third installment of the indemnities until Berlin stopped arming anti-Bolshevik military formations.⁵ When the Imperial Government realized that its end was near, it was eager to appease the Entente and decided that the least costly way of doing it would be to break relations with Soviet Russia. On November

¹See: Article II of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Jane Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. 1, London, Oxford University Press, 1957, p. 52.

²Ibid., p. 126 and pp. 127-128.

³For example, the so-called "Northern Army".

⁴Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. 1, pp. 539-541 542-547 and 552-555.

⁵Ibid., p. 544 and Louis Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs, p. 87

5, 1918, on the suggestion of the Social Democratic leader, Philip Scheidemann, the German government organized an incident. A Soviet diplomatic box 'burst' and subversive literature written in German calling to revolution and assassination was seized.¹ Dr. Joff, the German foreign minister, ordered Yuphe and his personnel expelled. An official German note delivered to Moscow, November 5, 1918, listed the 'box' incident and the failure to seize the assassin of Count Mirbach, the first German Imperial envoy to Soviet Russia, the reasons for the breaking of diplomatic relations.²

On November 9, news reached Moscow about a revolution in Germany and Lenin personally announced it triumphantly to the Russian people. The news was enthusiastically received in Russia.³ Two trains loaded with flour were sent to the hungry Germans. Throughout Russia a special fund for grain was launched to help 'the fighting brothers'—the workers and soldiers of Germany.⁴ In Moscow itself a 'Revolutionary Council of German Workers and Soldiers', chosen by radical

¹On Scheidemann's role in it see: John Wheeler-Bennett, The Forgotten Peace, p. 359; see also: Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. 1, pp. 560-561.

²Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. pp. 562-564. These relations were not resumed till the Treaty of Rangoon, April, 1929. The temporary trade agreement of May 6, 1921, amounted to a de-facto recognition.

³E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, pp. 95-96

⁴Ibid., p. 98 and Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, pp. 264-265.

German war prisoners, was set up as the lawful representatives of the German citizens in Russia, November 10, 1918, and was immediately recognized by the Soviet government.¹

However, Berlin ignored that German revolutionary Council, formed in Moscow, as well as all the Soviet public declarations of friendship. The Russians became irritated as Chicherin's notes to the revolutionary German government demonstrate.² He started to appeal directly to the German 'masses,' addressing his notes to the Councils of Munich and Kiel, assuming the role not of a diplomat but of a revolutionary.³ After a lengthy silence, the revolutionary German government thanked Russia for the trains of flour, but refused to accept them because President Wilson had already promised help.⁴ The relations between the two revolutionary governments became progressively cooler. Russia was eager to

¹Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. 1, p.564.

²Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. 1, See especially document No. 399, pp. 567-568.

³Ibid., p. 569

⁴E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, p. 98

resume normal diplomatic relations and urged Germany to permit Yophe to return to Berlin. The Germans refused to admit Yophe and shunned any official contact with Soviet Russia.¹ When the German government refused to let Yophe and his staff leave Borisov for Moscow unless the two German Consul Generals in Petrograd and Moscow were allowed to return to Germany, the Soviet government consented to let them depart although, as the Soviet government stated, "their crimes are heavy enough to pass a death sentence on the guilty."²

A committee which organized the first All-German Congress of Workers and Soldiers Councils, to be held on December 6, 1918, in Berlin, invited a Soviet delegation. On December 5, a Soviet delegation composed of Yophe, Radek, Bukharin, Raikovsky and Ignatov reached the German border and were turned away.³ Even the Soviet Red Cross delegates were barred by Berlin.⁴

¹Ibid., pp. 99-100. See Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, pp. 567, 569, 570, 576, 577.

²Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. 1, p. 564.

³R. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, pp. 100-101.

⁴Lionel Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, London: Bowes and Bowes, 1954, pp. 13-14.

The relationship of the two governments was also strained by the problem of evacuating the German Army from Russia. Even after the November revolution, the German Army continued to help the anti-Bolshevik forces and sold and carried away Russian state property, especially railway installations. When the Soviet government urged the 'German comrades' to desist,¹ Dr. Wolff, the German Foreign Minister, answered that his government considered all these properties as a war prize on the basis of the Brest-Litovsk treaty.² Numerous Russian notes and protests were of no avail. Requisition of cattle, grain, furniture and even looting of Russian hospitals continued unabated.³

As time went on, the hostility of the German socialist government progressively increased.⁴ Berlin stubbornly refused to renew diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia be-

¹Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. I pp. 581-589, 596, 598, 599.

²Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. I p. 600.

³Ibid., pp. 604-605, p. 619.

⁴See: Jane Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. 1, 1917-1929, Oxford University Press, London, 1951 p. 126.

cause of the following reasons -- fear of the Entente, combined with a wish to appease her, especially as long as the German troops were allowed to stay in the "Baltikum;"¹ constant irritation in Berlin with the Bolshevik appeals to the German masses to turn the November revolution into a Communist one;² the German Social Democratic and the leaders of the Unabhängigen Sozialisten were not interested in any radical transformations in Germany and least of all in a pro-Communist foreign policy.³ The socialist leaders deeply disliked the Russians in general and the Russian Communists in particular.⁴

The situation changed when the German Frei-Corps had to leave the Baltic region and the German boundary line on the East was cut in a way which accentuated the German defeat. In addition, Germany had to pay indemnities and was under a

¹G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, pp. 37-38

²This is clearly evidenced by Joffe's reply to German charges of Soviet interference in internal German affairs. See Jane Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. I, 1917-1929, pp. 127-128.

³G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 32, E. H. Carr, German Soviet Relations Between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939, Baltimore, 1951, p. 5-6.

⁴E. H. Carr, Ibid.

military control of the Allies in order to control the activities of the Reichswehr. These events corresponded to the constant decrease of the Social Democratic party's influence and to the increasing power of General von Seeckt, who was very ably assisted by Ago Freiherr von Maltzan who headed the Eastern Division of the German Foreign Ministry from 1919 till 1923.¹ This brought a shift in German policy.

Germany refused to participate in the anti-Soviet blockade and maintained a pro-Russian neutrality in the Russo-Polish war.² The Soviet official agent in Berlin since February 20, 1920, Vigdor Kopp, was officially recognized by the German government as Soviet representative for prisoners of war and was actually regarded as a semi-diplomatic representative as was his German counterpart in Moscow, G. Hilger.

On May 5, 1921, Berlin received the 'London Ultimatum' on reparations, and on the following day, on May 6, 1921, Germany concluded a trade treaty with the Kremlin.³ This was intended to be a warning to the West.⁴ When further German

¹John W. Wheeler-Bennet, Genesis of Power, p. 124.

²L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 30.

³Moscow and London had signed a similar treaty two months previously.

⁴L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 42.

diplomatic defeats continued, secret contacts between the generals of the Reichswehr and the Red Army became more frequent. These contacts became a mighty factor which pressed with increasing force for the renewal of full diplomatic relations as was achieved at Rapallo.

In conclusion, Ebert's revolutionary government coherently and continuously shunned any contacts with Soviet Russia. The situation changed when the Versailles system with all its consequences came into being. (Germany became politically isolated and was forced to pay war reparations. when Berlin was spurred to chart a new diplomatic course which led to Rapallo. This was seriously complicated by Moscow's constant and flagrant interference in Germany's internal affairs.

B. Russia's Political Intervention in Germany

After the seizure of power in Russia by the Bolsheviks, an international propaganda bureau was set up in Moscow to promote Communist revolutions on an international scale. Karl Radek, a former member of the German Social Democratic Party and a typical cosmopolitan intellectual, became an important Communist expert for German affairs in Moscow, Radek edited a newspaper 'Die Fackel,' printed in half a million copies daily, as propaganda material for the German soldiers.¹

¹ John W. Wheeler-Bennet, The Forgotten Peace, pp. 21-22

In order to undermine Germany's strength and to fester a Communist revolt there, the Bolsheviks organized fraternizations of Russian and German soldiers. It will be remembered that this was one of the principal demands of the Russian delegation at Brest-Litovsk. In addition, Communist radio broadcasts in German, printing and distribution of pamphlets, continued unceasingly during the Brest-Litovsk negotiations and afterwards. A certain incident is highly instructive. When the train which brought Trotsky and his staff stopped at the Brest-Litovsk station, Radek tossed pamphlets from the train window to the German soldiers standing on the platform.¹ Yophe's and Trotsky's long speeches at Brest were not addressed to Count Ruhlmann or General Hoffman, but to the German masses. When the Bolshevik ambassador arrived in Berlin, as a result of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, Yophe considered himself to be not so much a Russian diplomatic ambassador, but a representative of the World Revolution. Yophe, himself an accomplished conspirator and propagandist, was ably helped out in his conspiratory^{el} activities by N. Bukharin, a leading Communist theorist, and his staff. The Bolsheviks in Berlin got in direct touch with leaders of the Independent Social Democrats, such as Hugo Haase, and Oscar Cohn, and supplied them with very generous funds and information.²

¹Gerald Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 3.

²Louis Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs, p. 484

At the beginning of November, 1918, the Northern German ~~some~~ cities (Kiel, Hamburg, Lubeck and Bremen) were swept by the fire of revolution, and on November 9 the flames reached Berlin. German extremists from the right attributed these new developments to Yophe's activities. It would, of course, be senseless to believe that Yophe brought about either the revolution in Germany or the so-called "stab in the back" to the "undefeated German army."¹ Only Germany's defeat and the harsh conditions at home brought about the revolution.

Events soon forced the Communist party to test its ability to achieve a Communist revolution. Shop Stewards Union, a radical Workers union, in Berlin opposed Ebert's dismissal of the capital's leftist police president, Emil Eichhorn. On January 6, 1919, a gigantic protest demonstration in Berlin was called by radical groups and even by leaders of the Independent Socialist Party to support the Shop Stewards.² It was a militant mass response. The

¹The fact that Adolphe Yophe, the Russian representative, gave money for revolutionary purposes to Oscar Cohn, the Independent Social Democratic leader, who in turn placed the funds at Mendelsohn's bank in Berlin (Yophe, Cohn and Mendelsohn were all Jews), was used by the Nazis to describe ~~the transaction~~ as an international Jewish conspiracy to destroy Germany.

²Arthur Rosenberg, Geschichte Der Deutschen Republic, Karlsbad, 1935, p. 66.

Reichswehr could not act and the mob became the master of Berlin for several days. Ebert and Noske were hiding out. The critical period for the young republic passed in indecision and confusion among the shop stewards and the Communist leaders who failed to act in time. This gave the Reichswehr, under General von Luttwitz-Lequis, time to regroup and to enter Berlin without a fight. When the Communists realized how high the fighting spirit of the workers was, they joined in battle when the cause was already lost. A brief reign of terror took place in the city and "Berlin saw its first Nazi atrocities."¹

On January 15, 1919, Liebknecht and Luxemburg were arrested and 'shot while trying to escape.' Radek was arrested and the party was declared illegal. The Communists were routed.

Despite the Communist point of view that an excellent opportunity for a Communist revolution had been missed, this is extremely doubtful. Fritz Ebert, the leader of the Social Democratic Party, was in a secret alliance with the General

¹ Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, pp. 82-87

Staff,¹ and Legien, the Trade Union leader, was in a secret agreement with Stinnes,² the powerful industrialist.

While the murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg left the Communist Party of Germany leaderless, Radek effectively took advantage of the situation and intervened in the matters of the German Communist movement.³ The Russian influence increased not only as a result of the patent weakness of the German Communist party but also through the..

¹Gerald Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 32. According to E. H. Carr, Ebert concluded his pact with General Hindenburg, which is not correct. This so-called "Telephone Alliance" was concluded between Ebert and General Groener. See: E. H. Carr, German-Soviet Relations Between the Two World Wars 1919-1933, p. 10. For the more precise significance of these secret agreements and alliances, see: G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 33, Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, p. 65, and Arthur Rosenberg, Geschichte der Deutschen Republik, Karlsbad, 1935. pp. 244-245.

²E. H. Carr, German-Soviet Relations Between the Two World Wars, p. 11.

³L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 19.

36

creation of the Comintern on March 2, 1919, in Moscow.¹
The effectiveness of the Communist movement in Germany decreased considerably. It split into two and a new separate faction emerged--the German Communist Workers' Party, the KAPD.²

Communism in Germany received further heavy blows from Ebert, Noske and, above all, from the 'Freikorps' and the 'Black Reichswehr.' After the murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, for a while a situation of a semi-civil war set in in Germany during which the Freikorps crushed the resistance of the workers in many parts, (as the famous Workers' Council in Munich and the armed formations of the workers in the Ruhr. Ebert's, Noske's and Scheidenmann's role in cooperating with the Freikorps in defeating the workers' councils alienated a substantial part of the German workers from the Social Democratic Party and made them ready to accept

¹E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, p. 122. Hugo Eberlein, the representative of the KPD, had been instructed by Rosa Luxemburg to oppose the founding of a Communist International but was induced to abstain from voting. Luxemburg feared that a Communist International with its center in Moscow would inevitably become subservient to Russia's policy.

²G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, pp. 54-55.

Communist leadership.

This shift in opinion affected the well-known congress of the powerful Unabhängigen Sozialisten, USPD, in Halle, October 12 - 17, 1920. Gregory Zinoviev, the first chairman of the Comintern, was invited to address the Congress in Halle which decided to affiliate with the Comintern by 236 votes to 156. At a special convention in Berlin in December, 1920, the Spartacusbund and the Unabhängigen Sozialisten united in a new Communist party which, for the first time, really became a mass workers' party and an integral part of the Comintern. From then on, the Communist party in Germany became the main agent of Moscow's political influence in Germany.¹ This influence would not be very great as long as the civil war was raging in Russia and intervention continued, and Germany herself was in a state of semi-civil war. Dissensions among the German Communists and Levi's and Radek's

¹ Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, p. 135. See in this regard Ruth Fischer's very interesting description of the Berlin Convention of December, 1920, on p. 171.

sharp dissensions with Lenin¹ further reduced Moscow's control over the Communist party of Germany.

Meanwhile, the political scene in Germany became more stabilized. The Communist movement suffered severe setbacks, especially after the "March Action"² when the prospect of a revolution in Western Europe fell to a new low. These important events in the West correspond chronologically to equally serious developments in Russia. The Kronstadt uprising, the dire need of a new economic policy, which was soon to be introduced, the need to have more settled relations with the West, which, in 1921, started to recognize the new regime in Russia--all these events reduced the importance of the Comintern and increased the importance

¹At the Second World Congress of the Comintern in August, 1920, in Moscow, the oppositional group's delegates were accepted against Levi's opposition only because of Lenin's interference. In addition, when Levi held that no resistance should have been offered to the Freikorps and the Black Reichswehr because, according to Levi, to prevent the Shop Steward and Liebknecht from falling into a trap of military provocations, Lenin argued that such an attitude reflected the immaturity and conservatism of the Levi leadership which did not strike hard enough and in proper time. This was a fundamental difference in opinion about the realities of the German situation. See Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, pp. 137-140.

²For a more detailed account, see: E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, pp. 336-337.

and effectiveness of the Soviet foreign policy. The main ideological premise of the policy of the Comintern gradually became that the Soviet Union is the main citadel of the World Revolution, as the only Communist state in the world, and that its existence and needs override everything else. The Communist parties all over the world should subordinate their interests to this paramount need. While this was never admitted officially, it was becoming the obvious practice, especially after Lenin fell ill. The Politbureau of the Russian Communist Party decided the Soviet foreign policy and the policy of the Comintern, synchronizing the two. The autonomy of the Communist parties decreased steadily, paralleling the decrease of the role and independence of the Comintern as a whole to the policies of the Moscow Communist ruling clique and the Comintern became an instrument of Soviet foreign policy.

C. The Military Underground

In spite of their defeat in war, the generals of the German High-Command were successful in saving their reputation of infallible geniuses among the German people.¹ After November, 1918, when the prestige of the High-Command seemed to fall to a low point, the plebeian born Ebert and Noske rushed to save the shaky reputation of the officer corps, the General Staff and the High-Command.²

One of the most crucial problems which the German generals faced was the question of Germany's relation with Russia. Russia, defeated economically, ruined, but still controlling a tremendous territory and population in a land rich with natural resources, seemed to be the natural ally for Germany. Both had become international outcasts, humiliated and resentful, isolated by France and her allies. With the establishment of Poland, the hatred for Poland^{and} France among German officers grew into a obsession.³ Prussia and Russia ~~were~~ ^{had been} the main accomplices in the dismemberment of Poland in the XVIII Century. After Versailles, Russia and Germany lost 'their' territories to Poland. Common hatred ^{to} Poland and

¹John Wheeler-Bennet, The Nemesis of Power, pp. 14-15.

²E. H. Carr, German-Soviet Relations Between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939, p. 11

³See pages 18 and 19 of this paper.

murkey designs to dismember her again promoted friendlier relations between them. Yet, the problem remained how to bridge the gulf dividing monarchical German generals from international Russian Communists. The initial response seemed to be that no such bridge could be erected to Bolshevik Russia. Consequently, the necessary prerequisite was to crush the Bolsheviks, to establish a monarchical government in Russia and then to shape the Alliance. To be sure, there were a handful of officers who after Versailles were ready to introduce radical social and political reforms in Germany, to make her thus 'bundnissfähig' ^{to} the Bolshevik regime in Russia, but this was only an ultra-nationalistic fringe group. The overwhelming majority of the German officers regarded only the first solution as realistic. The attractiveness and realism increased as the Entente itself gave the German generals an excellent opportunity to bridge the gulf to Russia. This opportunity grew from a special assignment which the Allies gave the army in the Baltic region.

The Armistice agreement of November 11, 1918, supposed that the German troops on the Eastern front would hold their positions. This was confirmed by the Treaty of Versailles, Article 433, which provided for the withdrawal of the German troops "as soon as the governments of the principal allied and associated powers shall think suitable, having regard to the internal situation of these territories."¹ From the

¹Louis Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs, p. 135.

German generals' point of view, the most crucial line on the Eastern front was the Baltic region. On December 23, 1918, the British Admiral Sinclair had a meeting with August Winnig, the 'Reichskommissar für die Baltischen Land,' on the battleship 'Princess Margaret' in the port of Libava. Winnig, a Social Democrat, wrote about this meeting:

Die Engländer forderten nicht nur die Behauptung der Stadt Riga unter der bis dahin von der Roten Armee noch unbesetzten Gebiete, sondern redeten auch der Rückeroberung der bereits geraumten Teile und verlangten dass. Kein Mann and kein Geschütz mehr abtransportiert werde.

The Entente itself seemed to stimulate an invigorated and expansionist German policy in the 'Baltikum.'² That policy was reflected in the activities of General Count von der Golts, who took over the command of a reserve Korps in Libava on February 1, 1919. General von der Golts had far-reaching plans:

After securing a base in Latvia-Lithuania, to crush Bolshevism in Russia with a large army, to install a 'White' government and to acquire in it a sure friend for Germany....Together Russia and Germany ... should then throw down a challenger to the Western powers and free us from Versailles.³

¹Gunter Rosenfeld, Sovietsrussland und Deutschland 1917-1929, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1960, p. 206.

²To be sure British policy changed radically after six months.

³Lionel Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 15.

In March, 1919, the German army in the Baltic had started a wide offensive in Lithuania and Latvia.¹ The Soviet regimes in these regions were swept away with the active collaboration of an influential part of the native population. Von der Goltz and his officers did not regard themselves as Landsknecht. Their main aim was to crush Bolshevism in its cradle and then to establish a firm alliance with the new Russian regime. Besides, they were eager to destroy Red Russia as what they regarded as the basic source of the social turmoil and radical revolutionary activity in Germany itself. This factor could hardly be overlooked in the calculations of the German generals.

An additional aim of the Baltic operation was to strengthen the German position in that region which the Kaiser ^{had} regarded as an integral part of Imperial Germany.² The German policy in the Baltic region encountered stiff

¹Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. II, Moskva, 1958, pp. 97, 107, 133-137, and see: Fritz Klein, Die Diplomatischen Beziehungen Deutschland's Zur Sowjetunion, Berlin: Rutter and Loening, 1953, p. 69.

²Louis Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs, p. 134.

resistance from nationalistic Lithuanians and Latvians who were supported by the Entente. London and Paris resolved to establish independent Baltic states and they looked with growing suspicion on the German activities there. What vigilant France could hardly have missed was that German control over the Baltic, and especially over Lithuania, would have outflanked Poland and seriously weakened the strategic position of the new state to which was assigned such a pivotal role in checking both Russia and Germany.¹

The situation in the Baltic region in this period was complex and confused. Various hostile armies and military groups existed there.²

¹Gunter Rosenfeld, Sovjetrussland und Deutschland, p. 214.

²Lionel Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 14.

Estonia was the base of operation of General N. N. Yudenich,¹ who with strong British support led his army against Petrograd,² parallel to Denikin's offensive against Moscow from the south. Yudenich's army in Esthonia was also collaborating with von der Goltz's army in the Baltic,³ because the German general believed that the restoration of the Romanovs would greatly improve the chances of the Hohenzollerns. When Yudenich's offensive against Petrograd collapsed at the end of October and his army retreated,⁴ the fate of von der Goltz' Corps was also affected.⁵ Lloyd George became convinced that the Bolsheviks could not be conquered by arms alone,⁶ and as the independence of the new Baltic states and Poland was assured, London and

¹George Vernadsky, A History of Russia, p. 283.

²George Rach, A History of Soviet Russia, pp. 110-111.

³Wheeler-Bennet, The Nemesis of Power, p. 123.

⁴G. Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia, pp. 110-111.

⁵F. Klein points out that the fact that German troops left the Baltic in October-November, 1919, after Yudenich's army was defeated, was not a mere coincidence. See: F. Klein, Die Diplomatischen Beziehungen Deutschlands zur Sowjetunion 1917-1932, p. 69.

⁶G. Vernadsky, A History of Russia, p. 284.

Paris increased their pressure on Berlin to recall General von der Goltz.¹ The latter, although far from eager to leave the Baltikum, had to comply. With this, all the plans collapsed for building a bridge to Russia through the overthrow of the Bolshevik regime and ended the schemes of Ludendorff, Hoffmann, von der Goltz and their friends. In addition, the collapse of the Kapp revolt forced them to discard their policies for the time being.²

But the problem of building a Berlin-Moscow bridge remained. There was no doubt among the military men that it should be built. At the time when von der Goltz was active in the 'Baltikum', some German officers gave the problem some serious thought and came to a different conclusion. They believed that only a social transformation of Germany, even the nationalization of the means of production, would make Germany 'bundnisfähig' for an alliance with Soviet Russia. Baron Reignitz and, for a time, Colonel Bauer, both of whom served on the staff of General Ludendorff, represented such ideas.³ They visited Karl Radek in his

¹L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 16.

²J. W. Wheeler-Bennet, Nemesis of Power, p. 122.

³L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 18.

Moabit prison and in his 'political salon' to share their ideas with him. So did the two leaders of the radical workers in Hamburg, Lauffenberg and Wollheim, who advocated similar ideas for which the Marxist prisoner coined the term "National Bolshevism."¹ These ideas of Reibnitz and his friends could not gain any serious support either from German conservative nationalists or from wide left and radical circles and were allowed to die, in spite of the attempt by Radek to resurrect them in the period of the Ruhr crisis.²

A more permanent solution for cementing a German-Russo Alliance was provided by the German General Staff. Since Russia was not bound by the Treaty of Versailles, it would be relatively safe to circumvent the Treaty's military provisions by producing military equipment for the German army and training its officers in the use of forbidden arms in Russian territory. The possibility of rebuilding the Reichswehr in Russia was an important factor which influenced General Hans von Seeckt and his military group in their determined policy of an alliance with Soviet Russia.

The second factor of the post-Versailles reality which had a strong influence on the German officers was Poland.

¹G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 48.

²The notorious "Schlageter line"--see G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 158.

For them, Poland was a wedge between Germany and Russia built at the expense of German territory. The German generals resolved to partition Poland again. This aim could be achieved only by an alliance with Russia and von Seeckt and his group resolved to set out on this course.

The German General Staff established its own contacts with the Russians in the summer of 1919.¹ The German Ministry of War in Berlin took over the patronage of Radek.

The Turkish friends of General von Seeckt, Enver Pasha and Talaat Pasha, were among Radek's earliest visitors.² On Radek's advice, Enver Pasha left for Moscow in October, 1919, by aircraft,³ but was forced to land in Kovno and he was detained by the British military mission there for two months,⁴ and then told to return to Berlin. Enver ultimately reached Moscow in the summer of 1920 where he

¹Friedrich Rabenau, Seeckt-Aus Seinen Leben, 1918-1936, Vol. II Leipzig, 1940, p. 297; John W. Wheeler-Bennet, Mimesis of Power, p. 125; Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, p. 94.

²L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 17.

³Ibid., p. 20.

⁴Documents on British Foreign Policy, ed. E. L. Woodward and R. Butler, First Series, Vol. 2, London, 1948, pp. 334-345.

established a contact with the Bolshevik War Commissariat.¹ In the critical months of the Polish-Russian War, General von Seeckt clearly showed his partiality to Soviet Russia.² He subsequently created the "Udtergruppe R",³ a special section for Russian affairs, and it was a further important step in the direction of establishing firm contacts with the Red Army.

The Russian policy of General von Seeckt did not become decisively important in shaping German policy towards the Soviet state until after the collapse of the Kapp-Lutwitz revolt in March, 1920, when General von Seeckt became the most powerful man in Germany. Only then did he set out vigorously and in the greatest secrecy to carry out the policy of the Reichswehr towards Russia, and thus he paved the way to Rapallo and to the Rapallo Alliance.

¹ Friedrich von Rabenau, Seeckt-Aus seinen Leben, 1918-1936, Leipzig, 1940, p. 307.

² Ibid., p. 237. See also Lenin, O Vneshney Politike Sovetskoye Gosudarstva, p. 336 and J. W. Wheeler-Bennet, Nemesis of Power, p. 127. See also Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, p. 197.

³ Gustav Hilger, Alfred G. Meyer, The Incompatible Allies, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1953, pp. 193, 199.

D. Trade-Expectation and Reality

With the end of the war, economic reconstruction became a vital issue for Germany and Russia. The leaders of both countries were well aware that mutual economic cooperation would greatly accelerate their economic revival. Before the war, Germany was intimately connected with the Russian market. Russia imported industrial goods, machinery and pharmaceutical products from Germany, and exported grain, pulp and paper and raw materials. At the end of the first decade of the 20th Century, Germany took 23.3% of Russia's total exports. Russia was ^{bought} ~~buying~~ from Germany in a very considerable size amounting to 34% of her total import.¹ In 1913, 29.8% of Russia's export went to Germany. Nearly half of all foreign imports to Russia, 47.5% came from Germany.² As L. B. Krasin, the Russian commissar of foreign trade expressed it:

Hundreds of thousands of Germans used to live in Russia before the war; many of them are complete masters of the Russian language and have the most extensive personal connections throughout the length and breadth of Russia.³

¹The Encyclopedia Britannica, Eleventh Edition, Vol. XXIII, Cambridge, England, The University Press, 1911, p. 890

²Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, Chief Editor: O. U. Schmidt, Vol. XI, p. 728.

³E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, p. 366.

Yet, throughout 1919, there was not even a beginning of trade relations between Russia and Germany. Probably the very novelty of the Soviet Communist system, its unconventional violent practices, civil war and intervention, were responsible for the conviction of many Western leaders that the new regime was only a tragic aftermath of war and defeat which must shortly collapse. When the predicted downfall did not materialize, Germany was still reluctant to take the initiative, not only because of the deeply repugnant character of the new state, but by her desire not to antagonize neither France nor England and by her fear not to antagonize the future permanent rulers of Russia. In addition, Germany had valid doubts if Russia had the necessary funds to pay for imported goods. The problem of the Kremlin's recognition of Russia's pre-war debts, and finally an apprehension lest such trade negotiations might increase the influence of the German Communists at home, vastly complicated the problem. But very soon the conditions of the Versailles Treaty and especially Germany's eastern borders, as drawn by the Entente, changed Berlin's attitude. This was reflected in Germany's refusal to participate in the Allied blockade against Russia, October 29, 1919.¹

¹L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 24. For more details, see G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, London, 1957, pp. 50-51.

Besides, Russia's successful negotiations with the British in Copenhagen ¹ impressed the German industrialists as is evident from the Rathenau-Deutsch memorandum to the German government. This memorandum stressed a novel aspect in the trade relations of the two countries--Russia's importance as a land bridge for German trade with the Orient as the German fleet was destroyed by the Allies.² In their efforts, the German industrialists were assisted by the German military. On January 20, 1920, General von Seeckt delivered to the German government a memorandum in which he demanded a friendly policy towards the Soviet government.³ This memorandum assumed special importance when its author, General Hans von Seeckt, became head of the Reichswehr. Soon, on April 19, 1920, the first diplomatic agreement between the Weimar Republic and Soviet Russia was signed.⁴ Ostensibly, it was

¹Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. II pp. 364-367.

²Gunter Rosenfeld, Sowietrussland und Deutschland 1917-1922, pp. 260-262.

³F. von Rabenau, Seeckt--Aus Seinem Leben, 1918-1936, Vol. II, Leipzig, 1940, p. 252.

⁴Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. III, pp. 459-462.

concerned only with the repatriation of ex-soldiers and civilians. Victor Kopp became the first Soviet envoy to Weimar Germany, February, 1920. On July 7, 1920, he was granted diplomatic immunity.¹ In June, 1920, Gustav Hilger, the German trade specialist for Russia, arrived in Moscow. Hilger was recognized in a similar capacity as Kopp in Berlin. This opened up a new phase in the relations of these two countries. In October, 1920, Russia successfully finished off negotiations with Krupp and Henschel about the delivery of 800 locomotives to Russia.² This was a considerable order. Some German industrialists expected Russia to become for the next ten years the main market for German industry and her chief provider of raw materials and agricultural products. These hopes engendered pressures which resulted in a mutual decision reached on the 19th of April, 1920³ giving permission to the Soviet Mission in Berlin

16. ¹Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. III, pp. 14-

²G. Rosenfeld, Sowjetrussland und Deutschland, p. 325.

³Gustav Hilger, Wir und der Kreml, Alfred Metzner, Verlag, Frankfurt/Main. 1955, p. 33.

to open a trade department as was also done by the German Missions in Moscow in June, 1920.¹

The introduction of the New Economic Policy, NEP, on March 8, 1921, the signing of the Anglo-Russian trade treaty on March 16, 1921, coincided in time with the rising tension between Germany and the Entente, and it had a swift impact on the Russo-German trade relations. On May 6, 1921, the Russo-German agreement about the return of war prisoners signed on April 19, 1920, had been extended into a formal trade agreement.² In order to encourage German participation in the recovery of the Soviet economy, Russia was ready to extend to Berlin especially favourable trade conditions which raised the hopes of the German industrialists.³ As 1922 set in, promises and hopes for extensive trade between Berlin and Moscow had become a factor leading to Rapallo. The Russians did their utmost to foster great German expectations.⁴ To be sure, the role of this factor

¹Ibid., p. 327, and see Gustav Hilger, Wir und der Kreml, p. 33.

²Dokumenty Vneshney Politiki SSSR, Vol. IV, pp. 98-104.

³Allgemeine Elektrizitätsgesellschaft, Friedrich Krupp, Thyssen, "Siemens und Schuckert", etc. *Wann?*

⁴On May 13, 1921, there was established the German-Russo transport company "Derutva". It was rapidly followed by "Deru-Metall" and "Deru-Luft"--for air transportation. See G. Rosenfeld, Sowjetrussland und Deutschland, pp. 350-351.

should not be exaggerated-- they were still just hopes--but
sometimes hopes lead to great things.

CHAPTER III

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RAPALLO

The text of the Rapallo Treaty¹ gives the impression of an innocuous document dealing with economic matters. This outward innocence was a facade which hid behind it the reality of a close military and political collaboration of Germany and Soviet Russia.

To Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, who served as Germany's Ambassador in Moscow from 1921 to 1926, the Alliance was born out of the "Schicksalsgemeinschaft,"² a community of fate, of the two states. According to Hilger, Count Rantzau had his Russian counterpart in the person of Karl Radek as he writes:

I finally decided, therefore, to resort to means I had already used with success on similar occasions: an appeal to Radek, for whom the maintenance of German-Russian relations meant more than a useful means to an end; and who always reacted positively when these relations were in danger.³

Hilger does not clarify Radek's view on the Alliance. According to Hilger, for Radek it was not a useful means to an

¹See Appendix A.

²O. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 95

³Ibid., p. 181.

and, but then he does not say what it was to him, he leaves it obacure.¹

To say that the Rapalle Alliance was chiefly motivated by economic considerations is to accept the apparent for the real. True, such a position is quite tempting since

The widely advertised decision of the victorious Allies to exclude German exports from Western markets impelled the whole of German industry to face East.²

But, as E. H. Carr remarked in a different place:

After 1918--the one possibility of restoring the German economy on its old basis was the inflow of foreign subsidies and foreign investment on a large scale.³

Yet, Germany could get foreign subsidies and foreign investments on a large scale only in the West. Consequently, German economy was bound to be more dependent on the West than on the East. Besides, the trade turnover between Russia and Germany did not play any substantial role in their respect-

¹Although, in another place, in the German original Wir und der Kreml, translated in English as The Incompatible Allies, Hilger gives us to understand implicitly on Radek's attitude to Germany. Hilger writes:

"Für uns war jedoch die wichtigste Entdeckung, dass dieser professionelle Revolutionar, dieser überzeugte Internationalist eine grosse Schwache hatte: Deutschland. Der polnische Jude aus dem österreichischen Galizien fühlte sich durch engste kulturelle Bande an Deutschland gefesselt."

Gustav Hilger, Wir und der Kreml, Frankfurt/Main, 1955, p. 79.

²E. H. Carr, German Soviet Relations Between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939, Baltimore, 1957, p. 20.

³Ibid., p. 78 and see G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, London, 1957, p. 112.

ive economies, as it will be indicated further on.

One hypothesis about the nature of the Rapallo Treaty assumes that it aimed to destroy Poland and, consequently, the whole Versailles system. The proponents of this view base their theory on General Hasse's diary¹ and on a conversation held on February 10, 1922, between Radek and Seeckt as quoted by Rabenau in his book, 'Seeckt--Aus Seinem Leben, 1918-1936':

In einer persönlichen Unterredung/Seeckte mit Radek ist es zu einer bemerkenswerten Aussprache gekommen. Radek trachtet wohl Auftragsgemäss danach, mit Seeckt über einen Mitwirkung Deutschlands bei einem Angriff gegen Polen zu verhandeln. Seeckt hat das unbedingt abgelehnt, weil solchen Zusammengehen deAsofortigen Krieg mit Frankreich und der Tschechei zur Folge haben musste. Er empfahl dem Reichskanzler jedoch, wie bereits im russisch-polnischen Kriege, eine für Russland wohlwollende Neutralität. Radek dagegen strebte offensichtlich verhältnismässig engeren militärischen Vereinbarungen zu.²

Still, one should take into account the period in the Soviet-German relations when the Rabenau book was published, 1940, then, the time when Radek's suggestions were made, 1922, if they were really made. Moreover, Radek's views could be his own and not the opinion of the Politbureau to which Radek

¹G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, London, 1957, p. 112.

²F. von Rabenau, Seeckt-Aus Seinem Leben 1918-1936, Leipzig, 1940, p. 309.

did not belong.¹

It seems that the real meaning of the Treaty of Rapalle and the subsequent period of collaboration could be found in a combination of military, political and economic factors. The military factor played a significant role and had two distinctive aspects and aims. On one hand, to break the strategic isolation of Germany and Russia as it was organized and carried out by France and Great Britain, and on the other, to strengthen the military potential and war-preparedness of the two countries in case of any war exigency.

The mutual interests resulted from temporary exigencies, as the two warring crews of battered ships combined forces only while in danger at sea, until they reached a port.² Thus, as long as these military and political factors existed, the leaders of the two states deemed it necessary to keep their friendly relations. As soon as the critical period of political isolation faded, at least from Germany's point of view, their collaboration weakened until

¹E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, pp. 370-371, and see G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, pp. 112-113.

²See for Stresemann's opinion of the Treaty, G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, London, 1957, p. 121 and see G. Hilger and A. G. Meyer, The Incompatible Allies, New York, 1953, p. 198.

it received its final blow with the coming of Hitler to power. A closer analysis of the different aspects of the Alliance will assist in clarifying the problems.

The Economic Aspect of Rapallo

In the first years after November 1917, Russia was engulfed by economic chaos. Foreign trade was paralyzed. The discontent became formidable. This situation led to the Kronstadt mutiny and to the historic decisions taken by the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party to introduce the New Economic Policy.

The New Economic Policy was considered in the West as the final collapse of the economic principles of Communism. The New Economic Policy was hailed in the Western World as the triumph of capitalism in Russia and was considered to be a reconciliation not only with internal capitalism but with the foreign one as well. The first Soviet foreign trade agreement signed with Great Britain on March 16, 1921, was more than an ordinary trade agreement. It was a de facto recognition of the new Soviet State. Similar trade agreements followed soon -- September 2, 1921, with Norway; December 7, 1921, with Austria; and December 26, 1921, with Italy. A Russo-German trade agreement had been signed on May 6, 1921.¹

The introduction of the New Economic Policy raised the hopes in the West for the acquisition of a profitable

¹For details, see G. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 67.

Russia market. Consequently, it was not a mere coincidence that the first international conference ^{to} on which Soviet representatives were invited was the economic gathering in Genoa on April 10, 1922. Six days later, the Rapalle Treaty was signed;¹ Article 4 of the treaty granted the signatories the status of the most favoured nation which, in the context of that time, was very advantageous to Germany.

But the Russian market in the early Twenties was greatly curtailed as a result of the revolution, war and economic ruin. Statistical data can give us a partial picture of the economic ruin in Soviet Russia at the end of the civil war. It is reflected in the statistics of Russia export and import over its European borders.² The economic recovery, as far as the foreign trade is concerned, was slow, amounting in 1926-1927 in its total turnover to only 36.4[%] in relation to 1913.³

¹See Appendix A.

²THE FOREIGN TRADE OF RUSSIA IN MILLION RUBLES IN PRE-WAR (1913) CURRENCY

Years	Export	Import	Turnover
1913	1420.8	1202.3	2623.1
1920-21	10.0	179.0	189.0
1921-22	63.9	270.9	334.8
1922-23	133.2	147.9	281.1

and see: *Belshaya Sovyetskaya Entsiklopedya*, Moscow, 1930, Vol. II, p. 723.

³~~See: *Belshaya Sovyetskaya Entsiklopedya*, Moscow, 1930, Vol. II, p. 723.~~

From this statistical data, one can get a better idea of the importance of German-Russia trade relations. After the signing of the Rapallo Treaty, a marked increase in Germany's share in Soviet Russia's import could be seen. Russia exported raw materials and imported machinery and medical equipment. Russian imports from Germany rose from 25% in 1921 to 32.7% in 1922. Great Britain's dropped from 29 per cent in 1921 to 18.8 per cent in 1922.¹ But in order to grasp realistically the true value of this data we should keep in mind the fact that Russia's foreign trade, in its totality, in 1922 amounted to only 14 per cent of its pre-war level.² It is interesting to note that Germany's export to Russia for 1922 was four times higher than Russia's export to Germany.³ The meaning of all these data is that at this period, until 1925, Russo-German trade turnover was actually not of vital importance to either of them, particularly to Germany. Germany's trade turnover in 1925 nearly recovered its pre-war level when it reached in 1925

¹ E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, p. 435.

² See: Bolshaya Sovetskaya Encyclopedya, Moscow, 1930, Vol. II, p. 725.

³ J. A. Rosenko, The Rapallo Treaty--An Important Victory of Lenin's Policy of Peace, Vestnik Leningradskogo Universiteta, Vypusk 2, 1960, No. 8, p. 74.

the sum, in million RM, of 9472 as compared with 10892 in 1913 for export, and 13652 in 1925 in relation to 11655 in 1913 for import,¹ all in pre-war currency. The Russian turnover in the same year was less than a third in relations to 1913.²

The Russo-German trade agreement of May 6, 1921, opened widely the doors for a German trade penetration into Russia, but the Germans did not use it. According to Hilger, the German industrialists and financiers had no faith in the stability of the Soviet government.³ This seems to him to be one of the most vital reasons why Germany displayed such a passive attitude to trade relations with the Soviet Union. In 1921-22, the Soviets were ready to give wide concessions to Foreign capital, but the foreign capital failed to arrive. This failure of the West had significant importance as

this forced the Russians to learn to stand on their own feet and after they had tried

¹For more about the nature of that trade, see Der Grosse Brockhaus... Vol. 4, p. 632.

²Belshaya Sovetskaya Encyclopedia, Vol. II, Moscow 1930, p. 723.

³G. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 166.

As their own strength, they began to think that they could afford to give up the old plan of large-scale collaboration with the capitalist West.¹

This new development explained, at least partially, why the Soviet foreign trade in the middle and late twenties did not rise correspondingly to the needs and possibilities of the Russian market.²

An additional aspect of Russo-German trade relations was concessions. The Germans obtained concessions on Russian territory. Most of them failed financially in a short time and had to close down. The German industrialists were eager to get large profits in the shortest period of time as they were confident that the Soviet system would collapse. It is obvious that such a policy had to have a very evil influence on German-Russian trade. The rush for large and fast profits had to be checked by a German government agency, but this did not exist and German private entrepreneurs could not be restricted lest the principle of free enterprise would be hurt.³

In the autumn of 1922, the Krupp Corporation of Essen obtained a concession and established itself on the

¹Ibid., p. 171.

²Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopedia, Vol. II, Moscow, 1930, p. 725.

³G. Hilger makes a very interesting comment about it in his Incompatible Allies, pp. 166-167.

Manych River in the North Caucasus which, according to Hilger, had an agricultural character. It failed and its contract was terminated.¹

The 'Rusgertorg', a corporation owned equally by the Soviet government and a group of German big businessmen, led by the steel magnate Otto Wolfe, was organized at the end of 1922. It failed to produce any marked results, and it was dissolved in January, 1924.²

In October, 1923, there came into being the 'Mologales'. This was a timber concession given to a German corporation whose chairman became Dr. Joseph Wirth, the former German Chancellor and one of the fathers of the Rapallo Treaty. This company was unsuccessful and, in spite of several financial transfusions, it ultimately closed up business in Spring, 1927.³

Gustav Hilger, the scholarly German trade specialist in Moscow with long years of experience in this field, relates that all the German concessions in Russia had to close down except one, 'Deruluft'. 'Deruluft' was a Russo-German air transport company which survived because "its existence

¹Ibid., pp. 171-172.

²Ibid., p. 173.

³Ibid., p. 173.

corresponded to a mutual necessity."¹ This explanation given by Hilger of the reasons for the success of 'Deruluft' is very unsatisfactory. Maybe, Mr. Hilger knows much more than he permits himself to reveal. What can be easily understood is that the 'mutual necessity' was the need for air transportation of the German military personnel for training in Russia and this seems to be the secret of its success. But, this concession can hardly be regarded as a business enterprise. Rather, it was a military establishment under a commercial cover.

All in all, German business concessions in Russia proved to be a failure. An essential prerequisite for the program of Russo-German trade was the granting of vast long term credits and loans by Germany. This had not been provided. The first German credits were given only in 1923, the so-called "grain agreement."² There was a conspicuous interval of two full years between the first credit and the second credit was given in October, 1925. It was a very short term credit and of a relatively small amount, 100 million RM.³ Only in February, 1926, was a credit of 300

¹ Ibid., p. 175.

² Ibid., p. 184.

³ Ibid.

million RM given to the Soviet government, but again only for the short term of two years.¹

The Rapallo Treaty gives the impression of an economic treaty as nearly all of its articles deal with economic problems. It was emphatically not so. The most important economic clause of the Rapallo Treaty was Article 4 which in practical terms guarantees the most favourable treatment to Germany in Russian trade. Moreover, Russia was ready to give Germany excellent conditions for trade concessions but they were not utilized by the Germans. As Mr. Hilger, the best authority on Russo-German trade, writes, seven months after Rapallo, German capitalists did not do anything to advance German-Russian trade.²

The Germans demanded the abolition of the Soviet foreign trade monopoly³ and, when this did not materialize, they tried to circumvent it but failed. The Germans had to deal with the Russian trade monopoly as is reflected in the Soviet-German economic treaty of October, 1925, became a failure also, as Hilger writes:

The great expectations which German business circles had in the Treaty at the time of its conclusion were hardly realized.⁴

¹Ibid., p. 186.

²Ibid., p. 174.

³Ibid., pp. 182-183.

⁴Ibid., p. 184.

Further:

The proportion of exports into Soviet-Russia to the total German exports did not rise appreciably. From 1925 to 1928 the proportion rose only from 2.9 per cent to 3.3 per cent, and in 1928 the Soviet Union ranked twelfth as a customer for German goods.¹

Mr. Hilger concludes with this highly important remark:

Trade relations with the Soviet Union did not become vitally important to the German economy until after the world economic crisis had set in.²

This does not imply that one should tend to minimize completely the economic importance of the treaty. It should rather be kept in more realistic proportions.

The Diplomatic and Political Aspect.

The rulers of the Soviet Union were constantly haunted by the danger of a combined military intervention of Great Britain, France, United States and Japan against their country. This Soviet attitude could partly be explained by the policies of these countries towards Soviet Russia, as they expressed themselves by the allied intervention and blockade. Consequently, one of the main aims of Soviet foreign policy was to prevent a military inter-

¹Ibid., p. 187.

²Ibid., p. 186.

vention against Soviet Russia. Moscow's chief weapon against such a potential coalition was to exploit the rivalry, 'contradiction,' in the Soviet terminology, among the Western states to widen and deepen the gulf among them. About Soviet foreign policy to the West, Trotsky said in an interview, published in the 'Observer,' November 5, 1922:

Our relations to capitalist countries are based only on expediency [underlined by myself]; our only aim is to secure peace and normal economic relations.¹

Rapallo secured for Russia the de jure recognition by Germany. But the greatest political gain for Moscow was considered to be the friendly neutralization of Germany. The chain of isolation and encirclement of Russia had been torn at an important and sensitive link. The anti-Soviet front was automatically weakened. Chicherin gained what he called 'a political point d'appui' of first-rate importance.² Rapallo widened the breach between Germany and France, one of the principal foes of the Soviet Union, and Moscow did its best to fan the flames of hostility between them. The Soviet active diplomacy and propaganda for the defense of Germany at the time of the Ruhr crisis marked a

¹ J. Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. I, Oxford University Press, London, 1951, p. 345.

² Ibid., p. 448.

high point of opportunism and cynicism in the history of diplomacy¹, of collaborating and fostering ultra German nationalism known as the "Schlageter-Line".² No doubt the Ruhr crisis gave Moscow a wonderful opportunity to throw the apple of discord into the Western camp. Yet Moscow overplayed its hands in the time of the Ruhr crisis. The Ruhr affair became an important catalyst in clearing the political air of Europe. It accelerated the active policy of rapprochement of the United States of America and Britain towards Germany. When the Dawes Committee made its historic report on April 9, 1924, Chicherin was alarmed. The Narkomindel chief used the occasion of the second anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rapall, to give an interview, on April 16, 1924, which was clearly intended for Berlin. He warned Berlin that close relations with the West were dangerous for Germany:

If the international position of Germany had not been placed on a broader basis, the alleged improvement in relation with the Allies would have changed in reality into a loss of Germany's independence in regard to the Allies, for in international relations only realities count, only forces that are really in existence.³

¹Ibid., pp. 385-392; 396-398; 399-403; 405.

²See Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, pp. 282-283 and p. 286.

³Jane Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, p. 448.

These warnings could hardly impress Stresemann. Chicherin's political arguments were quite feeble. But what could not fail to make the necessary impression on Berlin were the 'innocent' words of outwardly appearing propaganda phrases, that:

The broad masses in Germany and in the Soviet Republic at once felt that the Rapallo Treaty meant something bigger and that its real importance went far deeper.¹

True, there were very few people in Berlin who knew how far the Alliance went, but (even in a democracy only very few people shape basic policy and they surely were well aware of the real 'depth' of the Russo-German relationship. General Seeckt knew best, as Chicherin said, that 'only realities count,' and surely the realities of the Rapallo Treaty went far deeper than the outward appearances might have suggested. These realities were strong enough to reinsure German neutralization towards the Soviet Union even four days before the signing of the Locarno Pact. On October 16, 1925, a commercial-treaty between Germany and Russia was signed in Moscow. This treaty was as much motivated by 'commercial' consideration as Rapallo by economics. It was a treaty of an explicitly political nature. Stresemann, who held as one of his goals to create a new turn in Germany's relations

¹Ibid.

with the West, did find it necessary publicly to commit Germany to a new treaty with Soviet Russia when from the point of view of German relations to Great Britain, France and the United States it was the least opportune time for doing so. Berlin actually gained a declaration from the Western powers that Germany would be relieved from becoming a partner in any possible sanctions against the Soviet Union.¹ This was a political gain for the Soviet Union, especially when at that period a planned anti-Soviet war was regarded by Moscow as something more than a probability.² At that juncture of time, Britain was regarded by the Kremlin as its worst foe. A fortnight before the signing of the Locarno Pact, Chicherin said at a press conference in Berlin, published by Izvestya:

There were innumerable proofs that the English government ~~was~~ pursuing a policy of encirclement in regard to the U.S.S.R. English policy in regard to the pact of guarantee the Locarno Pact was an integral part of the basic anti-Soviet activity...in regard to Articles 16 and 17 of the League of Nations Covenant Comrade Chicherin said: England will not let a single chance go by without exploiting it to the maximum for its anti-Soviet purposes.....

¹Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 133.

²See L. Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, Pioneer Publishers, New York, 1937. p. 190.

...Under this Article (16) Germany will fall into a position in which with France's help England will be able to exercise the strongest pressure on Germany, while in regard to France England will be able to appear as assisting Germany. If you add to this that England can promise Germany great benefits at Poland's expense, you have the policy of the carrot and the whip.¹

Chicherin openly and sharply attacked England, but by implication it actually amounted to an attack on Stresemann's policy. The Dawes plan, Locarno and Germany's entry into the League of Nations, dealt the political alliance of the two countries a severe blow, in spite of the fact that Germany was relieved, more implicitly than explicitly, of the provisions of Articles XVI and XVII.² Another contributing factor in the weakening of the Alliance was the fact that Russia and Germany went slowly out of their political isolation and became more accepted in the society of nations. But still the Alliance stood firm in spite of the political and economic set-backs. This was a result of another aspect of the Alliance--the military one.

Examining Germany's political gains from the Rapallo Alliance, one concludes that the encirclement of Germany and

¹ Jane Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. II, London, 1959, pp. 57-58.

² S. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 133.

her political isolation had been ended at Rapallo. Germany acted again, for the first time after her defeat, independently. Germany made the first bold step of coming back to the center of the stage. Germany secured an alliance against the Versailles Treaty and this galvanized her hopes for a modification of her eastern borders.

When Marshall Foch visited Warsaw and a Polish intervention on the eastern borders of Germany became a possibility during the Ruhr crisis, Russia intervened without delay.¹ The Rapallo Alliance became a factor in the increasingly warm attitude of England and the United States towards Germany.² The fear of the alliance of two such explosive powers as Russian communism and German nationalism, accelerated the developments and events which led to the Dawes plan and the Locarno Treaty. Surely Stresemann was an accomplished master in the delicate game of cleverly playing off the West against the East and vice versa, but this was made possible by the Rapallo Treaty. With the help of the Communist bogey Germany was able to achieve many of its important political goals. In the new political context of the post-Locarno

¹ See J. Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. I, p. 376 and G. Milner, Incompatible Allies, pp. 120-121.

² See E. H. Carr, German-Soviet Relations Between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939, Baltimore, 1951, p. 81.

period, when Germany's political stability depended on American investments, Berlin's alliance with Moscow seemed to be of questionable advantage to the former. London, Washington and Paris looked unfavourably on it. But Stresemann did not think to jettison it. Now we are much better equipped to understand his actions and why Rapallo was reaffirmed as late as April, 1926, in the Treaty of Berlin.

The whole period between Rapallo and the Treaty of Berlin saw many incidents in the Russo-German relations. These strains became more serious and frequent at the time of the improved German-Western relations. Among the most serious incidents should be mentioned the police raid on the premises of the Soviet trade Delegation in Berlin on May 3, 1924. German police agents were searching for the fugitive communist Bozenhardt among the papers, desks and files of the Soviet trade mission. Moscow regarded this incident very seriously. The Soviet Ambassador in Berlin left Germany for Moscow. Russian orders to German firms were suspended. It took ten weeks until the dispute was settled. A protocol to this effect was signed, after great difficulties, only on July 29, 1924. All was quiet for a while in the Western front of the two friendly states. It did not take very long and the Eastern front became explosive. On October 27, 1924 agents of the Soviet Secret Police arrested two German students

on the charge that they wanted to poison Stalin and Trotsky. Gustav Hilger, the economic counsellor of the German legation in Moscow had been officially implicated, as the Soviet embassy in Berlin was implicated in the Okoblevsky trial in Germany.¹

These incidents, charges and counter-charges went on while Germany under Stresemann negotiated over the Dawes plan which was signed by him in London, on August 24, 1924. From the Dawes plan the road led to Locarno and the entry of Germany into the League of Nations. Germany's rapprochement with the West came about regardless of all Soviet warnings and attacks. The deep mutual political distrust between the friends became too obvious to be concealed. The new political climate engendered by the 'spirit of Rapallo,' and the sentimental approach to it as to a 'Schicksalsgemeinschaft' (community of fate) started slowly but surely to cool off and fade away.

Chicherin decided to make a diplomatic tour of Western Europe. His first stop was the Polish capital. On September 27, 1925, Chicherin visited Warsaw and saw the Polish foreign minister Count Skrzynski. At a press conference, Chicherin spoke about the need for a development of friendly Russo-Polish relations. He was

¹G. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 140.

extremely glad to be able to stay here in Warsaw a few days...and established some firm points of agreement on which to base further diplomatic conversations, directed towards an enduring rapprochement between our two countries.¹

is interview, Chicherin used the phrase 'rapprochement' nine times and synonymous words, according to the Investia dispatches of October 4, 1925.² This seems to be no accident, especially when his next step was Berlin. When he reached Berlin, Chicherin voiced a thundering attack against the Locarno Pact and the League of Nations:³ "It is a fact that any nation that enters the League of Nations loses its independence, unless, of course, it is one of the victor states."⁴ In an interview on October 15, Chicherin said:

We have again been hearing frequently of statements by responsible members of the English government according to which England is preparing an international campaign for the creation of a bloc directed against our state. Moreover, certain press representatives, undoubtedly reflecting the opinion of the English government, have frequently expressed the idea that the conclusion of the guarantee pact was desirable from the point of view of uniting with Germany for the fight against our own state.⁵

¹Jane Degras, Documents on Soviet Foreign Policy, Vol. II pp. 55-56.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., pp. 57-58.

⁴Ibid., p. 58.

⁵Ibid., p. 61.

Chicherin's visit to Western Europe reached a new climax when he visited Paris December, 1925. He spoke warmly about the need of a mutual agreement:

The absence of any conflict between the natural and vital interests of our countries on the one hand, and on the other, the part which can be played by any decision upheld by our governments, (emphasized by myself), that is what should impel the Soviet Union and France towards agreement.¹

The Soviet Foreign Secretary emphasized the need to "form the foundation for stable relations uniting our countries."²

Chicherin was careful in his criticism of the foreign policy of the German government. After all, he was interested just in assuring German neutrality.

Investia stated on December, 1925:

Comrade Chicherin said that the Soviet Government's fears of the consequence of Locarno do not in the least extend to the intentions of the German government, whose goodwill was not in doubt. These fears extend to the objective circumstances which will be created for Germany by the Locarno treaty. This treaty gives the English government the opportunity of exerting strong pressure on Germany, as a result of which Germany might be compelled even against its own wish to change its attitude to the Soviet government. "We shall," said Comrade Chicherin, "follow with friendly attention, the policy which the German government will pursue."³

¹Ibid., pp. 67-68, quoted from an interview to "Le Temps", Dec. 18, 1925.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 78.

Chicherin's diplomatic activity was helped by Brockdorff-Rantzau and influenced by Germany's failure to enter the League as scheduled for March. The signature of the Berlin Treaty with Russia on April 24, 1926 by Stresemann seems to prove it.

The Berlin Treaty balanced Locarno, by assuring Soviet Russia that Germany would not join forces with the West against it. The treaty assured Germany's neutral position towards the Soviet Union. The first article of the Treaty stated that the Treaty of Rapallo would remain the basis of Russo-German relations. The second Article called for neutrality if either country were attacked 'despite its peaceful attitude.' Article III obliged the two parties not to take part in any economic boycott of the other. The last article, IV, stated that the Treaty was to remain in force for five years. The appended protocol stated that (1) the Treaty was an essential contribution to world peace, and (2) the membership of Germany in the League of Nations would not oblige her in any conceivable way to take any unfriendly action against the Soviet Union. Germany would observe the strictest neutrality.¹

¹G. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, pp. 146-147 and L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, pp. 116-117.

The Treaty was a Soviet diplomatic victory¹, as it confirmed Germany's continued neutrality towards Russia; simultaneously it put German policy on an even keel and made her international position stronger. It was unanimously approved by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Reichstag.² On the other side, Litvinov reported with the "deepest satisfaction"³ to the Central Executive Committee about the Berlin Treaty which was, of course, unanimously approved. Both Russia and Germany were content with their achievement. It stopped only for a while the worsening trend in their mutual relations.

The Diplomatic relations between Moscow and Berlin were greatly affected by the activity of the Comintern. On June 11, 1925, Stresemann wrote in his diary:

In the address delivered yesterday by Herr V. Kanderff...he mentioned the fact that Schulze, when Russian ambassador, was instructed to "conclude a reinsurance treaty with Germany, but only with Bismarck and with no other." We stand today before much the same decisions, and if the Russia of today were the Russia of the past, the decision would be a very easy one. In the long run the fiction cannot be maintained that there is a Russian government prepared to pursue a policy friendly to Germany, and a Third International busily engaged in undermining Germany.⁴

¹G. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 147.

²L. Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, p. 118.

³Jane Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, Vol. II, p. 106.

⁴Eric Sutton, Editor and translator, Guustave Stresemann, His Diaries, Letters, and Papers, London, 1937, p. 472.

If the basic difference in the system of property of the two allies could scarcely evoke any mutual sincere sympathy between them, the activities of the Comintern strained them, from time to time, to the breaking point. The Comintern's activity in Germany and Germany's responsive contra-action punctuated the serious political difficulties of the Alliance. The Soviet rulers did not even attempt to hide their intervention in German internal affairs. This communist intervention in the affairs of a friendly state reflected the dual nature of Russia's political relations to any non-communist state in general and towards Germany in particular. The British historian E. H. Carr, speaks of the

rivalry between Zinoviev and Chicherin which was complicated and intensified by dissention between Zinoviev and Radek--a dissention which turned specifically on the relation of the Rapallo policy to the cause of the international revolution.¹

It seems doubtful if there really was a problem of rivalry between the Markovindol, Soviet Foreign Ministry, and the Comintern, but rather a matter of conflicting evaluation of a concrete political situation. The events in Germany during July and August, 1923, seemed to prove at that time there

¹ E. H. Carr, Germany and the World Between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939, Baltimore, 1951, p. 69.

existed a so-called revolutionary situation there. But this opportunity, if it really existed, slipped away with the coming of the Fall of 1923. Only when Cuno, General Seeckt's friend, was forced to resign and the 'outspoken Westerner,' Stresemann came to power, was the Comintern allowed to make and shape Moscow's policy towards Germany. Stresemann's coming to power in Germany aroused Moscow's fear and anger especially after the failure of the 'Schlageter Line.' The fact that leaders of a 'friendly government' had decided in Moscow to stage an armed revolution in Germany against a friendly government underlined the dual way of Soviet diplomacy. As a matter of fact, the abortive revolution and Stalin's policy of 'Socialism-- in one Country' dealt a deadly blow to the Comintern's independent actions. The Communist Party of Germany became a blind tool and agent of Stalin. Still, one thing did the Comintern achieve -- for a while it poisoned the relations between the two countries.

The Military Aspect

The civil war and the intervention provided Russia's Red Army with its first battle experiences. In a short time, the Red Army became an efficient fighting force. It was strong enough to defeat the 'Whites,' to repulse the Poles in 1920 and to save the revolution. Obviously, Russia's armed forces were far inferior in comparison to the estab-

lished armies of the great Western European states, as mentioned before. There was a lot of improvisation in Soviet military theory and practice. Besides, the military training of any army is largely geared to the war equipment available and the latter was poor in quantity and quality as Russia's industry was still half ruined.¹

The Soviet leaders were aware of the fact that the Red Army was the mainstay of the regime. They were ready to make a supreme effort to increase its power and efficiency. They knew quite well, that in case of war, the army would decide if the Soviet regime was going to survive or not. Naturally, everything which could improve the efficiency of their army was gladly accepted.

The Soviet leaders, regarded by some as revolutionary dreamers, had a superb sense of reality. Moreover, they could be completely ruthless in the methods of carrying out their plans. The aim justified the means. They eagerly grasped the outstretched hand of the German Reichswehr. Introducing his drafted programme for the Communist International on the Fourth Comintern Congress, Bukharin said:

¹ Leo G. Hilger, The Inevitable Allies, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1953, p. 166 and especially pp. 195-196.

Should proletarian states, proceeding from considerations of the strategic aims of the entire proletariat, form military blocks with bourgeois states? There is no difference of principle between a loan and a military alliance. And I maintain that we have now grown so strong that we can conclude a military alliance with the bourgeoisie of another country in order to use it to smash another bourgeoisie. This is nothing but a question of pure strategic and tactical expediency.¹

Six months after Rapallo, in December, 1922, Bukharin gave the above-quoted theoretical clearance for a military collaboration with a bourgeois country. Surely, this was not only Bukharin's view, but rather the opinion of many Soviet leaders. Lenin's important principle was to exploit the 'contradictions' and antagonisms between the 'imperialists,' inciting them one against the other by giving them concessions. As E. H. Carr writes, Lenin observed that the "idea of combining military and economic negotiations is correct."² In order to understand the meaning of these words, one should remember that the establishment of German arms factories in Russia was to be camouflaged under the heading of concessions.³ Germany expected to benefit greatly from such a collaboration.

¹J. Degras, The Communist International, London, 1956, Vol. I, p. 445.

²E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. 3, p. 364.

³E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. 3, p. 364.

Germany, or her military leaders, wanted to rearm, maintain cadres from its technical arms well in training, and develop up-to-date methods of warfare. This could be accomplished only in violation of Versailles, and Soviet Russia was the logical place to hide such activities.¹

Let us turn to the history of this military collaboration. The initiative for such a collaboration came from Germany.² Karl Radek, being imprisoned in Berlin since February 12, 1919, received rough treatment at the beginning, but due to the intervention of the German Ministry of War it suddenly changed to one of comfort.³ His quarters turned into a political salon.⁴ Among his distinguished visitors was the previously mentioned friend of General von Seeckt, the Turkish general and exile Enver Pasha. According to Hilger, von Seeckt made the first attempt to contact the Soviet leaders through Enver Pasha in April, 1919.⁵ General von Seeckt helped Enver Pasha to leave for Moscow on October 10, 1919.⁶ Enver's letter from Moscow to General von Seeckt on August 26, 1920, shows that

¹G. Hilger, The Inconceivable Allies, p. 193.

²See Hilger, The Inconceivable Allies, pp. 190, 191, 193.

³Ibid., p. 190.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., p. 192.

⁶Kochan, Russia and the Weimar Republic, Bowes and Bowes, Cambridge, 1924, p. 20.

he established contact with the Russian War Commissariat.¹ In winter 1920-21, the German Ministry of War established the highly secret Sondergruppe R, (Special group R,) the special section for Russian affairs, to deal with all aspects of military collaboration with Russia.² Russo-German military negotiations were going on in Berlin from December, 1920, through the Spring of 1921.³ In the early summer, 1921, a German military mission under Herr Neumann, Major Oscar Ritter von Niedermayer, visited Russia. ~~While in Moscow, Niedermayer, visited Russia.~~ While in Moscow, Niedermayer opened an office of the Special Group R. there. Secret military negotiations between Russia and Germany started anew in Berlin on Seeckt's initiative in September, 1921,⁴ and lasted until December.⁵ On December 8, 1921, Seeckt personally participated in the meetings.⁶ On February 10, 1922, an important meeting took place between Seecket and Radek.⁷ Radek suggested that:

¹P. von Rabenau, Seeckt - aus Seinem Leben, 1918-1936, Leipzig, 1940, p. 307.

²Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 193, 199.

³G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 92; E.H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, pp. 362-363.

⁴G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 95

⁵G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 99

⁶E.H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. III, p. 370

⁷Ibid.

The Germans should not only organize and run factories for the forbidden weapons in Soviet Russia, but should train Red Army officers in the use of these weapons and at the same time set up training schools there for future German officers.¹

This was suggested by Radek according to "Lenin's request in March, 1921."² The culminating point of all these negotiations, at this particular phase, was the secret military agreement between Soviet Russia and Germany signed July 29, 1922, in Berlin.³ Russo-German military cooperation became an accomplished fact. Soon followed the contract with Junkers aircraft industry for the production of aircraft at Fili near Moscow, of shells at Slatoust, Ural, Tula Fili, a tank factory in Kazan, a pilot school in Lipetsk and a poison gas factory near Savátov, Bersol.⁴ In September, 1922, German military pilots arrived in Russia for training.⁵ Thus at this time the collaboration was already in full swing.

¹Ibid., p. 371

²H. Rosinski, The German Army (London, 1939), p. 194 quoted by G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 124.

³Journal of Modern History (Chicago) XXI (1949), No. 1 pp. 31-32, quoted by E.H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. 3, p. 436.

⁴E. H. Carr, The Bolshevik Revolution, Vol. 3, pp. 436-437.

⁵Ibid., p. 436. and see: Hans W. Gatzke, "Russo-German Military Collaboration During the Weimar Republic," The American Historical Review, April 1958, Vol. LXIII, No. 3, p. 578.

The German military establishments in Russia consisted of two main branches--the military training schools and the arms factories. The main training schools were in Lipetsk for the Luftwaffe; Kazan for tank warfare,^f and Saratov for gas warfare. Best known are the facts regarding the military pilot school at Lipetsk. German military airmen got their basic training in Germany itself under the cover of institutions to train commercial or sport pilots. A selected group went for final training to Lipetsk, the little obscure town in the Tambov province where 'Narodnaya Volya' once held its historic congress, 1879. In Lipetsk the German pilots and air navigators got superb training while testing, developing and experimenting with new types of war planes. There was a steady flight personnel and technical experts, from 75 to 100 staff members. The military airfield was completely administered by the Germans through Sondergruppe R. At Lipetsk the core of Hitler's Luftwaffe was trained. There the Germans developed and perfected various types of military planes.¹ Freund writes in his "Unholy Alliance":

As a result of this work, Germany, which was prohibited from manufacturing any military aeroplanes under the Versailles Treaty, developed prototypes of efficient all-metal

¹Based on Speidel, Reichswehr und Rote Armee, pp. 30, 37 & 39, quoted by G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 209.

war planes ready for mass production ten years before the major powers had them on the drawing board.¹

The training base for tank warfare in Kazan and the gas warfare school in Saratov were probably run parallel to the Lipetsk pattern.² The information about them seems to be scant.

The German War Ministry set up a special organization to finance the production of war materials in Russia. This was done so as to cover up the whole enterprise. The name given to this 'corporation' was Gesellschaft zur Förderung gewerblicher Unternehmungen--Society for the Advancement of Industrial Enterprises. This organization financed the ammunition production Tula, Leningrad and in Schlüsselberg; poison gas production, Bersol, in Samara and aircraft production at Fili. The Sondergruppe R controlled the aviation and tank training bases. Both Gesellschaft zur Förderung gewerblicher Unternehmungen and Special Group R had offices in Berlin and Moscow. The Sondergruppe R was later replaced by the Wirtschaftskontor,

The German specialists stationed at Lipetsk trained Russian officers as well. All the results of experimentation

¹G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 209.

²G. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 196.

and testing were shared with the Russians.¹ Red Army officers and Russian General Staff members were participating in secret training programmes in Berlin.² The intimate co-operation, as evident from the memoirs of Speidel, Blomberg, et cetera, reveals how far and wide this collaboration went on. The Marshals Tuchaczewski and Zhukov participated in courses given in Berlin by the German General Staff in re-^{fixed this name} construction of the Soviet war industry.³ It is interesting that "personal relations between the two armies were excellent and rapidly developed into cordial friendship."⁴ The chief architect of this impressive military cooperation on the German side was General Hans von Seeckt. A Junker and leading officer of the military caste-- he had, naturally, a very high opinion of both-- von Seeckt saw the future and welfare of Germany in the limits of the success or failure of the Reichswehr. He identified the two. His military mind was limited and inflexible, as is reflected in his militant opposition to Locarno and to Germany's entry into the League of Nations.⁵ Von Seeckt could not grasp the benefits which

¹Speidel, Reichswehr und Rote Armee, p. 28, quoted by G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 210.

²Ibid.

³G. Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 198.

⁴Ibid., pp. 198-199.

⁵Hans W. Gatzke, Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany, Baltimore, 1954. pp. 37-38.

Germany would gain by such a move--as, for instance, the removal from Germany of the Allied military control. At the same time, he was for a military alliance with Russia. In a letter to Chancellor Wirth, Seeckt wrote on September 11, 1922:

What then is our aim? What do we want from, in and with Russia?...We want two things. Firstly, a strong Russia economically, politically and, therefore, militarily, and thus indirectly a stronger Germany, in as much as would be strengthening a possible ally. We also want...a direct increase of strength for ourselves by helping to build up in Russia an armaments industry which, in case of need, would be of use to us...Russian requests for further military assistance could...be met by supplying materials and personnel.

Seeckt shaped Germany's policy to Russia especially in the years 1921-1923. He hated the French and even more the Poles. He was convinced that Germany would get its strength only through the Reichswehr, and when she would be strong enough she would get back what she lost in November, 1918.² The Weimar Republic was for him a convenient facade to work for a great Germany. In one of the most difficult moments in the history of the young Weimar Republic, in the days of the Kapp putsch, he refused to obey the orders of the civilian

¹Reeresarchiv, Seeckt, Stuck 213, Karton 15, quoted by G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, London, 1957, p. 137.

²Hans W. Gatzke, Straschmann and the Rearmament of Germany, p. 12.

superior the Minister of Defense, Noske. He did not hesitate to violate orders when the fate of the Republic was in grave danger. At the meeting of the military group with Noske, he arrogantly told the latter:

Troops do not fire on troops. Do You, Herr Minister, perhaps intend to force a battle before the Brandenburger Tor between troops who a year and a half ago were fighting shoulder to shoulder against the enemy?¹

General von Seeckt's military honour did not, however, deter him from asking for leniency and mercy for rightist terrorists of the 'Femme' group.²

What part did the civilian authorities of Germany play in this conspiracy of Russo-German military cooperation? It is obvious that this impressive project would never be achieved without the cooperation of the civilian population. Chancellor Wirth, an ardent and enthusiastic supporter of the Ostpolitik, Chancellor Cuno, Herman Muller, Ebert, Stresemann, Maltzan, Count Brockdorf-Rantzau, not to speak about Hindenburg who replaced Ebert, all the civilian political leaders knew and gladly cooperated.³ "The contract

¹Friedrich von Rabenau, Seeckt--Aus seinem Leben, 1918-1936, Leipzig, 1940, p. 221. The text given according to the translation given by G. Freund, Unholy Alliance, p. 56

²F. von Rabenau, Seeckt--Aus seinem Leben, Leipzig, 1940, p. 426.

³Hilger, The Incompatible Allies, p. 205.

between Soviet Russia and the Junkers had been concluded with the cooperation of the Foreign Ministry."¹ This policy of overt fulfillment and covered collaboration with the Red Army was regarded as the sacred "national interest."² It was taken for granted that no loyal German would jeopardize the fragile fabric of foreign relations which the expert officials of the Foreign and War Ministries had so carefully spun for the nation's benefit.³ When Philip Scheidemann exposed in the Reichstag only a part, and not the most important one, of the Soviet-German military collaboration, the conservative deputies called him "traitor."⁴ The Communist part of Germany denied the charge as it was committed to assist Soviet interests. The Vorwarts, The Central Daily of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, gleefully speculated that the bullets with which Reichswehr troops had bloodily suppressed the 1923 Communist uprising in Central Germany had probably been manufactured in the "fatherland of

¹Ibid., p. 199.

²Ibid., p. 203.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 203.

the proletariat."¹ Even after Scheidemann's revelation of the military cooperation continued, it became more intensified.

Stresemann gave his approval to the continued operation of the schools at Lipetsk and Kazan. German scientists were sent to Orenburg to assist in chemical warfare experiments.²

The magnitude of the military cooperation between Berlin and Moscow, which lasted till Hitler came to power, is still, in the main, not known. There are still many secret materials which will sometimes be of great help to a student of this period. Yet, there is no doubt-- the military collaboration was so vitally important to both countries that their alliance withstood all kinds of political set-backs but was still kept intact to the very end of the Weimar Republic. The military collaboration became a backbone of the Russo-German ^{collaboration} Alliance.³

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

² *Ibid.*, p. 207.

³ H. W. Gatzke, Russo-German Military Collaboration During the Weimar Republic, *The American Historical Review*, April 1938, Vol. LXIII, No. 3, p. 596.

CONCLUSION

The Great War undermined the old, stabilized political and social order of Europe. The Versailles Settlement, while not without significant merits, failed to create a new, stable order. The war triggered a chain reaction: social turmoil, economic chaos, political upheaval and general unrest. When the war ended, two especially dangerous, explosive centers emerged: Bolshevik Russia and defeated Germany. They became the two chief unsolved problems of Europe. France, U.S.A., and Great Britain separated the two from the Baltic to the Black Sea by a chain of newly created independent states. Among these states, Poland because of her ^{political} geographical position, assumed a special importance. Poland had to be big enough to check effectively any attempt to challenge the new territorial settlement in Eastern Europe, and to be an effective ally of the Entente. Both her neighbours were bent on her destruction. A myth of the "Polish danger" was created to draw Moscow and Berlin to closer collaboration, to prepare a new partition of Poland. German ultra-nationalists and Russian Bolsheviks found a common cause.

The extreme German nationalists were aided by the Entente. The unwise economic policy of the victorious states towards Germany, their failure to give support to the West's

best allies inside Germany, to the Democrats and Social Democrats, gave great comfort and aid to the nationalistic militarist groups in Germany, which pressed for collaboration with Russia.

The Russians, of course, were more than eager to grasp these outstretched German hands and to hold them as long as it would be useful. However, Moscow planned to have Germany not as a partner but as an Ally, and to Soviet Russia a real Ally could be only a Communist Germany. In the period, before the theory of socialism in one country had emerged, the Bolshevization of Germany was regarded as an indispensable prerequisite, for the survival of the revolution in Russia herself. Moscow did not spare money and effort to bring about the German "October". But the Communist party of Germany lacked mass support, leadership and experience. The K.P.D. encountered a strong barrier in the Reichswehr, in the nationalistic middle class, in the financial and industrial worlds, and last but not least, in the great majority of workers, who supported the S.D.P. These Communist activities did not deter the rulers of Germany from collaboration with Communist Russia.

Curiously, to a very large degree the Architect of the Russo-German collaboration was the Reichswehr. The Reichswehr wanted to crush Poland by securing Russian aid.

Moreover, the leaders of the Reichswehr realized that the future mechanized warfare, in the air and on the ground, would be decisive. The Versailles Peace forbade them to produce military planes and tanks and to train the army in such warfare. Russia seemed an ideal place, where it was relatively safe effectively to circumvent this important clause of the Versailles settlement. This seemed to be clear and attractive and the Reichswehr decided to render these plans into reality.

German political leaders like Maltzan, Wirth, Brockdorff-Rantzau were craving for freedom of political initiative and action of Germany. In their foreign policy, they turned their eyes to Russia. They too, like the military men, wanted to "correct" Germany's eastern borders, and like the Reichswehr people hoped for Russia's help. They set a pattern for every blow received from the Allies to move one step closer to Soviet Russia. Exactly one day after the "London Ultimatum" on reparations (May 5, 1921), Germany concluded a trade treaty with Moscow (May 6, 1921). And as further diplomatic blows did not fail to come, so did not fail to come further steps of German political leaders towards Moscow.

Germany's industrialists and business men still remembered very well what enormous economic role Germany played in prewar Russia (before the Great War Russia obtained

from Germany 47% of her total imports), and it whetted their appetites. Consequently, they too wanted closer economic ties with Russia. They seemed to envy the successful British-Russian economic negotiations in Copenhagen. Dreamers among German industrialists like Rathenau and Deutch even wanted to use Russia as a trade bridge to the Orient, India, China, as the German fleet was scuttled. Krupp and Henschel - two giants in heavy industry, obtained a "fat" Russian order: 800 locomotives, and this seemed to be just a beginning. A German trade mission opened in Moscow (June 1920), a Russian in Berlin. Then came the NEP and the Anglo-Russian trade treaty (March 16, 1921), and the German industrialists and business men became uneasy: do they miss the boat? Does not the sly Albion snatch out a great chance from under their nose? They too were determined to prod their government for closer cooperation with Soviet Russia.

And thus, the Rapallo Treaty was brought to life, a shock to the surprised outside world, a natural solution for all those German groups and Soviet leaders who pressed for it and attained it.

When the Rapallo agreement was signed, the expectations of the German industrialist, diplomats and military men were great indeed. The reality turned out to be different. What then was the true nature of the Rapallo

Treaty in reality economically, diplomatically and militarily?

While among the German industrialists were dreamers who saw gigantic trade prospects in Russia and behind her, they were well aware, that Germany (is) economically dependent on the west, as the sick German economy could be restored by vast foreign subsidies and investments which could only come from the west. After the signing of the Rapallo Treaty, when the Russian economic leaders welcomed German trade, the German industrialists became very reluctant to use it. They had second thoughts. The German industry doubtful about the stability of the Soviet regime, and were reluctant to invest there. This attitude strongly influenced the German concessions in Russia: they went there with the intention to get the highest profits in the shortest time, and to be able to get out before the regime collapses. This had a negative influence on Russia German economic relations.

Soviet Russia also had great economic expectation in connection with the Rapallo Treaty. Krasin, the Commissar for Foreign Trade personally participated in the Russian delegation to the Genoa Conference (April 10, 1922). He tried to get from Germany heavy machinery, tools, industrial equipment, locomotives and a score of other items for the reconstruction of Russia's economy. His orders were a boon to German heavy industry. However, Russia suffered a serious

setback in her economic relations with Germany, as a result of Germany's failure to provide Moscow large, long ^{term} credits, which Russia's economy very badly needed. However, the articles of the Rapallo Treaty, which dealt with economic problems, were beneficial for Russia. They contained a mutual cancellation of all claims for war cost and war damage, a renunciation by Germany of any compensation for German citizens for lost or nationalized property in Russia. While in this regard the treaty simply legalized a de facto situation, nonetheless, it cleared the air in Russia's relationship to Germany. However, the Rapallo agreement in its economic terms never flourished, as far as Russia was concerned. The great expectations of Russia's economists evaporated. But the Russians could not be blamed for it. Gustav Hilger, the German trade attaché in Moscow blamed German business circles for not taking advantage of excellent economic opportunities in the Soviet Union. This disappointed the Russians and Germans alike, yet the political and military factors were so important, that they out weighed any economical consideration.

The situation changes in regard to the political aspect of the Rapallo Treaty. Russia achieved at Rapallo the friendly neutralization of Germany in case of war against her. It put an end to her complete isolation. The Soviet Union acquired the status of a great European power.

The failure of the Communist revolutionary movement in Germany had far reaching results for Russo-German relations. Soviet Russia remained after the Great War the only Communist state and was bound to establish diplomatic contacts with other existing capitalist states. Diplomatic agreements with the European states became vital for Moscow. Such agreement meant de jure recognition for the Soviet Union, and they enabled Moscow to enter into normal diplomatic and economical contacts with the outside world. Chicherin, The Russian Commissar for Foreign Affairs in the nineteen twenties thought, that the Rapallo Treaty gave Russia a point d'appui, a foothold, in the hostile capitalist world. Chicherin hoped, that this foothold will gradually expand to all European powers. Chicherin's deep friendship with the first German Ambassador to Russia, Count Brockdorff-Rantzau accentuated Russia's sincere willingness to maintain close diplomatic ties with Germany. Chicherin was aided by K. Radek, the Comintern's representative in Berlin. The "Rapallo Spirit" transformed the Galician Jew and Cosmopolitan Russian Bolshevik Radek, into an outspoken promoter of extreme German nationalism in 1923 "The Schlageter Line". He was publicly praised by the Nazi writer Moeller von de Bruck and by extreme German Nationalists.

It seems, that Radek subordinated the interest of the

German Communist movement and the interest of the Comintern to the needs of the Soviet diplomacy ^{what} could never have happened had there not been the Rapallo agreement. When a revolutionary situation developed in Germany in the early months of 1923, Radek failed to encourage the German Communists to take the initiative and lead, which ^{was} could be of crucial importance for the fate of Germany. Radek supported united front of German nationalists and communists against the French occupation of the Ruhr. However, when the known "Westerner" Stresemann became Chancellor (August 13, 1923), and Russia suspected that, that meant the end of the "Rapallo spirit", ^{Radek} he and Moscow involved the German Communist in an attempted revolution ^{at} in a time when it had no chance of success. After the failure ^{of} this last Communist attempt to seize power in Germany, Russia embarked on a policy of reducing the Comintern to an appendix of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and the Communist Party of Germany into a tool of Russia's foreign policy. From then on Moscow maintained the Rapallo Treaty to its letter and "spirit" as best as she could.

From the point of view of the German foreign policy, the Treaty of Rapallo was the first independent political act of German diplomacy since November 1918. Germany's political isolation and encirclement ended at Rapallo. The ^{political} bold act at this obscure Italian town was first challenge^d

to the Versailles system. It brought for Germany Soviet diplomatic help during the Ruhr crisis. It helped to draw the attention of U.S.A. and Great Britain to the German problem, leading ultimately to the Dawes plan and to the Locarno Treaty. Stresemann cleverly used Rapallo as an effective means of improving Germany's political position in Europe. The very fact, that in spite of constant Communist interference in internal German affairs, and in spite of Germany's dependence on American investments, Germany found it necessary to revive the Rapallo Treaty in April 1926, by the Treaty of Berlin, proves that the political collaboration with Moscow, was too useful to Germany to be abandoned. Yet, this was not a close, intimate political cooperation, but a cool, business-like partnership. Still it was a success.

The political collaboration of the two states was closely dependent on the military contacts of the Reichswehr and the Red Army. The military link was regarded as quite important by Berlin and Moscow alike. The Russian leaders always gave their utmost consideration to the needs of the Red Army. They considered the army as one of the main pillars of the Soviet regime. They were very eager to collaborate with the Reichswehr. This collaboration enabled them to rebuild the Russian armaments industry (Zlatoust, Tula, Leningrad), and to train their military personnel in

airwarfare (Lipetsk), tankwarfare (Kazon) and in gaswarfare (Savator). High ranking officers of the Red Air Force and of the Red Army participated in illicit military trainings in Germany, designed for German Staff officers (among the Russians were Tulchenevsky and Khukov). German generals like Field Marshal von Blomberg and general Hans Reinhardt, participated in the manoeuvres of the Red Army and instructed Russian officers. In Germany, the military collaboration of the Reichswehr with the Red Army was maintained with the full approval of the civilian authorities. The Ministry of Finance and Foreign Affairs were invariably informed, as without their assistance the military collaboration would have been impossible. Thus, the so-called independent course of the Reichswehr in its connections with Moscow, was not so completely independent. Germany's top military and civilian leaders were quite eager to provide the Reichswehr with experience in aerial and tank warfare, as it was regarded as quite vital for Germany's military future.

Consequently, the "Polish danger", the Versailles Territorial Settlement, and the military provisions of that settlement, drew the Reichswehr to the Red Army. Yet the collaboration of the two armies was hesitant and limited. Germany could not and did not wish to make Bolshevik Russia too strong militarily. In the back of their minds, the German military never were too sure if it would not boomerang. The Reichswehr wanted to make Russia strong enough to check

effectively Poland and this meant not to make her too strong. Berlin knew very well, that Russia's military preparations had a clearly defensive character and this satisfied her. The Russians on the other hand never regarded the military or civilian representatives of the Weimar Republic as friends. Suspicion of foreigners is deeply ingrained in the Russian Communist mind. However, the constant deep distrust between the collaborators, while necessarily affecting the limits and scope of their mutual collaboration, never stopped it. Could such a military and political cooperation be called an Alliance? If so, then the term "Alliance" needs a new definition:

The incompatibilities between the Soviet Union and Weimar Germany were too great to be bridged over. Both parties were aware, that this partnership was a result of a temporary situation which would change and then their collaboration would fade away.

No, you cannot call this an alliance. It was rather just a natural and logical outcome of the immediate post-war political situation.

APPENDIX A¹

GERMANY---R.S.F.S.R.

TREATY REGARDING SOLUTION OF GENERAL PROBLEMS

(S²)--Rapallo, April 16, 1922; (R²)--Berlin, January 31, 1923

The German Government, represented by Reichsminister Dr. Walther Rathenau, and the Government of R.S.F.S.R., represented by People's Commissar Chicherin, have agreed upon the following provisions:

1. The two Governments agree that all questions resulting from the state of war between Germany and Russia shall be settled in the following manner:

(a) Both Governments mutually renounce repayment for their war expenses and for damages arising out of the war, that is to say, damages caused to them and their nationals in the zone of war operations by military measures, including all requisitions effected in a hostile country. They renounce in the same way repayment for civil damages inflicted on civilians, that is to say, damages caused to the nationals of the two countries by exceptional war legislation or by violent measures taken by any authority of the state of either side.

¹ Leonard Shapiro, Soviet Treaty Series, Washington, D.C., The Georgetown University Press, 1950, Vol. 1, pp. 168-169.

(²S--Signature, R--Ratification.

(b) All legal relations concerning questions of public or private law resulting from the state of war, including the question of the treatment of merchant ships which fell into the hands of the one side or the other during the war, shall be settled on the basis of reciprocity.

(c) Germany and Russia mutually renounce repayment of expenses incurred for prisoners of war. The German Government also renounces repayment of expenses for soldiers of the Red Army interned in Germany. The Russian Government, for its part, renounces repayment of the sums Germany has derived from the sale of Russian Army material brought into Germany by these interned troops.

II. Germany renounces all claims resulting from the enforcement of the laws and measures of the Soviet Republic as it has affected German nationals or their private rights or the rights of the German state itself, as well as claims resulting from measures taken by the Soviet Republic or its authorities in any other way against subjects of the German state or their private rights, provided that the Soviet Republic shall not satisfy similar claims made by any third state.

III. Consular and diplomatic relations between Germany and the Federal Soviet Republic shall be resumed immediately. The admission of consuls to both countries shall be arranged by special agreement.

IV. Both Governments agree, further, that the rights of the nationals of either of the two Parties on the other's territory as well as the regulation of commercial relations shall be based on the most favored nation principle. This principle does not include rights and facilities granted by the Soviet Government to another Soviet state or to any state that formerly formed part of the Russian Empire.

V. The two Governments undertake to give each other mutual assistance for the alleviation of their economic difficulties in the most benevolent spirit. In the event of a general settlement of this question on an international basis, they undertake to have a preliminary exchange of views. The German Government declares itself ready to facilitate, as far as possible, the conclusion and the execution of economic contracts between private enterprises in the two countries.

VI. Article I, Paragraph (b), and Article IV of this Agreement will come into force after the ratification of this document. The other Articles will come into force immediately.

Initialed by Chicherin and Rathenau

APPENDIX B¹

GERMANY - U.S.S.R.

AGREEMENT REGARDING NEUTRALITY AND NON-AGGRESSION,
WITH EXCHANGE OF NOTESS²--Berlin, April 24, 1926; R²--Moscow, May 5, 1933

The German Government and the Government of U.S.S.R., prompted by the desire to do everything in their power that would contribute to the preservation of general peace, and being convinced that the interests of the German people and of the peoples of U.S.S.R. demand a continuous collaboration that is based upon full confidence, have agreed to consolidate the friendly relations existing between them by the conclusion of a special Agreement and have appointed for this purpose as their plenipotentiaries:

The German Government: Gustav Stresemann,
Minister for Foreign Affairs;

The Government of U.S.S.R.: Nicholas Krest-
insky, Plenipotentiary Representative of
U.S.S.R. in Germany.

Who.....have agreed upon the following Articles:

1. The Rapallo Treaty remains the basis of
the mutual relations between Germany and U.S.S.R.

The German Government and the Government of
U.S.S.R. will maintain friendly contact for the purpose of

¹ Leonard Shapiro, Soviet Treaty Series,
Washington, D.C., The Georgetown University Press, 1950,
Vol. 1, pp. 168-169.

²S--Signature, R--Ratification

coordination on all questions of a political or economic nature equally concerning both Parties.

II. If, notwithstanding its peaceful attitude, one of the Contracting Parties is attacked by a third party or a combination of third parties, the second Contracting Party will observe neutrality during the entire duration of the conflict.

III. If, in connection with a conflict such as mentioned in Article II, or if at a time when neither of the Contracting Parties will be involved in an armed conflict, a coalition will be formed among third countries for the purpose of submitting one of the Contracting Parties to an economic or financial boycott, the second Contracting Party will not join such a coalition.

IV. The present Agreement is subject to ratification, and the exchange of ratifications will take place in Berlin.

The Agreement will come into force on the day of the exchange of ratifications, and will remain in force for five years. In due time, before the expiration of that term, both Contracting Parties will come to an understanding as to the subsequent forms of their mutual political relations.

EXCHANGE OF NOTES

(1) Sir;

Berlin, April 24, 1925

On the basis of the negotiations concerning the conclusion of the Agreement signed today between the German Government and the Government of the Soviet Union, I take the liberty to make the following statement in the name of the German Government:

1. During the negotiations concerning the conclusion of the Agreement and in signing it, both Governments, in agreement with each other, were proceeding from the opinion that the principle stipulated by them in Article 1, Paragraph 2, of the Agreement, concerning coordination on all questions of a political and economic character in which both countries are interested, will essentially contribute to the preservation of general peace. At any rate, both Governments, in their negotiations, will be guided by the point of view of the necessity of preserving general peace.

2. In this spirit both Governments were also discussing questions of principle connected with Germany's entrance into the League of Nations. The German Government is convinced that its membership in the League of Nations cannot be an obstacle to the friendly development of German-Soviet relations. In accordance with its fundamental idea, the League of Nations is called upon to settle international differences in a peaceful and just manner. The German

Government has decided to collaborate with all its might in the carrying out of this idea. Should, nevertheless, -- a possibility which the German Government does not admit -- the League of Nations ever develop tendencies which in contradiction of this fundamental idea of peace would be directed solely against U.S.S.R., the German Government will counteract such tendencies with all its power.

3. The German Government proceeds from the point of view that this fundamental line of German policy with regard to U.S.S.R. cannot be prejudiced by a loyal observation of the duties incumbent on Germany after her entrance into the League of Nations under Articles XVI and XVII of the Constitution of the League of Nations concerning the application of sanctions. According to these Articles, the question of applying sanctions against U.S.S.R. irrespective of other considerations could arise only in the case that U.S.S.R. would start an aggressive war against a third country. In this connection it must be borne in mind that the question as to whether in an armed conflict with a third country the Soviet Union is the attacking Party could only be decided with binding power with regard to Germany only with Germany's agreement, and that thus an accusation brought forth in this respect against U.S.S.R. by the other countries, if considered as unfounded by Germany, will not bind Germany to take part in the measures undertaken on the basis of Article XVI. With

regard to the question whether Germany can in general take part in the application of sanctions and to what extent it can do so in a concrete case, the German Government refers to the Note of December 1, 1925, concerning the interpretation of Article XVI, which was handed to the German delegation simultaneously with the signing of the Locarno Pact.

4. In order to create a solid basis for the smooth settlement of all questions arising between them, both Governments consider it convenient immediately to start negotiations concerning the conclusion of a general agreement for the peaceful settlement of conflicts which might arise between the two Parties, particular attention being directed to the possibility of applying arbitration and mediation methods.

G. Stresemann

German Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Berlin, April 24, 1926

(1) Sir;

In acknowledging the receipt of the Note which you sent me on the basis of the negotiations concerning the conclusion of the agreement, signed today, between the Government of U.S.S.R. and the German Government, I beg to inform you, in the name of the Government of the U.S.S.R., as follows:

1. In the negotiations concerning the conclusion

of the Agreement, and in signing it, both Governments were in mutual agreement proceeding from the opinion that the principle -- laid down in Article 1, Paragraph 2, of the Agreement -- relating to the coordination on all questions of a political or an economic character concerning both countries, will contribute essentially to the preservation of general peace. At any rate both Governments will in their negotiations be guided by the point of view of the necessity of the preservation of the general peace.

2. As regards the questions of principle connected with Germany's entrance into the League of Nations, the Government of U.S.S.R. takes cognizance of the statements made in Paragraphs 2 and 3 of your Note.

3. In order to create a solid basis for the smooth settlement of all questions arising between them, both Governments consider it convenient immediately to start negotiations for the conclusion of a general agreement for the peaceful settlement of the conflicts that might arise between both Parties, particular attention being directed to the possibility of applying arbitration and mediation methods.

N. Krestinsky

Plenipotentiary Representative
of U.S.S.R. in Germany

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Thesis Abstract

The Rapallo Treaty was and remains a most controversial one. Some students of history minimize its importance. Conversely, others magnify its significance, naming it an "unholy alliance". This paper, on the basis of the available facts, attempts to find out what was the real significance of the Rapallo agreement. This is the problem which it attempts to solve.

This paper starts by unfolding the completely changed situation which confronted Russia after the October Revolution and Germany after the November Revolution. A terse description is given of those external pressures which influenced the two European powers, to overlook social and political differences and to resolve on collaboration.

An analysis is made of the economic, political and military aspects of the Rapallo Treaty, how they really worked after April 1922, - till 1926. These have been the criteria of its actual significance. On the basis of the available information one may conclude, that while the economic expectations on both sides were impressive, the actual performance, throughout the period dealt in this paper, were modest. Politically, Rapallo was more successful. It accelerated Russia's and Germany's extrication from political isolation. The real aims of their political collaboration seem to be limited to objectives, which seem to 'normal' in the context of the political situation in the

early twenties. The most conspicuous achievements were effected by the military collaboration, which were however exaggerated, a task made easier by strict secrecy. Yet the scope of these military dealings seems to be quite limited. These limitations were set by the Germans who could contribute much more than the Russians. These achievements while seemingly impressive, appear to be modest by realistic standards.

This analysis leads one to the conclusion that Rapallo was by no means an Alliance, holy or unholy, but a political and military collaboration based on expediency. Rapallo was nearly forced upon Moscow and Berlin by a combination of many internal and external factors created by the results of the Great War and the Versailles Settlement. The collaboration was carried out with many qualifications and little enthusiasm on both sides. It appears also, that the Rapallo agreement could be explained only on the basis of the single and concrete situation which existed in the immediate post war period. As soon as the conditions changed and the isolation of both states was reduced Rapallo needed galvanization (the Treaty of Berlin in 1926), which is admittedly a doubtful sign of good health. Consequently, the conclusion arrived at, is that the Treaty of Rapallo was no Alliance, but a temporary expedient partnership.