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WILLIAM CHRISTIAN BULLITT

1891 --

DELUSION

DISENCHANTMENT

DISSENSION

William Christian Bullitt And Soviet-American Relations 1919-1946

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To Max David Angel

And Augusta Kaplan Angel.

PREFACE

Delusion, Disenchantment, Dissension is a story and an analysis of a controversial man and a controversial subject. The man is William Christian Bullitt, and the subject is Soviet-American relations 1919-1940. A full account of this man's role in the relationship between the two countries has never before been written. Thus, it would seem that such an evaluation would be of minor importance. The reader will have to judge for himself whether or not Bill Bullitt's part in Soviet-American relations was a significant one.

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CHAPTER I

A BOURGEOIS FROM RITTENHOUSE SQUARE

At school or at home, the atmosphere which the young William Christian Bullitt breathed was that emanated by Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was born there on January 25, 1891 -- into a wealthy and distinguished Philadelphia family. Bullitt was a descendant of a Frenchman named Boulet and an eighteenth century German named Horwitz. Many of Bill Bullitt's forebears were prominent figures in Early American history, and two more recent progenitors have become city statues. Kinship was claimed to George Washington, Patrick Henry, Viscountess Astor, Fletcher Christian (who led the mutiny on the Bounty) and Pocahontas, herself. He is still further related to the First Families of the Old Dominion through the intermarriages of his forebears with the Langhornes, Dandridges, and Harrisons. Of the two statues, one is that of Bullitt's paternal grandfather, John Christian Bullitt, a leading citizen of his day, which is placed before the Philadelphia City Hall. John Bullitt had come to Philadelphia from Louisville, Kentucky to assist in liquidating a bank, and had decided to remain in the legal center of the country.

Bill Bullitt's maternal great-grandfather, Dr. Samuel Gross, because he did so much to advance and standardize the practice of medicine in America, is honored by a statue which stands in front of the old Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C.

Mr. Bullitt was from the beginning an accumulation of things past. A few minutes after he was born in Locust Street, Philadelphia, he was "laid on an armchair, where his great-aunt, Lady Osler, wife of a noted Canadian physician, Sir William Osler, accidentally sat on the child. Thus immediately began operating on him the mixed advantages and drawbacks of his position as a member of a stylized, sedate, well-upholstered bourgeoisie, rich in fortune, education and appreciation of the early Colonial democracy - and caste."[1] It was from his antecedents' traditional pride in themselves and the United States, which they had once fought to help create and later thoroughly enjoyed, that he drew his possessive patriotism, and it was from their eminent satisfaction in the outcome of the American Revolution that he probably developed his instinct for rebellion generations after rebellion had gone out of his family. From the age of six months, when he was taken from Philadelphia to Rome to be shown to his aunt, the Duchess d'Assergio, he was annually taken on summer trips to Europe; as a boy, in winter he was sent to the De Lancey private day school, then, the best

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[1] "Profiles: Mr. Ambassador I: William Christian Bullitt", The New Yorker, December 10, 1938, p. 31.

in Philadelphia. Throughout the days of his youth, Bullitt was constantly educated and photographed; he studied sciences and foreign languages, learning his German in Munich and his French at the family luncheon table, where his mother, a good linguist, made French the noon rule.

At considerable expense, William Bullitt was sent to Yale for his undergraduate work. He soon distinguished himself as a student of political science, editor of the Yale News, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa; however, in his junior year (1911), he became ill. He suffered from abdominal pains and his sight began to fail. A Philadelphia doctor examined him and gave a verdict of which was very dismal indeed. He claimed that the young college student would not likely live more than six months, and furthermore would probably die blind. Another physician suggested that Bullitt move to California, which he did, settling on a bungalow colony near the Redlands. Living past the six month deadline, but still no better, he returned to Philadelphia to undergo an exploratory operation. This showed that he was suffering from intestinal adhesions, a hang-over from an earlier operation for appendicitus. After the operation he was told to adhere to a strict diet of milk and spinach and then he might get well. But after a few months of this dull diet, Bullitt in desperation came to a decision. He walked into a restaurant and ordered champagne and lobster for a final fling, and by some queer coincidence the combination agreed

with him and he felt better than he had for a long time. He has since repeated this meal many times.

He returned to Yale, and majored in psychology, and his professors advised him to become a research psychologist. He was, however, already interested in foreign affairs and was a member of Dr. Charles Seymour's first class in Modern History and Diplomatic Relations. Bullitt became a member of the Psi Upsilon and Schroll and Key honor societies and was president of the Dramatic Association -- an interest which remained with him in his later diplomatic life. He founded a short-lived organization known as the Minced Pie Club, two of whose members were Cole Porter and Chauncey Tinker (who became an eminent Boswell and Johnson authority). By his senior year at Yale, Bill Bullitt dissented from Society's caste attitude -- he raised his voice in protest against snobbery. He graduated with honors in 1912, receiving his A. B. degree.

The Bullitts had been following the profession of law for 300 years; William C. Bullitt's father was a lawyer, and thus in 1913 Bill Bullitt entered the Harvard Law School. Then, in his first year at Harvard, he experienced a tragedy and a disillusionment which played large parts in his decision to quit school. The tragedy was the death of his father. The disillusionment came when he overheard a conversation between a couple of his friends who were partners in a law firm:

> "The partners had lost a decision and were discussing plans to appeal it. Bullitt asked if they thought the decision unfair, and was told that they did not. 'But you're going to appeal it anyway?' - exclaimed the freshman law student incredulously. 'Why not?' was the reply. 'Our client likes the idea and is willing to stand the expense.' In a fashion which is typical of him, Bullitt then and there decided that he could not be a lawyer."[2]

His mother, suffering from the loss of her husband, received a recommendation from her physician to go abroad for a rest. Further, she was asked to select a place which she had not visited before. Russia was chosen for the destination, one of the nations of Europe which she had not seen. To keep his mother company, twenty-three year old William Bullitt accompanied her to Russia, then an untouristed, remote Czarist land, but a nation which would shape the idealistic, young man.

In Moscow, Bullitt and his mother stayed at the National Hotel. Then, on an August night in 1914, he was awakened by crowds outside in the streets shouting: "War! Down with the Austrians!" From his hotel window, he saw the dark masses of people moving up and down the roads. At that moment, Bullitt began formulating in his mind what his career would be. Bullitt and his mother were among the last tourists to get out of Russia into Germany via Poland before the frontiers were closed. In towns and villages all along the

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[2]"He Rose From The Rich", The Saturday Evening Post, March 11, 1939, p. 5.

route, the peasants were "mobilizing for the Hindenburg-Ludendorff slaughter that awaited them a month later in Tannenburg swamps."[3] A few days later in Berlin he heard crowds shouting, "Down with the French!", in London he heard them yelling, "Down with the Germans!", and in Paris he listened to the French cry down with many peoples, including the Turks. Bullitt concluded that in war each nation thought its cause holy, that war was thus illogical folly which a new generation of wiser diplomats must in the future avert. To be just such a wise diplomat was the career which, by now, Bullitt had decided upon; he and his ideals were then only twenty-three years of age.

When he returned to the United States, he confidently offered himself to the Philadelphia Public Ledger as an expert on the European situation -- after he had been refused by many other papers as a correspondent. He was given a cub job reporting South Philadelphia -- a police reporter at $10 per week. He took it and in his spare time wrote editorials on the European situation. However, his subsequent work as correspondent aboard the Ford Peace Ship was so good and because he was encouraged to write more about foreign affairs, in one tremendous leap Bullitt found himself promoted to the position of associate editor. In 1916 Bullitt married, Ernesta Drinker, a Philadelphia girl of great beauty and of fine social background. They spent their

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[3] Ibid., p. 6.

honeymoon in Germany, Austria and Belgium, where they traveled as guests of the German High Command, and Bullitt continued to write articles for the Ledger on what he saw.[4] On their return he was put in charge of the Washington Bureau of the paper, and there formed a friendship with Colonel Edward M. House, confidant of President Woodrow Wilson. In return for information on economic and civil affairs in Europe, House gave the young newspaperman many exclusive beats.

Mr. Bullitt's late friend, Charles Sweeney of the Philadelphia Public Ledger, stated that Bullitt "rose from the rich." In 1916, Bullitt seemed to be rising quickly. He appeared to be on his way to achieving that which he desired -- to get "behind the scenes", learn just what started the European conflicts, and become that wise diplomat whom he pictured as having the ability to avert all future wars. The United States was about to be drawn into the "Great War", and Bullitt had made personal contacts with important men in Central Europe and in Washington. If his ideals and desires were being formulated in 1914, they were maturing in 1916. He was married to a beautiful woman, and he looked forward to a bright career in international affairs. Disillusionment was not a big factor in his emotional make-up -- although what he experienced at Law School was destined to

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[4] "William Christian Bullitt: January 25, 1891.", Current Biography, December, 1940, p. 123.

follow him the rest of his life. "He was destined to be disillusioned again and again. Because of his character, he was unwilling to compromise with his ideals."[5] When those whom he followed did compromise, he dissented -- breaking with them -- just as he had done at Harvard Law School. The ideals which William Christian Bullitt believed in were inherent in his character, but were infixed more in his heart than in his mind.

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[5]Milton De Kalb Brogley, William C. Bullitt And Russian American Relations: A Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science (History) at the University of Wisconsin (1949), p. 28.

CHAPTER II

THE SECRET BULLITT MISSION TO RUSSIA

On Good Friday, April 6, 1917, Congress declared that war had been "thrust" upon the United States of America by the acts of the Imperial German Government. William Bullitt was asked by the U. S. War Department's Secret Service to take charge of the Political Section's confidential reports on the Central Powers -- which meant compiling information on the enemy. Bullitt became known in Washington as a State Department expert on enemy and subversive movements. His data on the Central Powers' political and economic status were used by Woodrow Wilson in his speeches on foreign affairs. Bullitt worked in the Division of Western European Affairs under Joseph C. Grew. His special duty was to follow the political situation in Germany and Austria-Hungary, and to prepare confidential reports to the department on these countries. He gave weekly reports and special memoranda to the department and to other members of the administration. After the armistice, Bullitt, who was close to Wilson and a great admirer of the Chief Executive, was chosen to be a part of the peace

commission.[1] In a testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate in 1919, Bullitt described his duties in Paris:

> "When I first arrived I was asked to take charge of a confidential bulletin which was to be gotten out for the benefit of the commissioners each morning. It was to be read by them. That lasted a very short time, and as is usual with most things of this kind, we discovered that the commissioners did not care to spend their time reading it, and therefore it was decided to abolish this bulletin, and that instead I should receive all the intelligence reports of military intelligence, of the State Department, intelligence received through all the special dispatches of the ambassadors, etc., in fact, all the information that came in, and a section was created called the Current Intelligence Section. I was called the Chief of the Division of Current Intelligence Summaries."[2]

Thus, Bullitt's job was to brief each of the American commissioners, including the President, for twenty minutes each morning on current affairs. When Bullitt couldn't make the rounds, a future Secretary of State, Christian Herter, took over for him. The job brought Bullitt into illuminating personal contact with men such as: Asquith, Lloyd George, Orlando, Clemenceau, Paderewski, Sir Maurice Hankey, Venizelos, Briand and others. Colonel House knew Bullitt to be keenly interested in the Russian revolution and international socialism in general. Bullitt was used as

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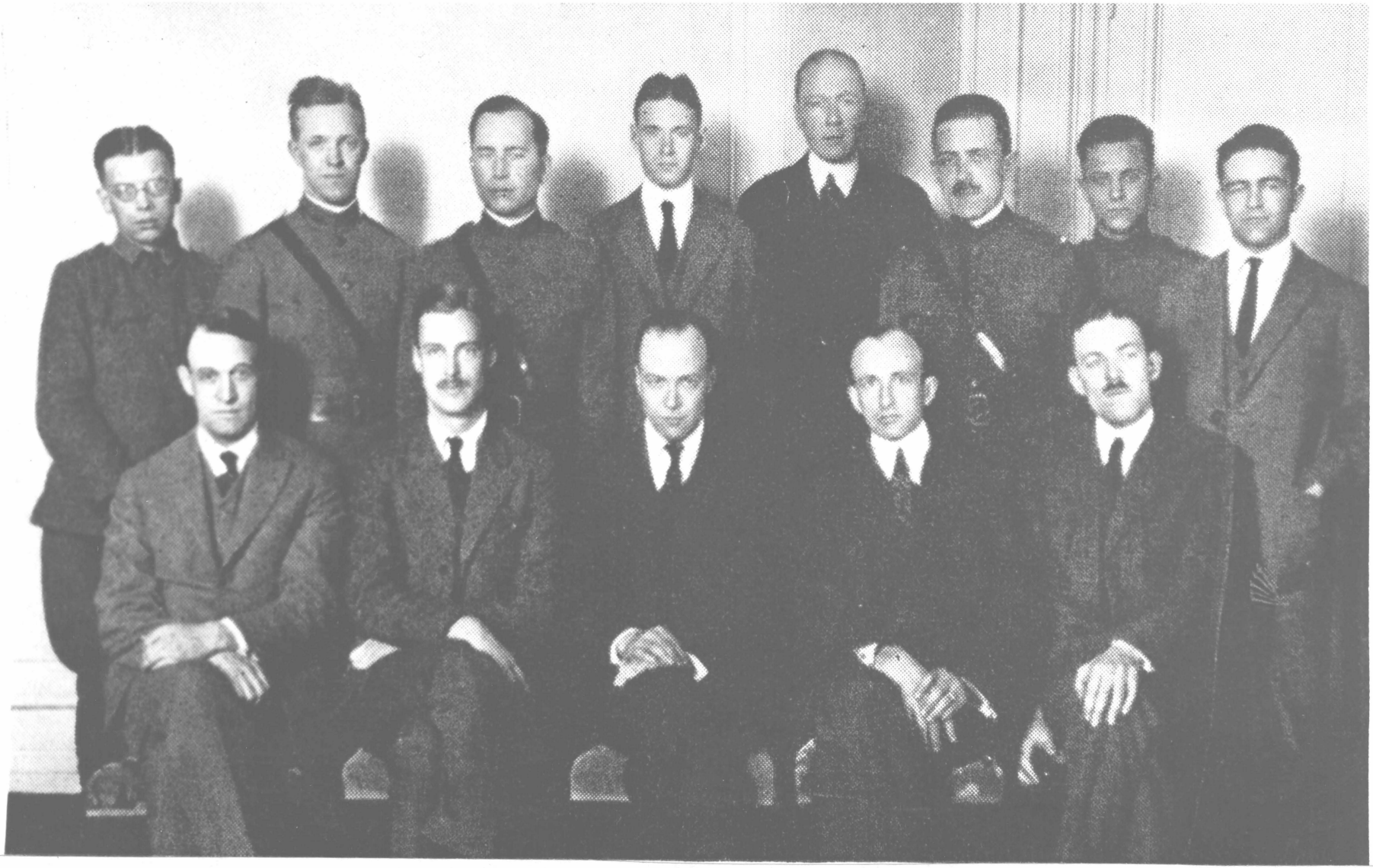
[1] The Bullitt Mission to Russia: Testimony Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, of William Christian Bullitt, (New York, 1919) p. 2.

[2] Ibid.



P-2 William Bullitt (front row, center) posed with members of the American Peace Commission at Versailles. Also, in the front row were two others who would become well-known; Christian A. Herter (second from left) and Allen W. Dulles (far right). Bullitt became the Chief of the Division of Current Intelligence Summaries, and his job included briefing each of the American commissioners, including the President, for twenty minutes each morning on current affairs.

a Leftist documentator and an emissary also -- and Wilson sent him to Berne, Switzerland to the Second International, at which President Wilson hoped the Socialists would accept Wilson's peace program as a part of their platform.

The stately Hotel Crillon on the Place de la Concorde was a scene of frenzied activity in the early months of 1919. It was filled with 1,300 Americans who had come to Paris for the peace conference that would end the First World War. "The corridors swarmed with ethnologists, geographers, economists, interpreters, army officials, reporters, and ambassadors. On occasion, President Wilson, the first American President to cross the Atlantic while in office, could be seen hurrying to keep an appointment with his top advisors. Out of this confusion was to emerge the first postwar American effort to make contact with Soviet Russia -- a mission that matched in its extemporized haste the ignorance and vagueness of United States policy toward the Bolsheviks."[3]

The excitement and haste that prevailed in the Hotel Crillon, and elsewhere in Paris as well in 1919, was understandable: the world was being made over. New countries were being created and old empires dissolved. A society of nations was being founded. Colonies were changing hands. Boundaries were being redrawn. In Europe all was turmoil.

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[3]Robert S. Rifkind, "The Wasted Mission," American Heritage, April, 1961, p. 40ff.

After four years of total war the nations of the continent were in a state of political collapse, and no one could tell with certainty what new structures would emerge from the rubble. A major source of uncertainty was the year-old Soviet regime in Moscow -- the regime that had made a separate peace with imperial Germany and that was, therefore, not invited to the peace conference. "This abrasive newcomer to the world scene was throwing off sparks which, many thought, were likely to ignite Europe."[4] In January, 1919 there was a Communist-inspired revolt in Germany. And in March a successful revolution placed the Russian-trained Béla Kun at the head of a Hungarian Soviet. "Paris cannot be understood without Moscow," the chief of the press bureau of the American commission later wrote.[5] "Without ever being represented at Paris at all, the Bolsheviki and Bolshevism were powerful elements at every turn. Russia played a more vital part at Paris than Prussia! For the Prussian idea had been utterly defeated, where the Russian idea was still rising in power."[6]

Sailing to France on the U. S. S. George Washington on December 4, 1918, Wilson had outlined the task facing the American Commission to Negotiate the Peace. He said, "The poison of Bolshevism was accepted readily by the world because it is a protest against the way in which the world

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[4]Ibid., p. 41.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

has worked. It is to be our business at the Peace Conference to fight for a new order..."[7] However, in building a new order, what was to be done with it? Welcome it? Tame it? Crush it? One thing was certain, one could not safely ignore it.

The Bullitt Mission of 1919, America's first diplomatic contact with Soviet Russia, grew out of two conversations held in the ornate office of French Foreign Minister Stephen Pichon at the Quai d'Orsay on January 12 and January 21, 1919.[8] On Sunday afternoon, January 12, 1919, the Council of Ten which was to guide the peace conference gathered for the first time in Monsieur Pichon's office. The Russian problem was raised at once. Though the guns were now silent on the Marne, war was in progress between the Soviet regime in Moscow and the White Russian armies based in Siberia, at Archangel and Murmansk, in the Don region and the Ukraine. It would be absurd, the British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, pointed out, for the Allies to "separate and announce that they had made perpetual peace when Siberia, which formed about half of Asia, and Russia, which formed about half of Europe, were still at war."[9] The hope that the Bolshevist Government would

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[7] Ibid.

[8] "Behind the Scenes At Paris," The Nation, September 27, 1919, p. 428.

[9] Ibid., p. 430.

collapse was not being realized. Mr. Lloyd George proposed three possible policies: military intervention, a blockade and finally a proposal to summon all the warring governments in Russia to a conference -- "somewhat in the way that the Roman Empire summoned chiefs of outlying tributary states to render an account of their actions."[10] The British favored the "Roman alternative" -- that the Whites and Reds be invited to suspend hostilities in Russia and send representatives to Paris. "The French Government," Monsieur Pichon announced to the press, "... will make no contract with crime." And Joseph Tumulty, Wilson's press secretary, wired from the United States that the suggestion that "the Russian Bolsheviks be invited to send peace delegates to Paris ... is denounced here as amazing."[11] The French could not forget that the Soviets had made a separate peace with Germany during World War I, deserting France in the hour of her peril. And America, however eager to get the boys home -- who had been sent into Russia prior to the German armistice to avert a total collapse of the eastern front and who found themselves buttressing the White armies -- didn't care to talk about it with the perpetrators of the Red Terror who had, it was said, nationalized women! However, Wilson supported Lloyd George. The White governments, led as they were by former Czarist officers, represented the

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Rifkind, "The Wasted Mission," p. 43.

ancien régime. Moreover, Wilson said, "there was certainly a latent force behind Bolshevism which attracted as much sympathy as its more brutal aspects caused general disgust."[12] Since further Allied military intervention in Russia was impractical, the Red and Whites must be encouraged to reach a settlement.

The French were unmoved. In order to meet their objections, Wilson on January 21, 1919 proposed that the various Russian factions be asked to send representatives, not to Paris, but to some more remote place where the danger of Bolshevik contagion would be less. The French premier, Clemenceau, was still opposed to conversations with the Bolsheviks "in principle" because "we would be raising them to our level by saying they were worthy of entering into conversation with us."[13] He reluctantly agreed to Wilson's proposal, however, and on January 22, 1919 Wilson wrote the Prinkipo memorandum -- which was sent out from Paris inviting the parties involved to a meeting on Prinkipo Island in the Turkish Sea of Marmora not later than February 15, 1919. The French, though they had capitulated at the conference table, had not given up: their Foreign Office promptly advised the White governments to reject the invitation. Bullitt stated the following before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the fall of 1919:

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[12] Ibid., p. 44.

[13] Ibid.

> "We found that the French foreign office had communicated to the Ukranian Government and various other anti-Soviet governments that if they were to refuse the proposal, they would support them and continue to support them, and not allow the Allies, if they could prevent it, or the Allied Governments, to make peace with the Russian government."[14]

The Unified Governments of Siberia, Archangel, and Southern Russia soon announced that "an exchange of ideas with the participation of the Bolsheviks" was out of the question.[15] Mr. Lloyd George kept insisting that something must be done, and William C. Bullitt arranged a meeting between the British Prime Minister and Colonel Edward M. House to take place on February 24, 1919, at which time they were to prepare a renewal of the Prinkipos proposal, and they were both prepared to insist that it be passed against any opposition of the French. In this state of affairs, the Russian question was reviewed by the Council of Ten on February 14. Wilson was leaving Paris that very night for Washington, to argue for the League. Winston Churchill, who was sitting in for Lloyd George, pressed vigorously for large scale armed intervention (The Prime Minister was in total disagreement with his somewhat irrepressible junior). Wilson rejected intervention as worthless. He declared that he would be content "that informal American

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[14]"Behind the Scenes at Paris," The Nation, p. 451.

[15]Rifkind, "The Wasted Mission," p. 44.

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representatives should meet representatives of the Bolsheviks." What he wanted "was not a rapprochement with the Bolsheviks, but clear information."[16] Precisely what Wilson had in mind never became entirely clear. Immediately after his conversation with Churchill on February 14, he departed Paris -- leaving Colonel House in command of the American peace commission.

Reports from an American agent in Stockholm had indicated that the Soviets were eager for conciliation and purported to be well disposed towards the proposed League of Nations. From the Villa Majestic in Paris, where the British Peace Commission was encamped, news came that the British -- in spite of the Prinkipo failure -- were willing to meet with the Soviet government's representatives in the near future. In the light of these developments, Colonel House acted swiftly. Within twenty-four hours after Wilson's departure, he was discussing with Secretary of State Robert Lansing the possibility of sending William C. Bullitt, one of the younger members of the American peace commission, to Moscow.

In the following days, House and Bullitt discussed the peace terms which would be acceptable to the United States. House indicated that the armistice on all Russian fronts, the withdrawal of Allied troops, and the re-establishment of economic relations would form an acceptable basis for a

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[16] Ibid.

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Russian settlement. Bullitt also conferred with Philip Kerr, Lloyd George's private secretary (later to become Lord Lothian, British Ambassador to the U. S.) -- and Kerr's opinion was that it was possible to resume normal relations with Soviet Russia on substantially the same terms as House had proposed. Everything was planned. One of Bullitt's companions on the mission stated:

> "Bullitt's instructions were to negotiate a preliminary agreement with the Russians so that the United States and Great Britain could persuade France to join them in an invitation to a parley, reasonably sure of some results. Colonel House had proposed, Lloyd George had planned, the visit; and Bullitt's instructions came from House and from the British Prime Minister."[17]

In view of the hostility of the press and the French toward anything that suggested possible recognition of the Soviet regime, it was decided that Bullitt's mission should be kept confidential. On February 18, his credentials were signed by the Secretary of State -- they directed him to "proceed to Russia for the purpose of studying conditions, political and economic, therein, for the benefit of the American commissioners plenipotentiary to negotiate peace..."[18]

While this communication to Bullitt seemed to give him official status as a representative of the United States Government, a telegram to the Acting Secretary of State in

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[17]Lincoln Steffens, The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens, (New York: 1931), p. 791.

[18]United States of America: Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 66th Congress, First Session, Senate Document 106, p. 1224.

Paris denied his official status.[19] Joseph C. Grew stated, however, in a letter to Mr. Henry White and General Tasker H. Bliss that to the best of his recollection he was directed to write a letter by Mr. Lansing and that, in doing so, he employed the form habitually used in furnishing a letter of credentials to any one dispatched on a mission by the American Plenipotentiaries.[20] Therefore, Grew's statement would give credence to the assertion by Bullitt that he was not a unofficial observer, but was sent to Russia for a specific and official purpose. Mystery surrounded the 1919 Bullitt Mission to Russia from the time Colonel House initially proposed the visit. Mystery still surrounds it.

Bullitt was to be accompanied by his secretary, R. H. Lynch, and by W. W. Pettit, a captain in American Military Intelligence traveling in mufti. At the last minute, Bullitt asked Lincoln Steffens to join his party. Steffens was an outspoken admirer of the Soviets and readily agreed to go. He was a top flight journalist and was always being made an editor of some magazine or daily, yet he hated a desk and four walls. Steffens was surely muckraking's most celebrated practitioner. He was chagrined when editors would not let him turn from muckraking to didactic essays to show that "intelligence was above morality," that there was no science nor certainty to morals, etc.

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[19] Ibid., p. 1284.

[20] Papers Relating To the Foreign Relations of the United States 1919: Russia, (United States Government Printing Office, Washington: 1937), p. 97.

Steffens wanted to work out the "scientific laws of revolution," and was delighted when revolution broke out in Russia in 1917. He made a pilgrimage to Russia and wrote, "I would like to spend the evening of my life watching the morning of a new world." He admired Lenin and urged young people in the U. S. to go to Russia.[21] In 1919 this once popular muckraking journalist was considered a dangerous man. No major American newspaper or magazine would carry his work and he had been "covering" the peace conference on his own. Yet, Bullitt asked him to join the secret mission to Russia.

On February 22, 1919, Bullitt's party left Paris for London. The next day a British naval vessel was to carry them across the North Sea. They would proceed across Scandinavia and enter Russia via Finland. It was a long, cold route to Russia, but in the winter of 1919 it was the only route; America was officially still at war with Central Europe. Steffens wrote, "British consuls met and speeded us through Norway, Sweden, and Finland..."[22]

It was a strange affair, America's first diplomatic mission to Soviet Russia, dispatched with much haste and little thought. When it was over, few could be sure why it had been sent. Bullitt later said, "I was instructed to go in and bring back as quickly as possible a definite statement of exactly the terms the Soviet Government was

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[21]Bertram D. Wolfe, "The Harvard Man In The Kremlin Wall" (John Reed), American Heritage, February, 1960.

[22]Steffens, The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens, p. 791.

ready to accept. The idea in the minds of the British and American delegation were that if the Allies made another proposal it should be a proposal which we would know in advance would be accepted, so that there would be no chance of another Prinkipos proposal miscarrying."[23] Yet, other people felt the mission was quite an unofficial matter. The personnel of the mission also presented a somewhat odd picture, to say the least. Bullitt was only twenty-eight years old, and many felt he was rather headstrong and too emotional. Thinking back on the trip to Russia years later, Lincoln Steffens recalled that, "Bullitt had brought along his secretary Lynch, apparently to play with. On trains and boats they skylarked, wrestling and tumbling like a couple of bear cubs all along the Arctic Circle. A pretty noisy secret mission we were, but Bullitt knew just what he was about; nobody could suspect us of secrecy or importance; and at formal moments and in emergencies the head of our mission was all there with the form, the authority, and the -- audacity."[24]

In Sweden, the party picked up a Swedish Red, Kil Baum, to guide them -- "which,added to Bullitt and Lynch, made a murderous peace commission."[25] When the group reached

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[23]Rifkind, "The Wasted Mission," p. 45.

[24]Steffens, p. 792.

[25]Ibid.

Finland, they ran into difficulty -- as Lincoln Steffens explains:

> "Our conspiracy was to get on through Finland. A new country with new officials is always difficult, and the Fins (and the Poles) felt that they were guardians, not only of their borders, but of European civilization. Bullitt managed the Finns. He laid wires as we proceeded slowly; there was always someone for us to appeal back to; and when at the Russo-Finnish border an arrogant Finnish officer drew up to stop and search us, Bullitt outdid him in arrogance -- 'Hands off, you. Telephone for orders. We pass.' The man wilted, and the cordon of troops opened. We sleighed across the line to the special two-car train that was to take us to Petrograd, where Bullitt's work began -- delicate, hard work."[26]

At 1 P. M. on March 8, 1919, the American mission crossed into Russia.[27] Two days later the Commission to Negotiate Peace received a telegram from Bullitt relating, "I have reason to feel certain that I shall have definite propositions from the Soviet Government to transmit within a week or ten days."[28] The mission had arrived in Petrograd late Saturday afternoon, March 8. Petrograd was a deserted city; there were few people at the railway station, and nobody in the dark, cold, broken streets. A vacant (American packer's) palace was the place in which the Americans spent

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[26] Ibid. p. 793.

[27] Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1919: Russia 861.00/4039: Telegram: The Vice Consul at Viborg (Imbrie) to the Acting Secretary of State, Viborg, March 8, 1919, pp. 75-76.

[28] Ibid., 861.00/4049: Telegram: The Commission to Negotiate Peace to the Acting Secretary of State, Paris, March 10, 1919, p. 76.

the next nights. The Soviet officials who met the Americans were at first under the impression that the older and more famous Steffens was the head of the mission. The night of their arrival, Steffens was taken to many quiet hotels by his Swedish and Russian guides -- searching for officials at midnight teas. He stated, "I was led from one tea to another till at last the guide found and presented me to Zinoviev, one of the three commissioners appointed to deal with us. Unwillingly, without greeting, he snapped one question at me in German, 'Sind Sie bevollmächtigt?' ('Do you have plenipotentiary powers?'). 'No', I answered and I began to explain the preliminary nature of the mission. He would not listen ... he turned away abruptly, and we never saw him again..."[29]

The Russian greeting fit the weather -- cold and foggy. Bullitt soon reported that the rumors of the frightful conditions in Petrograd were exaggerated ones. Lenin, President of the Soviet of People's Commissars (who was in Moscow) sent Grigori V. Chicherin, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and M. M. Litvinov, Assistant Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, to deal with the Americans in Petrograd. They soon learned that Bullitt was head of the mission, and held several discussions with him. But Bullitt couldn't help noticing the deserted factories, the factories with machinery for thousands of workers which were struggling

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[29]Steffens, p. 795.

along with a few hundred, the closed shops and houses, and the straggling crowds on the dead streets. However, he told himself that this was just the beginning of the new experiment -- as Steffens would say, the "morning of a new world." On March 10, 1919, Bullitt and Steffens, with Chicherin and Litvinov, left Petrograd for Moscow. Lynch was left outside Russia, and Captain Petit in Petrograd.

Chicherin and Litvinov expressed full confidence in the good will of the American Government, but they greatly distrusted the French. They feared that the French would employ the period of the armistice to send large supplies to anti-Bolshevik armies and to raise forces to operate against the various Soviet Governments. Both Chicherin and Litvinov told Bullitt, "... in principle the Soviet Government is willing to pay its foreign debts" and "the only question being how to meet immediate payments because of the present difficult financial position of the Government."[30] Bullitt, as the days passed, became more and more excited. He realized the importance of his work, and witnessed great cooperation on the part of the Soviet officials with which he talked. Soviet Foreign Minister Chicherin was so impressed with Bullitt that he felt the American quite worthy to meet Lenin in Moscow, and so arranged the meeting.

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[30] Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1919: Russia: Paris Peace Conference 184.02202/4: Telegram: The Consul at Helsingfors (Hayes) to the Commission to Negotiate Peace. Helsingfors, March 11, 1919, p. 76.

Bullitt and Steffens, together with Chicherin and Litvinov, arrived in Moscow on March 11. It too was a cold and hungry city -- but it seemed sunny, dry, and warm when compared with the foggy, humid Petrograd. For the next few days Bullitt and Steffens lived largely on the canned goods they brought with them in mail pouches -- supplemented by black bread and caviar which alone seemed to be in plentiful domestic supply. Even so, Russian officials had a way of coming by their rooms at meal times. Steffens later related, "... the Russians came gladly, promptly, to our meals of canned food, and sometimes they just happened in at meal hours. Chicherin, a shy, little, serious man, blushed one evening when he called, he said, to ask a question of fact, and I answered, 'Yes, Mr. Secretary, supper is about ready.' But he stayed to supper ... we never had a meal outside our own house, and the Russians were frequently at our table."[31]

Bullitt, Chicherin and Litvinov, with Lenin near by, negotiated daily. Then, on March 16, 1919, William Bullitt relayed the news of an agreement he had reached with the Soviet Government to Paris via Helsingfors, Finland:

> "... as a result of a week of day and night discussions with the leaders of the Soviet Government, I am convinced that in the main their statement represents the minimum terms which the Soviet Government will accept. The statement runs as follows:

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[31] Steffens, p. 795.

1. All existing de facto Governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland to remain in full control of the territories which they occupy at the moment when the armistice becomes effective, except insofar as the conference may agree upon the transfer of territories; until the peoples inhabiting the territories controlled by these de facto Governments shall themselves determine to change their Governments.
2. The economic blockade to be raised and trade relations between Soviet Russia and the Allied and Associated countries to be reestablished...
3. The Soviet Government(s) of Russia to have the right of unhindered transit on all railways and the use of all posts which belong to the former Russian Empire and to Finland...
4. The citizens of the Soviet Republics of Russia to have the right of free entry into the Allied and Associated countries as well as into all countries which have been formed on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland ... provided they do not interfere in the domestic politics of the countries (and the same for Nationals of the Allied and Associated countries).
5. The Soviet Governments, the other Governments which have been set upon the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland, to give a general amnesty to all political opponents, offenders, and prisoners, and to assist their own nationals who have been or may be prosecuted for giving help to Soviet Russia.
6. Immediately after the signing of this agreement, all troops of the Allied and Associated Governments and other non-Russian governments to be withdrawn from Russia and military assistance to cease to be given to anti-Soviet Governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire. The Soviet Governments and the anti-Soviet Governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland to begin to reduce their armies simultaneously, and at the same rate, to a peace footing immediately after the signing of this agreement.

> 7. The Allied and Associated Governments... propose as an integral part of this agreement that the Soviet Governments and the other governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland shall recognize their responsibility for the financial obligations of the former Russian Empire, to foreign states parties to this agreement and to the nationals of such states... The Soviet Government of Russia undertakes to accept this foregoing proposal provided it is made not later than April 10, 1919."[32]

Bullitt felt he had achieved what House and Kerr had wanted. He felt that there was no doubt whatever of the desire of the Soviet Government for a just and reasonable peace -- or of the sincerity of the March 16, 1919 proposal. The most striking element in this proposal, as one looks at it today, was that the Soviet government purported to be willing to leave the White governments in control of the territory they then occupied. This meant that the Bolsheviks would give up (at least for the time being) claim to the whole of Siberia, the Urals, the Caucasus, the Archangel and Murmansk areas, Finland, the Baltic states, a portion of White Russia, and most of the Ukraine. Soviet Russia was to be limited to a radius of some 500 miles around Moscow.

Two days later, on March 18, 1919, Bullitt sent his analysis of Soviet Russia to the Commission to Negotiate

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[32] Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1919: Russia: Paris Peace Conference 184.02202/5: Telegram: Mr. William C. Bullitt to the Commission to Negotiate Peace. Helingfors, March 16, 1919, p. 77.

Peace in Paris:

"1. The Soviet Government is firmly established and the Communist Party is strong politically and morally. There is order in Petrograd and Moscow.... Prostitution has disappeared. Robberies have almost ceased. The opera, theaters and ballet are performing as in peace, except that they are managed under the department of education which prefers classics and sees that the common people and children attend, full instructed.
2. The Soviet Army is growing, high spirited and well equiped. The soldiers...and the common people no longer have the beaten, doglike look which marked them under the Tsar. They carry themselves like free men and very like Americans.
3. The chief opposition parties, the Menshiviki and the right Social Revolutionary Party, are now supporting the Government. Their opposition ceased largely because Russia was being attacked from outside...by intervention in Russia, by support of anti-Soviet Governments and by the blockade we are working against the will and the needs of...the Russian people, to help whom is our one desire...
4. The Left Social Revolutionary Party occupies the destructive position commonly attributed to the Communists by the outside. This party demands the extermination of the Bourgeoisie...
5. ...the economic conditions of Soviet Russia are tragic. And this is due to the blockade...
6. ...it is my conviction that the Soviet Government is the only constructive force in Russia today. ...I was particularly struck by Lenin, who is a straight forward man of the quickest intelligence, and a certain serenity, humor, and broad-minded views... We can destroy the Communists only by producing anarchy. Then we shall finally have to intervene over the dead bodies and dead hopes of the simple Russian people to set up a form of government they do not want and against which they will revolt whenever strength returns to them... They received me because they had gathered the impression that President Wilson was beginning to see through the lies against them to the very simple truth that a dull, inexperienced,

> a young people were trying rudely but conscientiously and at the cost of great suffering to themselves to find a better way to live for the common good than the old way."[33]

Bullitt wired Colonel House, "You must do your utmost for the peace, for if you had seen the things I have seen during the past week and talked with the men I have talked with, I know that you would not rest until you have put through the peace."[34] Bullitt saw that Lenin was advocating the conciliation of the United States even at the cost of compromising with many of the principles the Russian leader held most dear. Lenin was ready to meet the western Governments half-way. Bullitt told the Commission to Negotiate Peace that the hold which Lenin had gained on the imagination of the Russian people made his position almost that of a dictator. There was already a Lenin legend. He was regarded as almost a prophet. His picture, usually accompanied by that of Karl Marx, was everywhere. When he called on Lenin at the Kremlin he had to wait a few minutes until a delegation of peasants left Lenin's room. They had heard in their village that Comrade Lenin was hungry. And they had come hundreds of miles carrying 800 puds (incredibly enough 14½ tons) of bread as the gift of the village to Lenin.

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[33] Ibid., Paris Peace Conference 184.02202/6: Telegram: Mr. William C. Bullitt to the Commission to Negotiate Peace. Helsingfors, undated, p. 81.

[34] Ibid., Paris Peace Conference 184.02202/9: Telegram: Mr. William C. Bullitt to the Commission to Negotiate Peace. Helsingfors, undated, p. 34.

Just before them was another delegation of peasants to whom the report had come that Comrade Lenin was working in an unheated room. They came bearing a stove and enough firewood to heat it for three months. Thus, William Bullitt witnessed the popularity, the magnetic personality of the President of the Soviet of People's Commissars.

The Russians feared Allied intervention greatly. Chicherin wrote Christian G. Rakovsky, Prime Minister of Soviet Ukraine in March, 1919 -- urging him to support an understanding with the Allies. "This decision is very important," he declared. "If we don't try to get an agreement the policy of blockade will be pressed with vigor. They will send tanks... Bullitt does not believe that big concessions can be won for us in Paris. But he hopes to carry this proposal through... France knows nothing about it. This must be kept absolutely secret."[35]

Satisfied that he had gotten what he had been sent to get, Bullitt left Russia in a hurry. From Helsinki, he cabled his preliminary report to Paris. Bullitt was excited, however, he did see that his mission was not completely finished -- those in Paris had to agree to the proposal by April 10, 1919. Lincoln Steffens later said, "Our return from Moscow was less playful than the coming. Bullitt was serious... Our journey home was a course of intellectual

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[35]Louis Fischer, Men And Politics., An Autobiography, (New York: 1941) p. 132.

digestion; we were all enjoying a mental revolution which corresponded somewhat with the Russian Revolution and gave us a sense of looking ahead... It was a mental change we had experienced, not physical. Bullitt asked in surprise why it was that, having been so elated by the prospect of Russia, we were so glad to be back in Paris. I thought it was because, though we had been to heaven, we were so accustomed to our own civilization, that we preferred hell. We were ruined; we could recognize salvation, but could not be saved."[36]

Bullitt, himself, got back to Paris on March 25, and that evening he went to see Colonel House. Both men knew that it would take a struggle to put over what amounted to de facto recognition of Soviet Russia, but at that time both seemed to have thought that it was the only intelligent course. Bullitt filed a final report which was sent on to Wilson, and Steffens did likewise. In a world that still tended to equate Bolshevism with anarchy and instability, Bullitt and Steffens were providing needed information. The day following Bullitt's return, he and House set out to put over the plan. Bullitt conferred at length with the American peace commissioners. House attempted to deal with the President, who had by this time returned to Paris. But Wilson did not wish to take up the Russian question at the moment. He had, he said, a "one track mind" and was

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[36]Steffens, p. 799.

preoccupied with other matters. Unable to get an appointment for him with Wilson, House made arrangements for him to meet with Lloyd George and other British statesmen. Bullitt had breakfast with the Prime Minister on March 27. In a testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee a few months later, Bullitt related, "... I had breakfast with Mr. Lloyd George at his apartment, General Smuts and Sir Maurice Hankey and Mr. Philip Kerr were also present, and we discussed the matter at considerable length. I brought Mr. Lloyd George the official text of the proposal. General Smuts read it immediately and he said he thought it should not be allowed to lapse; that it was of the utmost importance. Mr. Lloyd George, however, said he did not know what he could do with British public opinion. He had a copy of the Daily Mail in his hand, and he said, 'As long as the British press is doing this kind of thing how can you expect me to be sensible about Russia?' ... Mr. Lloyd George then urged me to make public my report."[37] Questioned in the House of Commons some three weeks later about the rumors that diplomatic approaches had been made to the Soviets, Lloyd George replied, "We have had no approaches at all... I think I know what my right honorable friend refers to. There was some suggestion that a Young American had come back from Russia with a communication. It is not for me to judge the value of this communication, but if the President of the

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[37] "Behind the Scenes at Paris", The Nation, September 27, 1919, p. 430.

United States had attached any value to it, he would have brought it before the conference, and he certainly did not."[38]

Wilson, indeed never brought Bullitt's report before the conference; quite the contrary, when he turned his "one track mind" to the Russian question, he ordered that the report be suppressed. The newspapermen were left clutching at rumors. Though many projects tended to suffer a lingering death at the Hotel Crillon, Bullitt's succumbed swiftly: for all practical purposes it was dead and abandoned within 48 hours after Bullitt's return to Paris.

William Bullitt had set he heart on the acceptance of his report. He had known since he had first reached the March 16, 1919 agreement with the Soviets that he would meet up with trouble when he returned to Paris. However, he didn't expect a total refusal by the Allies. Lloyd George felt the need of sending a complete conservative to Russia to negotiate instead of Bullitt -- because Bullitt was suspected of being sympathethic towards Communism. Samuel Compers, who was influential in the American Federation of Labor movement in the U. S., talking to Mr. Lansing in Paris, was told of Bullitt's mission to Russia. Compers made the statement that Bullitt was reported to be in sympathy with the Bolsheviki. The Secretary of State

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[38]Rifkind, "The Wasted Mission," page 45.

replied that Bullitt was not a sympathizer with the Bolsheviats, nor was the commission.[39]

Bullitt was disillusioned, and furious. He was angry enough about Wilson's actions, however the comments of Lloyd George in the House of Commons brought his emotions to a boiling point. He later stated, "About a week after I had handed to Mr. Lloyd George the official proposal, with my own hands, in the presence of three other persons, he made a speech before the British Parliament, and gave the British people to understand that he knew nothing whatever about any such proposition. It was the most egregious case of misleading the public, perhaps the boldest that I have ever known in my life."[40]

Why did such an important mission fail? Why did President Wilson and Prime Minister Lloyd George act in such a way as to completely defeat the proposed treaty? If the Bullitt mission of 1919 began in a mysterious fashion, its failure was even more mysterious. There were many reasons for the plan's defeat, but as to which reason was the dominant factor -- there is still question. It was probably an unwise method of procedure, on Bullitt's part, to return with such a document. It left to the Allied governments no

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[39] Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: 1919: The Paris Peace Conference: Vol. XI, p. 70.

[40] The Bullitt Mission to Russia: Testomony Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, of William Christian Bullitt, (New York: 1919) p. 93.

latitude of negotiation. By taking cognizance of the document, they would obviously place themselves in a position where they could only take it or leave it.[41] Any alteration in its text at the Allied end would have given the Soviet government formal grounds for refusing to accept it. Nevertheless, it was in substance not an offer to be lightly rejected from the Allied standpoint.

Bullitt seems to have arrived in Paris when passions were at their peak and the strain on everyone was the greatest -- concerning questions on the treatment of Germany. To make things worse, President Wilson was at this time increasingly unwell. Another reason for the mission's failure can be attributed to the general atmosphere of confusion that attends large multilateral gathering of senior statesmen -- the characteristic inadequacy of summit statesmenship. And closely related to this was the great difficulty which is always involved in any attempt of a coalition of sovereign governments to negotiate with a single hostile political entity, particularly in a confused and rapidly moving context of circumstances. "This is something that requires centralization of authority, complete privacy of decision, and a high disciplined mode of procedure. These are not the marks of coalition diplomacy."[42]

An even more important cause of Bullitt's misfortune was no doubt the domestic -- political situation in England,

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[41] George F. Kennan, Russia and The West Under Lenin and Stalin, (Boston, 1960) p. 131.

[42] Ibid., p. 132.

which did not permit Mr. Lloyd George to do what he thought would have been sensible about the Russian problem. Thus, one sees a disadvantage in democratic diplomacy. "A system of government under which the executive power is sensitively attuned to the waves of popular sentiment, and of parliamentary opinion, is one which finds it difficult to adjust rapidly and incisively to a complicated and fast moving series of circumstances, especially when controversial domestic issues are involved."[43] Some months after his reference to Bullitt in the House of Commons, Mr. David Lloyd George remarked, "I ... made war against and helped starve a great people writhing in agony, and though I agreed with Mr. Bullitt and would myself gladly have made peace, I could not bear those dreadful newspaper articles and the frightful things Winston Churchill would have said. Frankly, I have done much that is evil."[44]

There was another reason for the failure of the Bullitt mission. At the time of Bullitt's return to Paris a new proposal was being entertained in the entourage of Colonel House -- one centered around the person and activities of the future American president, Herbert Hoover. Hoover was at that time Director of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, an American organization which had functioned with spectacular

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[43] Ibid., p. 135.

[44] "The Awful Transgressions of Mr. Bullitt," The New Republic, October 1, 1919, p. 264.

success during the war in getting food relief to the population of German-occupied Belgium. On March 28, 1919, just after Bullitt's return to Paris, President Wilson received a long letter from Hoover recommending the establishment of a relief commission for Russia along the lines of the Belgium one. His plan did not involve any recognition of what he called "the Bolshevik murderers", but called for the Bolsheviki to cease hostilities against their opponents in Russia and stop their propaganda abroad or accept the onus of denying food to the Russian people. The idea of using food as a weapon was one which had a very strong appeal to the American mind. Since the money and food would be donated by Americans, the action could always be portrayed to people at home as an altruistic and benevolent one, and made to contrast favorably with the evil and awful thing called "power politics" of which the European countries were presumed to be chronically guilty. Hoover called upon Fridtjof Nansen, the Arctic explorer, to take over the titular leadership of the Proposed Relief Commission for Russia. On April 2, the awkward questioning about the Bullitt mission began in the House of Commons and on April 3, President Wilson, worn with strain and frustration, collapsed and took to his bed for a period of some days. House, encouraged by his subordinates, seized on the Hoover proposal as means of evading Lenin's offer. Here was an alternative

scheme which, if successful, appeared to spell less risk for the Allies, and could bring no embarrassment if it did not succeed. Bullitt was asked to merge his efforts with those who were handling the Hoover-Hansen initiative, for it was said that the Allied reply to Lenin could be embodied in the terms of this new proposal. Mr. Auchincloss and Mr. David Hunter Miller, international law experts, were instructed to draw up the proposition. The result was: nothing was said about the withdrawal of the Allied forces -- and distribution and transportation within Russia, it was said, would have to be under supervision of the proposed Relief Commission. The provision for supervision of all Russian transportation by the Relief Commission meant simply taking one great and vital branch of economic and military administration out of the hands of the Russian government entirely. Bullitt objected violently. The proposal was rejected by the Soviets early in May, and they protested that the true objectives of the plan were not humanitarian but political -- and demanded instead full-fledged peace negotiations. That demand was to be ignored by the United States for fourteen years.

Why Wilson disregarded the Bullitt report is the mystery within the fantasy. Perhaps only a mind reader could tell with confidence what the increasingly secretive President was thinking. Bullitt himself had suggested at least two theories. On the one hand he had said that his report was

abandoned, because, at the moment of his return to Paris, the White armies had made substantial advances and it was hoped that the Soviet government might soon be destroyed by force of arms. Admiral Alexander V. Kolchak made a one hundred mile advance, and it was felt he would be in Moscow within two weeks. However, Wilson did not share that hope. Trying to stop Bolshevism with an army, he said on March 27, was like using a broom to stop the sea. Somewhat petulantly, Bullitt has also suggested that when Wilson found out that Bullitt had gones first to see Lloyd George, he took it as a personal affront and refused to see Bullitt out of sheer pique.

However, a somewhat more substantial explanation of Wilson's behavior can be suggested. The President was unwilling to acknowledge that Soviet autocracy had become part of the scheme of things. He was waiting for some sign of change, some sign that the revolution was settling down into tractable, constitutional, parliamentary patterns. He was willing to encourage such a change. "I visualize it like this," he told William Wiseman in October, 1918. "A lost, impossible folk, fighting among themselves. You cannot do business with them, so you shut them off up in a room and lock the door and tell them that when they have settled matters among themselves, you will unlock the door and do business."[45]

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[45]Rifkind, "The Wasted Mission," p. 45.

If all the factions could be gotten together and persuaded to lay their cards on the table, they might continue to constitutionalize themselves. "One can see in Wilson's mind a picture of Bolsheviks and Monarchists sitting opposite each other in long rows like so many Whigs and Tories -- with Menshiviks and Social Revolutionists somewhere in the back benches. And a Lenin somehow transmuted into the leader of the loyal majority, Wilson would gladly deal with -- however radical the man's economics might be."[46] Persuaded, as were most Americans in 1919, that parliamentary, constitutional democracy was the wave of the future, Wilson was prepared to wait if need be for things to settle down. In May, he said that he no longer regretted not having a Russian policy -- under present conditions it was impossible to define one.

As more information and misinformation concerning Communist rule filtered across the sea, American dislike and fear of the Russian regime reached new proportions. The period of the "Great Red Scare" was well under way. The press was filled with tales of Bolshevik atrocities, with little effort being made to sift the true from the false or to evaluate the conditions in Russia which prompted such measures. By the summer of 1919, even President Wilson had abandoned his verbal neutrality towards Russia. In the course of his nationwide tour to rally support for the

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[46] Ibid.

Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations, he spoke of the Moscow regime as "the negation of everything that is American."[47]

William Christian Bullitt was a young and impatient man. He was bitterly disappointed with the abandonment of his project, and when in May he saw the text of the Treaty of Versailles, he gave up in despair. On May 17, 1919, he submitted his resignation to the Secretary of State. Steffens reported later that Bullitt "was one of the group of aristocratic young American liberals who ... wanted to do right and had to decide then and there whether to sacrifice their careers, as they honestly believed, by an open challenge to the wrong done by their government, by their department, or yield and play the game..."[48] Bullitt dissented from his government's policies and wrote President Wilson the following letter:

> "Sir, I have submitted to the Secretary of State my resignation as assistant in the Department of State and attaché to the American commission to negotiate peace. I am one of the millions who trusted implicitly in your leadership and believed you would take nothing less than 'a permanent peace based on unselfish, unbiased justice.' But the government has consented now to deliver the suffering peoples of the world to new oppressions, subjections and dismemberments -- a new century of war.

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[47] Ray S. Baker and William E. Dodd (eds.), War and Peace, Presidential Messages, Addresses, and Public Papers (1917-1924) by Woodrow Wilson (New York, 1927) II, p. 15.

[48] Steffens, p. 802.

> I can convince myself no longer that effective labor for a "new world order" is possible as a servant of this Government. Russia, the 'acid test of good will' for me, as for you, has not ever been understood.
>
> It is my conviction that the present League of Nations will be powerless to prevent these wars, and the United States will be involved in them by obligations undertaken through the covenant of the League and in a special understanding with France....
>
> That you persistently opposed most of the unjust settlements; that you accepted them only under great pressure is well known. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that if you had made your fight in the open instead of behind closed doors, you would have carried with you the public opinion of the world which was yours....
>
> I am sorry you did not fight our fight to a finish and that you had so little faith in the millions of men like myself in every nation who had faith in you."[49]

Bullitt sounded like more of an idealist than President Wilson. However, the young man was terribly disillusioned. With a keen sense of the dramatic, he gave the press copies of his letter of resignation, and stated that he was going to lie on the sands of the Riviera and watch the world go to hell. On June 28, 1919, the peace treaty was signed at Versailles, and the men at the Hotel Crillon packed their bags. Six months after it had opened, the peace conference adjourned, and the Allies separated with the announcement that they had made a perpetual peace. Siberia and Russia were still at war.

William Bullitt had not quite made <u>his</u> peace. From Paris, he retired not to the Riviera but to the Maine woods

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[49] "Clearing the Air," <u>The Nation</u>, May 31, 1919, p. 869.

from whence he was summoned in August, 1919 by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. He appeared before the committee on Friday morning, September 12, and was not a reluctant witness. "He simply turned state's evidence," Senator Henry Cabot Lodge later said.[50] Bullitt's testimony covered 138 pages; he submitted 26 documents on the League, Russia, the Versailles Treaty and included private conversations, gentlemen's chats etc. He stated that all of Wilson's chief advisers had privately expressed their disapproval of the Treaty of Versailles. He brought laughter to the lips of the senators when he quoted Lansing as saying that the Senate would vote against the treaty if only they could understand it.

Wilson was in the midst of his great tour of the West, speaking for the Treaty (and denouncing Russia), when the news of Bullitt's testomony reached him. Two weeks later he suffered the stroke that ended his tour. When Wilson recovered, he accepted Lansing's resignation; the Bullitt affair had been a climactic skirmish in the long battle between the President and his Secretary of State. Bullitt's testimony, more than any other individual's, was considered to have brought the greatest weight against America's joining the League.[51]

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[50] Nifkind, "The Wasted Mission," p. 45.

[51] "Profiles: Mr. Ambassador II: William C. Bullitt," The New Yorker, December 17, 1938, p. 24.

Being Left was not intellectually the mode in 1919 in the United States. By the rich, Bullitt was treated as a traitor to his class -- by Democratic and Republican pro-Leaguers as a renegade -- by the press and the bureaucrats, he was almost universally tagged as a tattletale for letting cats out of the bag which were familiar to every diplomat in Europe but news to the common man. The London Post birched him for not playing the game. The New York Times called his revelations treacherous and indiscreet. Oswald Garrison Villard's Nation, which was anti-League, backed him as a champion of open diplomacy openly arrived at and was alone in printing in toto his important Russian report. The New York Tribune termed him a rash young man, a sort of super-Bayard. He was called a radical, of the type that considered certain things not binding on him. "He was not," the report stated, "bound by old-fashioned rules as to breaches of confidence."[52] Collier's declared that, "To a United States still shaky and hysterical over the Soviet's social experiment, he became 'explosive Bullitt, a trouble maker and a bad boy of international politics."[53] Finally, the New Republic found room for praise: "...people are often too fearful of doing or speaking out to let their heart and conscience dictate their actions and speech. True, Mr. Bullitt

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[52] New York Tribune, September 26, 1919, p. 1.

[53] Collier's, November 11, 1933, p. 92.

violated a small rule of decorum which was imposed on him under duress, but driven to criticize the established order he could not help but commit a breach of decorum."[54] "Being twenty-eight, he relished equally the battle, the martyrdom, and his share of the victory. America repudiated the League, Wilson became a broken, ill old gentleman, and the young Philadelphian stepped into limbo."[55]

Thus, was concluded the fantasy which had begun as America's first diplomatic contact with Soviet Russia. The Soviets had purported to be willing to forswear the bulk of the historically Russian territories. The Allies had said, in effect, that they had not heard about it. The situation was anomalous, if not comical. Yet, for all its absurdity, the Bullitt mission posed the dilemma that in the ensuing five decades has gradually become the major theme of world diplomacy. Could the democracies afford to do business with Soviet Russia? Could they afford not to?

It was, of course, only the first act of William Christian Bullitt's official contact with Soviet Russia. Fate would grant the young dissenter another rendezvous with the "idealistic social experiment" which had so excited him in his youth.

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[54]The New Republic, October 8, 1919, pp. 295-296.

[55]"Profiles," The New Yorker, p. 24.

CHAPTER III

THE RECOGNITION OF TWO OUTCASTS

When he resigned from Wilson's peace staff in 1919, in what was considered a scandalous underling's uprising against the Treaty of Versailles, Bullitt said he knew he would be put on the political shelf for fifteen years. His prophecy erred by three years. At the close of his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1919, he was asked what future plans he had. He replied, "I expect to return to Maine and fish for trout, where I was when I was summoned by this committee."[1] For twelve years, Bullitt lived in retirement from public life. He had married Ernesta Drinker of Philadelphia, and in the seven years of their marriage, they lived in Washington, in Europe (where she was with him during the Peace Conference, dazzling the international great with her beauty and her Paris gowns), in New Hampshire, Grammercy Park, and finally in Ashfield, Massachusetts where they built a summer home. In 1921, he spent a year as managing editor of Famous Players-Lasky (film) Corporation.

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[1] The Bullitt Mission To Russia: Testimony Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, of William Christian Bullitt, (New York, 1919) p. 93.

In 1923 Mrs. Bullitt obtained a divorce, and shortly afterward Bullitt married Louise Bryant Reed -- widow of the American Communist, John Reed, who was buried in the Kremlin wall.[2] Louise Bryant was a public figure in her own right, an established journalist, author of "Six Months in Red Russia." Reed had had a lasting influence on her and, it is possible, had a posthumous temporary influence on Bullitt. The Bullitt lived in Turkey for a year, returned to Paris in 1924, where their daughter Anne was born and lived variously in France, Vienna, Philadelphia, and New York.[3]

In the period following his political eclipse, Bullitt's appetite for books and documents was concentrated on the un-published archives of the war. He later related, "I spent most of my time between 1919 and 1932 in studies related to foreign affairs. I did much research in the German and Austrian secret archives -- which included the minutes of the German cabinet meetings during the First World War and the private papers of the men in Austria who had so much to do with launching the attack on Servia."[4] Of the private papers he had access to were those of the former German

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[2]Cf. Bertram D. Wolfe, "The Harvard Man In The Kremlin Wall," American Heritage, February, 1960, pp. 6-9.

[3]"Profiles: Mr. Ambassador II: William C. Bullitt," The New Yorker, p. 24.

[4]Letter from William C. Bullitt to Milton De Kalb Brogley, December 5, 1947 in Milton De Kalb Brogley's, William C. Bullitt And Russian American Relations: A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science (History) at the University of Wisconsin (1949) p. 51.

Chancellor, Prince Max of Baden, at Schloss Salem, Colonel House's papers, and many others.

During what William Bullitt called his exile, he wrote a lot, mostly interpretations of history which he never published. He wrote a novel, "It's Not Done." It had a sale of 150,000 copies and was translated into German and the Scandinavian languages. "Philadelphia society thought his book a roman à clef about itself and his first marriage and liked his report on neither."[5] The novel was written during Bullitt's years in Turkey, when he lived in a manner suited to the exotic streak in his nature. In an effort to approximate his name, the natives called him Bulut Pasha, which in Turkish means Cloud General. He liked that a great deal. In 1930, Louise Bryant and William Bullitt were divorced, and after a long and tragic illness, she died in Paris in 1936.

In 1931, because of his admiration for Franklin D. Roosevelt and because of their close friendship, Bullitt began to emerge again. In the pre-nomination period, he helped shape Democratic foreign policy. Bullitt later stated, "In the early spring of 1932 Mr. Roosevelt, who was confident that he would be nominated and elected, asked me to make a tour of the whole of Europe for him so he might have someone close to him who knew something about foreign affairs. I made

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[5]"Profiles," The New Yorker, p. 25.

the trip and visited Moscow and Leningrad once more."[6] During his brief stay in Moscow, Bullitt talked with Karl Radek (a leading Russian journalist) -- who later published his account of their conversation. According to Radek, Bullitt expressed the view that the Soviet Union alone marched "manfully forward" in the midst of world economic and political disorganization. Roosevelt, the American visitor asserted, would be the next President of the United States and could be expected to "carry out the will of America; to establish not only normal but friendly relations with Russia."[7] Radek no doubt embellished Bullitt's words, but Bullitt's friendliness toward Russia was well-known at the time.[8]

Rumors came back to the United States that Bullitt, in talking to various officials of the countries where he visited, claimed to represent the putative next President of the United States. These rumors caused a furor in various quarters of the country. Before Roosevelt's inauguration, the excitable Senator Arthur Robinson (Republican, Indiana) rose on the Senate floor and demanded Bullitt's arrest for allegedly representing Mr. Roosevelt before foreign governments

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[6]Letter from William C. Bullitt to Milton De Kalb Brogley, December 5, 1947, p. 52; and Letter from William C. Bullitt to Robert Paul Browder, February 2, 1950, in Robert P. Browder's The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy (Princeton: 1953) p. 100.

[7]Pravda, November 9, 1933.

[8]See Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (New York: 1948) I, p. 296.

in Europe.[9] Soon, Senator Robinson received a letter from Under Secretary of State William R. Castle with paraphrases of the replies from missions located in the European capitals where Bullitt had been reported visiting. Mr. Castle declared that the replies "would not indicate that Mr. Bullitt had represented himself to high officials of foreign governments as a representative of the President-elect."[10]

Upon his return to the United States in the summer of 1932, Bullitt reported orally to Roosevelt in Albany, briefing the future President on the current situation in Europe.[11] What he had to say about Russia is unknown, but it is more than probable that he relayed his favorable impression and, in the confident expectation that Roosevelt would be elected, urged a serious investigation of Russian-American relations after March 4, 1933. Late in September, 1932, F. D. R. asked Henry Morgenthau, Jr., who was to become Secretary of the Treasury, what he thought of "bringing this whole Russian question into our front parlor instead of back in the kitchen? When Morgenthau replied that of course it must be the President's decision, Roosevelt disclosed that he had 'a plan in mind.'"[12]

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[9] News-Week, November 25, 1933, pp. 6-7.

[10] United States State Department Press Releases, 1933, Vols. 8-9, p. 92.

[11] Letter from William C. Bullitt to Robert Paul Browder, February 2, 1950 in Broder, p. 100.

[12] Henry Morgenthau, Jr., "The Morgenthau Diaries," Part III, Colliers, October 11, 1947, p. 21.

On April 20, 1933, a State Department press release made the following announcement: "Mr. William Christian Bullitt has been appointed by the Secretary of State to be a Special Assistant to the Secretary of State. He took the oath today."[13] Thus, the man who had dissented from the ranks of the Wilson government and who had suffered banishment from the confidence of the Democratic party was resurrected for the diplomatic corps. However, Franklin D. Roosevelt apparently hesitated for some time before appointing him, and the President may not have done so except for the insistence of a member of the noted Roosevelt "Brain Trust" (a group of unofficial advisors) -- Raymond Moley. Although Roosevelt had seemed to want Bullitt as an advisor on European affairs, and later used him, as did Cordell Hull, in much the same confidential service as had Wilson, he did not apparently want him to have an official position.[14] Moley had heard of Bullitt's defection from Wilson, and also of his visit to Europe shortly before Roosevelt was inaugurated. Moley assumed that Bullitt would have a place in the State Department, but Roosevelt denied that this was true. The former Assistant Secretary of State stated, "I was introduced to him /Bullitt/ finally, by F. D. R. in February ... he told me of his 1919-1920 adventure, of the years in Europe that had

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[13] United States State Department Press Releases, 1933, Volumes 8-9, p. 283.

[14] Raymond Moley, After Seven Years (New York: 1939) p. 136.

followed, of his sympathy for the Roosevelt policies, and of his desire to return to the diplomatic service. He impressed me very favorably, and it seemed to me that simple justice called for his being given a chance to resume the career cut short twelve years before... I spoke to Roosevelt about it, shortly after. He was inclined to be dubious about whether Bill should be given an appointment... For what seemed like a long time, I reminded the President almost daily that there was an obligation of sorts to Bullitt -- with no noteworthy results, I admit.[15] At last, Moley prepared a memorandum about Bill's appointment and several other men's, and President Roosevelt soon initialed it. Armed with this, Moley went into the office of Mr. William Phillips, the Under Secretary of State, "who thereupon showed more emotion than I knew he was capable of,"[16] Moley relates. Mr. Phillips bitterly reminded Moley that Bullitt had been "disloyal" to the Wilson Administration. Mr. Moley states, "I answered that the years had shown that, on the point of difference between Wilson and Bullitt, Bullitt had been right; it seemed to me that loyalty to one's country superceeded loyalty to a President; that it was a man's duty, under such circumstances to pass up official position and take a public stand... After the customary tussle, Phillips and I finally agreed.

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[15] Ibid., p. 137.

[16] Ibid.

Bullitt should be Special Assistant to the Secretary rather than Assistant Secretary, as the latter appointment, which required Senatorial confirmation, might involve the raking up of old scores. Bullitt's commission was made out. My assistant was sent to the White House with it. The President's eagerness to make the appointment may be gauged by the fact that my assistant was kept waiting through three whole mornings before F. D. R. signed it."[17]

On May 16, 1933, President Roosevelt telegraphed a direct appeal to the heads of fifty-four governments asking their cooperation in the coming World Economic Conference to be held in London. Included among the addressees was President Mikhail Kalinin of the Soviet Union. This was the first direct communication between the United States Government and the Kremlin since the Revolution.[18] The convening in June of the World Economic Conference offered an opportunity for the United States and Russia to draw closer together. The Conference gave Moscow a platform from which to appeal to the United States for a reconciliation along economic lines and also provided a meeting place for the representatives of the two countries. And, at least one of the American delegates might be expected to lend a sympathetic ear to the Soviets -- William Christian Bullitt.

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Robert Paul Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy (Princeton: 1953), p. 86.

During the conference, both Bullitt and Assistant Secretary of State Raymond Moley, met with Litvinov. The result was that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation announced that it had extended a four million dollar credit to the Soviet Government's agency (Amtorg) for the purchase of sixty to eighty thousand bales of American cotton on the open market.[19] The loan was for one year at five per cent and was to cover seventy per cent of the Soviet purchases. Although it was not for a long term, the credit opened a breach in the economic barriers between the two countries, and was significant as having been granted by a government agency.

In the U. S., reaction to the news was varied. Hamilton Fish labelled the deal "inexcusable, improper and probably illegal," while Senator Kenneth McKellen of Tennessee hailed it as an "excellent way to move surplus cotton."[20] The Nashville Banner viewed Russia as the "same outlaw nation that it has been from the day Bolshevism banished the autocracy of a Czar and substituted a reign even more devastating and ruthless."[21] On the other hand, the Providence News-Tribune suggested that closer connections between Russia and the rest of the world might hasten the deterioration of the Soviet system. "Wild blood is not tamed nor

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[19]Edgar S. Furniss, "Soviet Diplomatic Successes," Current History, XXXVIII, 1933, p. 756.

[20]Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy, p. 87.

[21]Ibid.

taught," it editorialized, "by being left to roam...through its native jungle."[22]

Although Mr. Bullitt denies that recognition was discussed with Litvinov during his several meetings with the Soviet representative at the London Conference,[23] the ground work was being prepared for the future reconciliation of the two countries. When he returned to the United States, Bullitt was instructed by Secretary of State Cordell Hull to write a memorandum for the information of the President, covering certain aspects of the forthcoming negotiations between the U. S. and Russia. Bullitt stated in his memorandum that "before recognition and before loans we shall find the Soviet Government amenable. After recognition or loans, we ... [shall] find the Soviet Government adamant." The Soviet Government, along with many other governments in the world, owed the United States money in 1933. Bullitt suggested that the U. S. try to obtain a waiver on the inevitable counterclaims which would be presented by the Soviets for damage suffered from the Siberian, Archangel and Murmansk expeditions. He also recommended that guarantees be obtained to secure the religious rights of American citizens resident in Russia.[24]

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[22]"The London Economic Conference," Literary Digest, July 15, 1933, p. 8.

[23]Letter from William C. Bullitt to Robert Paul Browder, February 2, 1950. Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy, p. 87.

[24]Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers 1933, II, pp. 793-794.

President Roosevelt, however, had a predilection for direct communications between the heads of states. Some exchange of opinion was necessary, nevertheless, to guarantee that the method adopted would be satisfactory to Russia. For this task, Roosevelt turned to Bullitt, who during the late summer had become Roosevelt's closest adviser on the Russian question. Bullitt had been taking an active part in the recognition preparations since August, 1933.[25] Although Bullitt was a member of the State Department, his work in this matter was directly under the President, and during the exploratory stages before the invitation was dispatched, the Department was not cognizant of many of his activities.[26] The first approach to the Soviets was made by William Bullitt through Boris E. Skvirsky, the Director of the Soviet Information Bureau in Washington,[27] the unofficial embassy of the Russian government in the United States. Working through Skvirsky, Bullitt made known to the Russians the desire of the President to open negotiations, and attempted to ascertain if Moscow was willing to discuss the issues outstanding between the two countries. It was a negotiation which called for particular finesse, and, very likely, the Russian agreement

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[25]Ibid., p. 788.

[26]Interview by Robert Paul Browder with Mr. William Phillips, Boston, Mass., June 7, 1949 and interview by Robert Paul Browder with Mr. Robert F. Kelley, Washington, D. C. June 15, 1949. Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy, p. 102.

[27]Bullitt Letter to R. P. Browder, Ibid., p. 100ff.

on terms was couched in noncommital phrases of acceptance. The President and Bullitt were presumably satisfied, however, for Bullitt turned next to the drafting of a note of invitation for Roosevelt to send to Moscow. Among other factors determining the form of the message was the conviction of Bullitt that the success of the recognition negotiations depended upon the Kremlin's choice of a Soviet statesman of first-rate importance for the American mission, preferably Litvinov.[28]

When the note was completed and approved by the President, Bullitt went to Skvirsky and asked him to transmit it to Moscow. Moscow approved of the form of the invitation, and it was resent, addressed to Mikail Kalinin, President of the Central Committee of the U. S. S. R., signed by Roosevelt, and dated October 10, 1933.[29]

The departure of Commissar Litvinov was shrouded in secrecy to avoid publicity and the necessity of meeting correspondents. Accompanied by Constantine Umanskii, Press Director of the Foreign office, and Ivan Divilkovsky, Secretary General of the Foreign Office Collegium, Litvinov traveled by way of Warsaw, Berlin, and Paris to take the transatlantic steamer for the U. S. At Berlin, he finally agreed to grant an interview to American correspondents, and he told them that as far as the Soviet Delegation was concerned an agreement

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[28]Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, I, pp. 296-297

[29]Phillips Interview, Browder, p. 106.

P-3 Soviet Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov cheerfully posing aboard the Berengaria on his arrival at New York on November 7, 1933 -- the sixteenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Before leaving the Berengaria for the revenue cutter that bore him to the Jersey railroad terminal, Mr. Litvinov declared, "I am setting foot today, gentlemen, on the territory of the great American Republic with a keen sense of the privilege that is mine in being the first official representative to bring greetings to the American people from the peoples of the Soviet Union. The anomalous nature of the situation during the last sixteen years has now been recognized by both sides." A representative of the New York Sun concluded that Litvinov was "like hundreds of business men that might be seen walking Seventh Avenue at the luncheon hour."

could be reached in "a half an hour."[30] The Berengaria with Maxim Litvinov and his party aboard, steamed into New York harbor on November 7, 1933 -- the sixteenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Litvinov was met by Secretary Hull and his entourage who, after an exchange of greetings, escorted the Russians to the Skvirsky residence. Later, at a reception at the White House, President Roosevelt received Litvinov in the Blue Room, although he is said to have jokingly suggested the Red Room as more appropriate.

After two days of negotiations, there was still no final agreement. The conference had reached an impasse on the major issues -- namely, religion and propaganda. William Bullitt later declared that Litvinov's persistent refusal to agree to the guarantees prompted the negotiators to hand him a schedule of steamship sailings with the choice of sign or go home.[31] If Mr. Bullitt's memory was correct, the State Department was most certainly resorting to drastic action. President Roosevelt had an interview with Litvinov, and by the end of the discussion Litvinov had noticeably thawed -- negotiations were greatly enhanced. On November 10, 1933, Secretary Hull left for the Montevideo Conference. In Hull's absence, his duties devolved upon Under-Secretary Phillips, but as far as the Russian-American

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[30] New York Times, October 29, 1933.

[31] William C. Bullitt, "How We Won The War and Lost The Peace," Part I, Life, August 30, 1948, pp. 93-97.

negotiations were concerned, William Bullitt then became the principle representative of the State Department. Bullitt was Roosevelt's chief advisor and emissary and most of the materials which passed between the White House and the State Department in the succeeding negotiations were handled by Bullitt with the President.[32]

Negotiations were drawing to a close, however there was one major problem remaining to be solved -- the debt issue. Finally, Washington lowered the debt owed to the U. S. by the Soviet Union to $187,729,750.[33] The Soviets claimed that they were not obligated to honor the debt of their predecessor because it had been used to aid the forces fighting the Bolsheviks. It must be noted, however, that a very small part of the total loan was apparently so used, and secondly, that the supplies were not military materials but food, medical stores and rails. Furthermore, Washington did try to take the Soviet argument into account when it calculated the sum owed by the Soviet government. There were other debt categories (such as claims of American holders of pre-Revolutionary bond issues), however the "Czarist-Kerensky debt" remained the big problem. Litvinov agreed to fix $100,000,000 as the lower figure, but Roosevelt

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[32]Kelley Interview, Browder, p. 107.

[33]"Leffingwell Memorandum," June 28, 1919, Loans to Foreign Governments, Senate Document N.86, 67th Congress, 2nd session, (Washington, United States Government Printing Office 1921), pp. 93-94.

replied that he wasn't confident he could persuade Congress to accept a settlement below $150,000,000. Litvinov agreed to remain after the resumption of relations and continue negotiations with Bullitt and Morgenthau. Such was the unfortunate debt memorandum which was to be the source of much future ill-feeling between the two governments. The well-known experiences of other nations should have been sufficient warning that the U. S. was tempting fate -- Russia wasn't alone in owing Uncle Sam money. It was a particularly unfortunate move in the light of the circumstances surrounding recognition. Russia was unusually anxious for diplomatic relations. Japan was threatening her in the Far East and Germany was becoming powerful. It is not at all improbable that if enough pressure had been exerted, she would have made a definite settlement then and there. The Soviet Government and Maxim Litvinov would have suffered an immeasurable loss of prestige both at home and abroad if the negotiations failed. If, however, for undisclosed reasons, a firm stand was not feasible, every effort should have been made to draft a tentative agreement that left no room for misinterpretation. The badly worded memorandum gave the Soviet Government an opportunity later to draw quite a different meaning from it than had been intended. William Bullitt, especially, would come face to face with this problem in the following months.

On the evening of November 16, 1933, President Roosevelt went into his study at eleven o'clock. Mr. Phillips,

Secretary of the Treasury Woodin, Morgenthau, Bullitt, and Commissar Litvinov joined him. Roosevelt read through the agreements that had been drafted by the State Department. The signatures were actually affixed at 1:14 A. M. November 17, 1933. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Roosevelt was visibly pleased with the night's work and all those present toasted the new relationship between Russia and the United States with a glass of newly legal 3.2 beer.

The eight points covered in the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreements were: 1. An exchange of letters saying the two executive were glad that their countries were resuming normal relations. 2. An exchange of notes by which the Soviet Union and the United States pledged each other to refrain from interference in the international affairs of the other country. For the U. S., this was to be a protection from Communist propaganda in the United States. 3. An agreement that citizens of one country in the other should be permitted freedom of religious worship and exercise of ecclesiastical functions. 4. A protocol providing that a consular convention should be negotiated giving Americans in the Soviet Union the same civil rights as those enjoyed by the nationals of any third country in Russia. 5. A memorandum from Litvinov replying to a verbal question by the President defining prosecutions for economic espionage. 6. An agreement that the Soviet Government, preparatory to a final settlement of claims and counter claims between the

two Governments, would not make any claim with respect to court judgements or official actions affecting obligations to the Government of Russia. 7. A statement by Litvinov that the Soviet Union would not hold the U. S. responsible for property damage arising from damage to property during the activities of U. S. troops in Siberia in 1918. 8. A joint statement saying that Mr. Roosevelt and Litvinov had exchanged views with regard to methods of settling all outstanding questions of indebtedness and claims and that they hoped for a speedy solution of these.[34]

When asked in 1950 about the chief reason for the November, 1933 rapprochement between the U. S. and Russia, William C. Bullitt replied, "By that time both the President and I were convinced that Hitler would eventually make war unless England, France, and the Soviet Union should stand together against Nazi aggression. It seemed in our national interest to prevent the outbreak of a Hitler war and, therefore, to resume relations, somewhat skeptically, with the Soviet Union... The primary objective was to prevent the launching of another war by Hitler."[35] But, it is quite possible that the course of history since 1933

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[34]"The United States and Russia Make Deal," The Literary Digest, November 25, 1933, p. 4.

[35]Letter from William C. Bullitt to Robert Paul Browder, February 2, 1950, p. 108.

has in some measure influenced Mr. Bullitt's recollections of the motives behind recognition. Dr. Robert Paul Browder of Princeton has suggested the following. "Although the voluminous section in Foreign Relations for 1933 testified to Washington's concern over the threatening resurgence of Germany, the subject matter indicated no anxiety over the imminence of aggressive moves on her part. Germany's intentions were becoming more and more obvious as 1933 wore on, but they were potential dangers."[36] As a matter of fact, Bullitt himself wrote in 1936, "The only actual threat to the Soviet Union is the Japanese. All Litvinov's propaganda trumpetings to the contrary, the Soviet Government knows very well that Germany cannot be in a position to make war on the Soviet Union for many years."[37] It would appear safer, therefore, in the absence of more concrete evidence, to conclude that the fear of Japanese and German aggression, the desire for trade with the Soviet Union, the realization that recognition meant more information on the Russian nation than the U. S. previously possessed, the desire to deal with Russia on equal terms, the sincere desire for a peaceful world, and the efforts of William Christian Bullitt -- all

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[36]Browder, p. 111; cf. Foreign Relations, 1933, II, pp. 493-543; William E. Dodd, Jr. and Martha Dodd (eds.) Ambassador Dodd's Diary, 1933-1938 (New York: 1941) pp. 4-6; Joseph E. Davies, Mission to Moscow (New York: 1941) pp. xiii-xiv.

[37]Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Relations: The Soviet Union: 1933-1939. (United States Government Printing Office, Washington: 1952), p. 293.

all influenced President Roosevelt's decision to recognize the U. S. S. R.

Thus, it was that the United States of America recognized two outcasts in 1933. One being a man who was an outcast for twelve years among politicians in his own society, the other being an outcast for sixteen years among the society of civilized nations. In November, 1933, the second act of William Christian Bullitt's official contact with Soviet Russia was at an end. The third act was about to begin -- one which neither Bullitt nor the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would ever forget.

CHAPTER IV

FROM CORDIALITY TO "MISUNDERSTANDINGS"

At the Presidential press conference on the afternoon of November 17, 1933, when the recognition correspondence was released, President Roosevelt also made known the appointment of William C. Bullitt as the first ambassador from the United States to the Soviet Union. The appointment seemed a logical choice, for no other American had done more to facilitate the final agreement. The obvious enthusiasm of Bullitt for a rapprochement was well-known to the Russians. The Honorable J. Thorkelson of Montana said that the new ambassador was "perhaps the most outspoken bourgeois who could have been chosen as Ambassador to Russia." Thorkelson also brought out the fact that Bullitt had been the last American envoy to leave Soviet Russia after official relations had been broken off with the fall of Alexander F. Kerensk, who had been Prime Minister of Russia from July to November, 1917.[1] Assistant Secretary of State Robert Walton Moore, in a radio address on the subject of the recognition of the Soviet government stated: "My belief is that the

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[1] United States of America Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 78th Congress, Third Session, Appendix, Volume 80, Part 14, pp. 1844-1846.

President did the ideal thing in appointing Mr. Bullitt as ambassador. Having had very intimate association with him in the work of the Department and particularly during the weeks of preparation for the Russian negotiations and the negotiations themselves, I am able to testify that he is a most unusual man -- brilliant, of extraordinary intellectual and physical vigor, and concerned only about accomplishing the best that can be expected. He is one of those who have steadily and strongly insisted that clear and satisfactory agreements should accompany recognition. I am in a position to say that he had no desire for the appointment. His personal preference would be to remain in this country, where his friendships are innumerable and his official activities altogether congenial. But there is no other man combining first-hand knowledge of government and social conditions in Russia with complete information as to all of the details of the recent negotiations and, in the light of its results, such a full conception of the duties that will have to be performed by our ambassador and his subordinates in order to make certain that the relations between the two countries shall be as friendly and mutually beneficial as the most sanguine American desire."[2] But future events were to suggest that perhaps a man less emotionally involved with the success of the new relationship would have fared better at the Moscow post.

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[2]United States Department Press Release, 1933, Volumes 8-9, p. 285.

On the evening of December 8, 1933, William C. Bullitt boarded a train bound from Paris to Moscow. This time he traveled to Russia as the first American Ambassador to that country since the Bolsheviks had come to power in 1917. His party arrived in Moscow on Monday, December 11, 1933. He was met at the railway station by a host of Russian officials -- including Troyanovsky, who was, in turn, the first Russian Ambassador to the U. S. since the Revolution of 1917. As an old American friend of new Russia, Bullitt was received with fantastic acclaim. As he rode to the hotel in which he was to stay, people in the streets cheered him. When Bullitt approached the Hotel National, he saw the American flag suspended over the entrance. The suite which was reserved for him was, oddly enough, the exact same one he had occupied when Austria sent her ultimatum to Serbia in 1914. It had, however, been beautifully refurnished and the forty-eight year old American Ambassador found it most comfortable. "The hotel was adequately heated," he reported to the Acting Secretary of State a few weeks later, "and the food and service were good."[3]

He was received at once by Litvinov at the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and had a brief, friendly conversation. When he returned to his hotel room, he received a phone call from the lobby. It was Louis Fischer, an American

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[3] Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers: The Soviet Union: 1933-1939, p. 55.

P-4 On the evening of December 8, 1933, William C. Bullitt boarded a train bound from Paris to Moscow. During his 1919 secret mission, Bullitt's actual status as a representative of the U. S. government was questioned by both Soviet and Western authorities. However, now, he traveled to Russia as the first American Ambassador to that country since the Bolsheviks had come to power in 1917.

publicist. Mr. Fischer later said, "He greeted me very cordially with his red and gold smile. He seemed intelligent and very pro-Soviet with an air of, 'Well, we succeeded in the end in getting recognition.' He used one phrase that stuck in my mind. He said, 'After all, the President, Jack Reed, and I are of the same American strain.'"[4] Later in the afternoon, Bullitt's phone rang again, and someone informed him that Harpo Marx was in the lobby. Bullitt descended quickly, and pumped Harpo's hand with so much excitement that the oft silent comedian felt forced to utter a few phrases. Unfortunately, within a couple of months, Bill Bullitt came to realize that the same tactics didn't work so well on the Soviet officials.

On Tuesday, December 12, which was a Soviet holiday, he lunched en famille with Litvinov. He had previously given Litvinov a copy of the remarks he proposed to make on presenting his credentials -- which was to take place the following day. Litvinov told Bullitt that he was delighted with them, and that President Kalinin was also. Before the American Ambassador left Litvinov, the Russian Commissar gave him an advanced copy of Kalinin's reply as a special politeness, contrary to diplomatic precedent.

The next morning, December 13, Bullitt proceeded with his party, which included Mr. Joseph Flack (who was First

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[4]Louis Fischer, Men And Politics: An Autobiography, (New York: 1941) p. 300.

Secretary of the American Embassy in Germany) and Mr. George F. Kennan (who became the Third Secretary of the American Embassy in Moscow from 1934 to 1935), to the Kremlin. At noon, a large reception was held in one of the main rooms of the Kremlin. Ambassador Bullitt presented his credentials to Kalinin, the President of the Soviet All-Union Central Executive Committee. Bullitt declared:

> "... I do not come to your country as a stranger. My profound interest in it has existed for many years and I come with a deep conviction of the importance and historic significance of my mission. That mission, Mr. President, is to create not merely normal but genuinely friendly relations between our two great peoples who for so many years were bound to each other by a tradition of friendship... Bound by the tie of their mutual desire for peace, our peoples will find many other fields for fruitful cooperation. Today each of our nations in its own manner is seeking with the same indomitable will and limitless energy, but by different methods, to promote the welfare of its peoples. This simultaneous effort, rather than a source of conflict, offers an opportunity for creative collaboration. Finally, our peoples are surely bound by the bond of a common youthful energy, a readiness to seek new ways to solve new problems and a courage to face the future unafraid. Mr. President ... I pledge you every effort within my powers to forge strong and enduring ties between our countries."[5]

President Kalinin replied:

> "... The outstanding role which you personally, Mr. Ambassador, have played in the matter of mutual rapprochment of our two countries is well known to the wide public in the Union of

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[5] Foreign Relations, 123 Bullitt, William C/31: Remarks of the American Ambassador in the Sovit Union (Bullitt) upon the presentation of His Letters of Credence to the President of the Soviet All-Union Central Executive Committee (Kalinin) at Moscow, December 13, 1933, pp. 49-50.

> Soviet Socialist Republics, and the very fact, therefore, that it was precisely you who were chosen, by the President of the United States as the first Ambassador in the U.S.S.R., in itself, is considered by us as an act of friendship. I assure you that in the realization of those high tasks in which you rightly see the important historic significance of your mission, you will always meet with the fullest and most active cooperation on my part and on the part of the Government of the Soviet Socialist Republics."[6]

Although the exchange of amenities involved in offering and accepting the diplomatic credentials followed the stereotyped phrases common on such occasions, there was a special atmosphere of cordiality in the proceedings. And the newspapers attached importance to the words of the American Ambassador. Izvestia pointed out that, as Bullitt had stated, the significance of the new relationship lay in the fact that both countries desired a much closer tie than mere normal diplomatic intercourse offered. The basis for the cooperation of Russia and the United States, a mutual interest in the avoidance of a new war, was applauded as the highest aim upon which to found a profitable friendship.[7]

Meanwhile, Bullitt was receiving exceptional manifestations of friendship from the Russian leaders. President Kalinin, in an informal, half hour conversation with Bullitt

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[6]Ibid., 123 Bullitt, William C./31: Reply of the President of the Soviet All-Union Central Executive Committee (Kalinin) to the American Ambassador (Bullitt), at Moscow, December 13, 1933, pp. 50-51.

[7]Izvestia, December 14, 1933.

following the credential reception, bestowed liberal praise upon the Ambassador and upon Franklin Roosevelt. Kalinin assured the Ambassador that Russia saw a vast difference between the American executive and other capitalist statesmen. Kalinin remarked that "the people of Russia knew that Roosevelt was truly interested in the well-being of laboring men and the farmers and that he was not engaged in protecting the vested interests of property."[8] Unfortunately, Kalinin did not disclose the channels through which the Soviet public had been apprised of that information. Certainly, they did not receive it via the press or other Russian periodicals, which had consistently castigated the methods of Roosevelt as semi-fascist and pictured in lurid terms the ruthless disregard of the American governing classes for workers and agriculturists in the United States. In reporting on his conversation with Kalinin, Bullitt concluded, "I had never met Kalinin and had thought from what I have read and heard of him that he was a simple-minded old peasant. I was surprised to find out that he is far from simple-minded. He has a delightful shrewdness and sense of humor."[9]

On the afternoon of Friday, December 15, Bullitt had a long talk with V. M. Molotov, who was Chairman of Council of Peoples Commissars from 1930 to 1941. Bullitt later

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[8]Foreign Relations, 1933, II, p. 634.

[9]Ibid.

reported, "I found that I had underrated him as I had underrated Kalinin. He has a magnificent forehead and the general aspect of a first-rate French scientist, great poise, kindliness and intelligence."[10] He told Bullitt about the difficulties of the Soviet Union in the Far East, and said that the primary desire of the entire Soviet Government was to avoid war and to obtain time to work out the domestic reconstruction which had scarcely been begun. Years later, the first U. S. Ambassador to the Kremlin was accused in Congress of being too friendly with Molotov. Bullitt denied that he ever talked or referred to Molotov as his "friend Molotov," in that Molotov had little to do with foreign affairs when Bullitt was in the Soviet Union, and the former Ambassador related that he knew him only slightly and had had only one important conversation with him during his entire stay in Moscow.[11]

That evening Litvinov gave a formal dinner in the honor of William C. Bullitt, and nearly all the Commissars were present. The following day, Bullitt began to exchange calls with the various Ambassadors and Ministers in Moscow, and before he finally left the city a few days later, he had had about forty conversations with these colleagues. He was particularly impressed with the French Ambassador,

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[10] Ibid., p. 835.

[11] United States of America Congressional Record, August 21, 1940, Appendix Volume 86, Part 17, p. 5445.

Alphand -- who had been for many years an assistant to the French Foreign Minister, Théophile Delcassé. In the evening, the American Ambassador was Litvinov's guest at the Ballet -- which basked in the American bourgeois' favor. A few evenings later, Bullitt was taken to the Opera -- where the Muscovites rose to shout his name.

Perhaps, the highlight of William Bullitt's December visit to Russia, came on Wednesday evening, the twentieth. In the morning, he had interviews with V. I. Mezhlauk (the Vice President of the State Planning Commission - Gosplan) and K. E. Voroshilov (Marshall, People's Commissar for Defense in the Soviet Union). Mezhlauk, who was purged in 1937, told Bullitt that machine tools of all sorts would be the chief articles of import from the United States during the coming years. Voroshilov discussed frankly the situation in the Far East. The Soviet Union was much worried by the Japanese seizure of Manchuria, and Voroshilov felt that Japan would attack the Soviet Union in the near future. He was especially anxious to have a full detachment of American military, naval, and air attaches in Moscow. He hoped that he could obtain some good advice from these representatives. Bullitt later reported that Voroshilov "made it clear that; if our Government desires, our military and naval men can have a relationship of the utmost intimacy

with the military authorities of the Soviet Government."[12]

That evening, Bullitt dined with Voroshilov at the Commissar's apartment. In addition to Voroshilov and his wife, Stalin, Kalinin, Molotov, Litvinov, Mezhlauk, Troyanovsky and many others were present. Litvinov remarked to the American that most of those seated at the table made up the "inner directorate." The dinner was an extremely friendly one with continual toasts -- the first of which was offered by Stalin who proposed a toast, "To President Roosevelt who in spite of the mute growls of the Fishes, dared to recognize the Soviet Union."[13] His reference to Hamilton Fish created considerable laughter. Bullitt then proposed a toast to the health of President Kalinin, whereupon Molotov raised his glass to Bullitt and declared, "The health of one who comes to us as a new Ambassador but an old friend."[14]

After dinner, Bullitt had a long talk with Stalin, who during one point of the conversation introduced the Chief of Staff Egorov to Bullitt as "the man who will lead our army victoriously against the Japanese when they attack us."[15] Stalin asked the Ambassador to see if he could enable the Soviet Union to obtain in the immediate future 250,000 tons

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[12] Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers: The Soviet Union: 1933-1939, Bullitt, William C./32: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Acting Secretary of State No. 2 On Board Steamship "Washington", January 4, 1934, p. 123 ff.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

of old rectified rails from the American railroads which were engaged in carrying out re-equipment programs. Stalin said that the rails would be delivered to Vladivostok, on the east coast of Siberia, to complete the double tracking of the Trans-Siberian Railway. He added, "Without the rails we shall win that war but it will be easier with them."[16]

Stalin had evidently followed the development of the President's program with close attention and expressed an admiration for the President which seemed to Bullitt to be most genuine, saying finally, "President Roosevelt is today, in spite of being the leader of a capitalist nation, one of the most popular men in the Soviet Union."[17] Ambassador Bullitt had been the first foreign ambassador to have been formally received by Marshall Stalin -- quite an unprecedented gesture. But as has been seen, Bullitt further evidenced Stalin's goodwill with even more unusual actions. As if to give Voroshilov's dinner for Bullitt a final grand touch, after the Ambassador had said good-bye to Voroshilov and the others, Stalin accompanied him to the door and said, "Is there anything at all in the Soviet Union that you want?"[18] When Bullitt replied that he was interested in the bluff property overlooking the Moscow River as a location for the United States Embassy, Stalin unhesitatingly responded,

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

"It is yours."[19] The next day Litvinov told Bullitt that the property for the proposed embassy was his if he still wished to have it. Bullitt said that he still had that desire, and the matter was closed -- at least, so thought the American Ambassador.

To judge by the enthusiastic reports of his short visit to the U. S. S. R. in December, 1933, Bullitt was highly flattered by the attentions that he had received. In fact, he was somewhat concerned over the reaction of other diplomats in Moscow to his exceptional reception. After the Voroshilov banquet, he suggested to Litvinov that "it seemed to me desirable that it should be made known to the Press merely that I had been at Voroshilov's and that Stalin had dropped in, and that I had a talk with him... It is valuable to have the inside track, but it seems to me not desirable to emphasize the fact to the world."[20]

The following morning, December 21, Bullitt has his last discussion with Litvinov before the Ambassador left Moscow -- a talk, the contents of which Litvinov desired Bullitt to convey to the Secretary of State in strictest confidence. Litvinov asked if the government of the United States would have any objection to the Soviets joining the League of Nations -- since France had been applying pressure on Russia

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[19] Ibid.; Foreign Relations, 1933, II, pp. 837-838.

[20] Foreign Relations, 1933, II, p. 838.

to join. Bullitt replied that he had no codes and thus couldn't consult Washington in regard to the matter, but in his own behalf believed that the U. S. would have no objection. Then, Litvinov turned to the Soviet's Far Eastern problems. They discussed ways and means of preventing Japanese aggression. Litvinov suggested that in addition to the supplying of the steel rails, of which Stalin had spoken the previous evening, the most effective means of forestalling an attack would be by the institution by the U. S. of proposals for non-aggression pacts between the U. S., the Soviet Union, China and Japan. Bullitt explained to him the difficulties in the way of any such proposal, that the U. S. had no intention of getting into war with Japan -- and that America's participation in any Far Eastern difficulties would be confined to the use of moral influence to maintain peace. Bullitt, in reporting, on his discussion with Maxim Litvinov, stated, "Nevertheless, the Soviet Union is so anxious to have peace that it is obvious that even our moral influence is valued highly by the Soviet Government."[21] Litvinov felt that anything that could be done to make the Japanese believe that the U. S. was ready to cooperate with Russia, even though there might be no basis for the belief, would be valuable. He asked whether

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[21] Foreign Relations, Soviet Union: 1933-1939, 500.C001 1695 Telegram: The Charge in France (Mariner) to the Acting Secretary of State. Paris. December 23, 1933, p. 53.

it might not be possible for an American squadron or an individual wership to pay a visit during the spring to Vladivostock or to Laningrad. Bullitt replied that he could not answer the question, but would refer to Washington. An attack by Japan upon the Soviet Union was regarded as certain by all members of the Government and the Communist Party with whom Bullitt talked in Moscow. In December, 1933, Russia needed a friend -- and William C. Bullitt, in himself, in his position as representative of the United States, and as an influential friend of F. D. R. seemed to be just what "Uncle Joe" needed.

On the afternoon of December 21, Litvinov gave a tremendous "farewell" reception for Bullitt and that evening the American party left for Paris, crossing the Russian border at noon, December 22, 1933. People had cheered him in the streets. At the Opera, Muscovites had risen to shout his name. The Ballet had basked in his favor. He had moved in an atmosphere of hysterical Slavic emotion which produced a superficial state of the most delightful and confused optimism in all concerned. Bullitt would have been wiser to have waited until the Russian authorities were asked to give something more tangible than words to the cause of Soviet-American friendship before he accepted their protestations of assistance so uncritically. But, there seems little question that he went to his new post full of high hopes for the future of Russo-American relations and with a

strongly developed sympathy for the men and the objectives of the new Russia.[22] William Bullitt wired the Secretary of State when the American delegation had arrived in Paris from Moscow, "It is difficult to exaggerate the cordiality with which I was received by all members of the Government including Kalinin, Molotov, Voroshilov and Stalin, who until my arrival had never received any ambassador, said to me, 'At any moment, day or night, if you wish to see me you have only to ask and I will see you at once.'"[23]

In the first months after the reestablishment of relations, the public statements of the representatives of both countries gave a promise of a possible rapprochement in the political field, which would have an appreciable influence on the course of world affairs. Ambassador Bullitt returned from his brief visit to Moscow to tell the American people that the U. S. and the Soviet Union could "now work together and shall work together for the preservation of peace," and to predict that the "cooperation of our nations will be a potent force in preserving peace." And, he stated, "The government of the Soviet Union has gone even

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[22]Louis Fischer, Men and Politics: An Autobiography (New York: 1941) p. 301.

[23]Foreign Relations, Soviet Union, p. 53ff.

further than we have gone in showing its desire for peace."[24] It should be stressed that the attitude of Mr. Bullitt toward Soviet Russia was shared by many American liberals in the early 1930's before other features of the Bolshevik government became manifest.

Maxim Litvinov continued to impress Washington with the need of a Soviet-American non-aggression pact -- but to no avail. Even before recognition, during the negotiations in Washington, Litvinov had suggested to both the President and the State Department that the U. S. and Russia conclude a bilateral nonaggression pact and inaugurate a series of similar interlocking agreements to include China and Japan. The President firmly rejected the treaty plan because it did not include all of the powers with interests in the Far East[25] -- and Acting Secretary of State Phillips pointed out to the Commissar that the Kellogg Pact already served the same purpose. When Bullitt returned to Moscow, he was approached many times on this matter -- but by the spring of 1934 the unyielding stand of Washington was finally accepted as definite. Technically, American opposition continued to be predicated upon the necessity of an agreement including all the Pacific powers, and re-enforced by an

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[24] William C. Bullitt, The Establishment of Normal Relations Between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, An address before the Chamber of Commerce of Philadelphia, January 19, 1934 (United States Government Printing Office, Washington: 1934), pp. 5-6.

[25] Foreign Relations, 1934, III, pp. 74-78.

unwillingness to recognize Manchukuo, a prerequisite to Japanese adherence that Moscow was apparently willing to grant.[26] On July 7, 1934, the New York Times revealed the Russian demands for a nonaggression pact and the American refusals, citing the State Department as its source of information. Two days later, Pravda was authorized by the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs to state that "Comrade Litvinov never made any kind of proposal either in Washington or in Moscow for a bi-lateral Soviet-American non-aggression pact."[27] However, by the summer of 1934, Japanese-Russian tension had ceased and the Russians had heard reassuring views expressed by France and England, concerning the attitude toward a possible attack on the Soviet Union from the east. The Kremlin could afford to be less concerned about American aid.[28]

William Bullitt, meanwhile, had returned to Russia. A contingent of American Marines helped him to move into Spasso House, a magnificent palace built for a pre-Revolution millionaire. Here Bullitt's entertaining was in the millionaire manner. "At first, the United States Embassy was the sun of Moscow's diplomatic heaven and Bullitt was social king."[29] The Ambassador's dinner parties were

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[26] Ibid., 1934, II, pp. 74, 75, 78, 82, 83.

[27] Pravda, July 9, 1934.

[28] Foreign Relations, 1934, III, pp. 96-97, 230-232.

[29] Louis Fischer, Men and Politics (New York: 1941) p. 301.

rivalled only by those given by Litvinov and featured even choicer viands, since Bullitt, in his official capacity, could obtain superior supplies from the world outside. Bullitt's route became the talk of the Arctic Circle. For one of the balls at the Embassy, he borrowed animals and birds from a zoo for decorations. There were cockerels and pigeons crowing and cooing in glass cages, baby bears and mountain goats in pens, and a seal which served guests champagne from a glass balanced on its nose. It was during this spectacular period that a witty Russian lady tartly remarked that Bullitt hadn't made up his mind whether being an ambassador was a job or a charade, and that politically he was aspiring to do with charm what even Talleyrand wouldn't have attempted except with cash, intrigue, or an army.[30]

As ambassador, Bullitt worked with his accustomed zeal, making a heroic effort to cement the long-lost friendship of America and Russia. He even brought with him quantities of baseballs, bats, and gloves.[31] A furious worker, he immediately exhausted two secretaries and cabled Washington, "Please send a secretary who can stand Moscow and me."[32] Once the initial frenzy of acclaim and mutual hospitality

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[30]"Profiles: Mr. Ambassador II: William C. Bullitt," The New Yorker, XVII, December 17, 1938, p. 25.

[31]Robert S. Rifkind, "The Wasted Mission," American Heritage, XII, April, 1961, p. 45ff.

[32]"Profiles," The New Yorker, p. 26.

was over, Bullitt's ill-concealed curiosity as to how everything was going in the "idealistic social experiment" became increasingly embarrassing to officials to whom an uninterested capitalistic ambassador would have been less upsetting.

Bullitt's New Deal colleagues predicted that the U. S. would harvest an annual business of $500,000,000 -- once the Soviet settled the Czarist-Kerensky debts due the United States.[33] However, before Bullitt left for Moscow in 1934, he made an effort to caution American business and financial leaders against overestimating the volume of trade that could be expected without reciprocal buying in the Soviet Union. Speaking to the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce on January 19, 1934, the Ambassador warned that too much reliance should not be put on the efficacy of credits to stimulate Soviet buying. "Credits in some measure are no doubt justifiable," he advised, "but credits merely postpone the day when goods have to be taken, and therefore credits in excessively large amounts must be avoided."[34] His remarks were prompted no doubt by his Moscow impressions and by concern in Washington over the undue optimism in

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33"Bullitt Quits 'Death Cell' As Straus Retires," News-Week, VIII, September 5, 1936, p. 9.

34William C. Bullitt, The Establishment of Normal Relations Between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: An address before the Chamber of Commerce of Philadelphia, January 19, 1934 (Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office: 1934) p. 5.

many industrial circles.

But hopes were not easily dimmed. Private business groups immediately set about formulating plans for facilitating Soviet credit in the U. S. banks and industrial and commercial organizations discussed projects to form amalgamations for the financing of Russian orders.[35] Before any definite steps could be taken, the government itself answered the need by creating through executive order, on February 2, 1934, the first Export-Import Bank. Administered and financed by the government, the organization had the power to advance credits, borrow money and negotiate discount notes, as well as other bona-fide evidences of indebtedness. The first Export-Import Bank was founded specifically to assist in the anticipated trade with Russia.[36] However, its facilities were rendered useless almost from its inception.

The debts had still not been settled. Accordingly, to make clear the position of the American government, the Export-Import Bank passed a resolution stating that credits for Soviet purchases in the U. S. would be withheld until a satisfactory debt arrangement had been presented to the President by Moscow.[37] When the Johnson Act was

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35R. C. Ropes, "American-Soviet Trade Relations," The Russian Review, III, No. 1 (1943), p. 92.

36F.D.R., The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (New York: 1938), III, p. 79.

37Benjamin H. Williams, Foreign Loan Policy of the United States Since 1933 (New York: 1939), pp. 24-25.

passed, which prohibited U. S. credits and loans to foreign nations who had not paid their debts to the U. S., it contained an amendment excluding from its provisions government controlled or financial public corporations -- ie. the Export-Import Bank.[38] Thus, if the Soviets submitted a plan which met with executive approval, or showed sufficiently convincing evidence to the President of intent to pay, it was possible for the Export-Import Bank to revoke its resolution and extend credits to Russia. The Department of State and the Attorney General finally decided that Russia had to begin payment on her debt before she would cease to be considered in default.[39]

Needless to say, the Russians were most disgruntled by the course of events. It could easily have been that the diplomatic rebuke hurt the Russian government's pride more than the inability to receive a loan or credits. An editorial in the April 17, 1934 Russian newspaper Za Industrializatsiiu directed attention to the tremendous opportunities for Soviet-American trade, which recognition had made possible, "but through no fault of ours," Soviet readers were informed, unjustifiable obstacles had been thrown in the path of the expected development -- namely, the Johnson Act and the Export Import Bank resolution. A second editorial, published

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[38]Ibid., p. 25.

[39]United States State Department Press Releases, X (January-June, 1934), pp. 265-266.

on April 28, 1934, concluded that "as a whole the matter concerns only very insignificant and generally disputable and problematical claims." As an indication of how the pendulum had swung away from the pre-recognition arguments, the newspaper pleaded for the lifting of the bans on loans and credits in order that "a solid material base be created under the political rapprochement of the two great countries, which in the present troublous times are bound together by a common interest in the maintenance of peace."[40]

In short, this was the main content of Soviet-American relations in the opening months of 1934 -- the beginning of William C. Bullitt's problems with the Kremlin -- problems which were initially "misunderstandings," but which developed into deep personal and official disappointments.

One evening after his arrival in Moscow, Bullitt entertained a number of commissars with food and drink at the Embassy. The American Ambassador showed them the Soviet Second Reader. In it was a chapter entitled "America." At the head of the chapter was a drawing of starving children working at factory machines in a cellar, while on the floor above fat, bejeweled women and fatter men danced to jazz music. The text read: "America is a country where children of workers and peasants are forbidden to get an education. They are forced to work all day at machines in dark cellars, and get nothing to eat but bread, while the rich dance over

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[40] Za Industrializatsiiu, April 28, 1934.

their heads." Bullitt asked the commissars how they expected to educate leaders for the Soviet Union if they taught their children such lies? They laughed and one of them replied, "Have you ever found any one of us that doesn't know the facts?" The Ambassador replied that he thought they were better informed than the members of any government he knew. The commissar then went on, "It will always be so. We shall educate in special schools leaders who will teach them exactly what it is in the interest of the Soviet Union for them to know."[41] This was just one of several small glimpses that the new Ambassador was getting of the Russia of the early thirties. Soon a cloud dimmed and chilled the scene at the American Embassy. The American publicist Louis Fischer reported, "The Russians said Bullitt was 'not serious' and to a Russian that is a serious charge. Part of the trouble lay in a cordial, mutual dislike between Bullitt and Foreign Commissar Litvinov. Litvinov several times told me of his regret that Washington had not sent a career diplomat instead of 'an ambitious and impetient' one who hoped to rise to fame on success or failure in Russia. There were no laurels to be reaped by Bullitt in Moscow...through no fault of his own."[42]

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[41] United States of America Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 81st Congress, Second Session Appendix, Vol. 96, Part 13, April 21, 1950 to June 7, 1950, p. A3456.

[42] Louis Fischer, Men and Politics (New York: 1941) p. 301.

What had happened to the cordial relationship of Bullitt with the Soviet officials, Litvinov, especially? A series of misunderstandings had cropped up on the surface of Soviet-American relations. As has been seen, the debt problem halted all U. S. credits or loans to Russia -- until the Soviets paid the debts. Japan was appearing to be more friendly to the Soviet Union. Indeed, Baron Shidehara, the former Japanese Minister For Foreign Affairs, had written the Russian Ambassador in the U. S., Troyanovsky, "It would be absolutely madness for Japan and the Soviet Union to fall into war with each other. I see no possibility of any such eventuality and I am certain that wiser counsels will prevail in both Tokyo and Moscow."[43] As long as relations between these two powers weren't moving toward a crisis, Soviet friendship with the U. S. wasn't of immediate necessity -- and the debt problem could wait, and wait.

However, at the end of March, 1934, Ambassador Bullitt was still quite hopeful of reaching a solution on the matter of debts. He stated, "Previous negotiations with Litvinov have led me to observe that his decisive negations are often followed by acquiescense and I do not consider the present problem insoluble."[44] Voroshilov approached

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[43] Foreign Relations of the U. S. Diplomatic Papers: The Soviet Union: 1933-1939, 800.51W89 U.S.S.R./ 21$: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt), Temporarily in Washington, to the Secretary of State, Washington, February 10, 1934, p. 63.

[44] Ibid., 800.51W89 U.S.S.R./84: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, March 21, 1934, p. 69.

Bullitt at the end of March, and brought up the question of obtaining the 200,000 tons of used steel rails in regard to which Stalin spoke to Bullitt in December, 1933. Voroshilov felt it was a matter of extreme urgency. However, Bullitt explained to him in detail the impossibility of any credits being granted until the Soviet Government had settled its debts to the Government of the United States. By April, Bullitt wired the Secretary of State about a talk he had had concerning debts. "I had a completely unsatisfactory discussion with Litvinov this afternoon. He was angry and adamant... I shall continue...to cultivate tranquil personal relations and to act as if the questions of debts, claims and trade did not exist."[45]

Soon Bullitt came to a realization concerning the debt problem. In May, he reported, "The nub of the matter is this: if the Soviet Government should again become convinced that an attack by Japan was likely or imminent we should probably find Litvinov willing to reach an agreement on the basis of our proposals. So long as the Soviet Union feels completely secure I believe that no agreement acceptable to us will be acceptable to the authorities in Moscow... I can recommend no other policy than unruffled patience."[46]

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[45] Ibid., 800.51W89, U.S.S.R./28: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union(Bullitt) to the Secretary of State. Moscow, April 8, 1934, p. 80.

[46] Ibid., 800.51W89, U.S.S.R./60: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, May 21, 1934, p. 100.

Meanwhile, also in May, Litvinov was making an effort to achieve some kind of diplomatic result from the resumption of relations with the U. S. He proposed to transform the then meeting Disarmament Conference into a permanent organization, which would consider and act on all threats to peace, working parallel to the League of Nations, but unhampered by its restrictions and limitations.[47] Pursuing his plan even after the entrance of Russia into the League, Litvinov approached the U. S. Government in December, 1934, through the Soviet Embassy in Washington, with the suggestion that America take a leading role with Russia in setting up the new international body. The Commissar believed that the organization would offer the U. S. an opportunity to take a more active part in international affairs while still remaining outside the League. But, Secretary Hull, who evidently favored the project personally, regretfully informed the Soviet Ambassador that Washington could not accept the offer.[48]

Thus, if from Bullitt's vantage point it appeared that Moscow was doing nothing to inspire confidence in Washington after the reestablishment of relations, from the

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[47] The League of Nations, Records of the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, Series C (Geneva: 1936) II, p. 212.

[48] Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, (New York: 1948) I, p. 304; Foreign Relations, The Soviet Union, pp. 152-155, 189-91, 216.

Soviet's point of view, the United States was wrecking cordial relations by disputing an insignificant legal issue and by remaining within the confines of American isolationism.

In June, Bullitt sent the following report to the Secretary of State. "... In the handling of relations between countries so widely separated in ideas, structure and distance as the U. S. and the Soviet Union, it seems to me of vital importance that minor vexations should not be permitted to produce an atmosphere in which a mutually beneficial cooperation cannot thrive. In Moscow we are subjected to a hundred such irritations daily and it is, I feel, our duty to endure them with equanimity and to preserve our wrath for major issues."[49] If Bullitt felt that the minor problems would fade away in the light of major ones -- he was wrong. The little problems became big, and the major ones tremendous. Within a few days, the American Ambassador related the following to Washington. "I have just spent a most unsatisfactory hour with Litvinov... I told him that I felt this attitude (of indebtedness) on his part might terminate any possibility of close collaboration between our nations. He replied 'I do not take the matter so tragically. No nation today pays its debts. Great Britain has defaulted. Germany is defaulting. And no one

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[49]Foreign Relations, 800.51 W69, U.S.S.R./ 69: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, June 14, 1934, p. 102.

will be able to make propaganda against the Soviet Union if we do not pay one dollar on a debt we did not contract'... I said that the American Government would regard the position of the Soviet Government as the following: we shall not honor our agreement with the President, we shall make no payment either to the American corporations or individuals whose property we have seized. We shall make no payments on our indebtedness to the Government of the U. S. and we shall buy nothing in the U. S. We shall, however, expect the Government and people of the U. S. to work with us loyally and intimately."[50] Hull replied immediately, "Think you took exactly proper line in conversation with Litvinov."[51]

By late June, Bullitt had not at all given up hope for good relations between the countries. He told the Secretary of State that he had private information that Stalin and the military authorities felt strongly that cooperation with the U. S. must be strengthened and not destroyed and that he didn't consider Litvinov's intransigence irreversible. However, there had been other problems besides Russian indebtedness which began to take their toll on the American Ambassador's patience. There was a "misunderstanding" concerning the property for the proposed U. S. Embassy on the

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[50] Ibid., 800:51W89. U.S.S.R./72: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, pp. 108-109.

[51] Ibid., p. 110.

bluff overlooking the Moscow River. Stalin had promised it to Bullitt, and Litvinov had told the Ambassador the very next day that Stalin had given orders to the Moscow Soviet to grant the U. S. the property desired. Then on March 25, 1934, Bullitt received a telephone call telling him that the Moscow Soviet would not give him the western half of the property he had chosen but only the eastern half -- which did not suit the Ambassador's plans for the proposed $1,200,000 Embassy for which he had approached the U. S. Congress. Bullitt had explained the matter in detail to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and Congress had voted money on the basis of the explicit promise of the Soviet Government. Bullitt replied to one Florinsky who had called to tell him the bad news that "It was not wise for the Soviet Union to create the belief in the United States that a promise of Stalin, backed by an assurance of Litvinov, plus a written confirmation by the Soviet Ambassador at Washington (Troyanovsky), was worthless."[52]

On March 26, Bullitt stormed into Litvinov's office, but the Commissar was ill -- and his personal representative, Mr. Divilkovski, declared that it was just a "simple misunderstanding." Bullitt declared that he could enter into no negotiations in regard to the matter because "it was a

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[52] Ibid., 124.611/127: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, March 28, 1934, p. 71 ff.

common occurrence for national governments to overrule municipal authorities when the municipal authorities wished to contravene engagements which had been entered into by the national government."[53] He added that if the Moscow Soviet would not acquiesce it was necessary to order the Moscow Soviet to acquiesce. Meanwhile, William C. Bullitt sat in the Spasso House, high and dry. No new embassy was built.

Bullitt ran into another "small misunderstanding." Grinko, the People's Commissar for Finances of the Soviet Union, had made an oral agreement with the American Ambassador to the effect that the State Bank would supply the American Embassy staff with paper roubles for the necessary minor expenditures at a fair rate of exchange. The Soviet Government became unwilling to carry out this verbal promise. Divilkovski made it plain that, in addition, the Soviets wouldn't carry out their verbal statements with regard to consular fees. Both Grinko and Litvinov had told Bullitt in December, 1933 that the Soviet Government had no objection to Embassy charging consular fees in the Soviet Union either in dollars or in paper roubles at a paper rouble rate to be fixed by the American Embassy staff in accordance with the rates outside the Soviet Union. For a month or two after Bullitt's arrival, Litvinov and Divilkovski repeatedly restated this intention. There had

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[53] Ibid.

been no objection. Then came the Divilkovski's announcement at the end of March that his government had decided it would pay consular fees in paper roubles only at the rate of one thirteen (1.13) to the dollar. The American Ambassador replied that the Embassy expected to charge the Soviet Government 55 to the dollar or 50, at least. Needless to say, Bullitt lost the argument.

Multiply these little "misunderstandings" a thousand-fold, and one can see the state of mind in which the first American Ambassador to the Soviet Union would find himself after a few years at his Moscow post. But these were just the little disappointments -- the bigger ones were yet to come. This experience would certainly have been an unpleasant one for any sincere representative of the U. S. at the Kremlin. However, one must understand that William C. Bullitt was more than just a sincere representative of America in Russia. In 1919, he had <u>personally</u> carried the burden of Soviet-American relations and had failed. In 1933, he had <u>personally</u> advocated and helped to carry out the Russo-American rapprochement of November of that year. And during the years 1933 to 1936, when he served his government as Ambassador to the Soviet Union, he surely must have felt <u>personally</u> responsible for carrying out the new-born relationship to splendid heights -- heights that could, as Litvinov believed, have benefited his political career when he returned home and heights which certainly could have resulted in a more peaceful world.

At the end of March, 1934, the American Ambassador relayed the following conclusions on the "misunderstandings" to Secretary Hull.

> "These extraordinary incidences indicate clearly that oral promises of members of the Soviet Government are not to be taken seriously. I have the impression that the 'misunderstandings' have been produced not so much by bad faith as by inefficiency. The members of the Soviet Government seem disposed to make promises without taking into consideration all the factors involved. There are several organs in the Soviet Government of negative authority which are in a position to prevent the carrying out of promises made by individual members of the commissariats. Whatever the source of these 'misunderstandings', it seems to me that in every case understandings with the Soviet Government or representative thereof should be made in writing or should be confirmed at a latter date by a written document."[54]

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[54] Ibid.

CHAPTER V

A SUMMER LULL, AN AUGUST STORM, AND A CHANGED MAN

From the cordial atmosphere of December, 1933, Soviet-American relations degressed to the "misunderstanding" stage of late March, 1934. With the approach of summer in 1934, relations between the two countries took a turn for the better. Bullitt telegraphed from Moscow, "There have been unusual demonstrations of friendliness toward this Embassy during the past week which I believe have been ordered by the Kremlin as a result of apprehension that Litvinov's intransigence with regard to the matter of debts and claims might result in a prolonged disinclination of the Government of the U. S. to cooperate in any field with the Soviet Government."[1] The unusual friendliness of all members of the Soviet Government continued to be manifested in a most striking manner. On July 26, Litvinov lunched with Bullitt en famille and accompanied him to the first polo match ever played in the Soviet Union. Bullitt had personally imported the necessary equipment and taught the Red Army calvalrymen

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[1] Foreign Relations, The Soviet Union: 1933-1934, 800.51 W89, U.S.S.R./86: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union(Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 22, 1934, p. 121.

to play. Voroshilov and General Feldman, chief of the Red Army's Personnel Administration, both attended the match and returned with the American Ambassador to the Embassy where they remained until the early hours of the morning. Bullitt later reported that he found as he expected that Litvinov had not given Stalin and Voroshilov an altogether accurate version of the various discussions the Ambassador had had with Litvinov with regard to claims and indebtedness. Voroshilov expressed an intense desire "that the relations between our two countries should not only appear to be friendly and intimate but should in reality be friendly and intimate."[2] Voroshilov proceeded to tell Bullitt that he was still worried about the Far East and hoped that the demand of the army for transportation equipment of all sorts would finally overcome Litvinov's objections. Bullitt hoped that Voroshilov would use his influence with Stalin to soften Litvinov's obduracy.

Steiger who was the G. G. P. U. surveyor (General State Police Administration -- internal secret police) of the diplomatic corps and who had the most intimate relations with the Kremlin told Bullitt that both Kalinin and Molotov and indeed all the leaders of the Soviet Government wanted to be invited out to the Embassy. Bullitt asked whether

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[2]Ibid., 800.51 W89, U.S.S.R./89: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 27, 1934, p. 23.

P-5 As Ambassador to Russia, Bullitt arrived in Moscow with his daughter Anne on December 11, 1933. He was greeted as a sympathizer by the Soviets, but after a year at his Moscow post, his sympathy began to deteriorate. However, Bullitt felt personally responsible for maintaining cordial Soviet-American relations. He experienced many "minor misunderstandings", but by the summer of 1935, the friendship between the two nations seemed to be quite warm.

Stalin had also inquired, and the secret police agent said in a typical Soviet ambiguous phrase -- "that also was not impossible."[3] Ambiguity or not, the American Ambassador's spirits were lifted a great deal, and he cabled Hull, "The obvious desire of the leaders of the Soviet Union to cultivate friendly relations with the United States coupled with the sudden improvement in Soviet-British relations and the rapprochement with France seems to me to offer a possibility with reference to development of a new and fruitful collaboration between the U. S., Great Britain, France and Russia."[4]

The debt problem remained hauntingly unsettled. The Russians were trying to forget it, but Bullitt wouldn't let them. Bullitt acted in a similar manner to Charles Francis Adams, the U. S. Minister to Great Britain 1861-1868 -- during the American Civil War. Great Britain had been building ships for use in the Confederate Navy and Adams continually protested to Her Majesty's Government. Bullitt protested to the Soviets -- but whereas the British eventually were held accountable for theiractions, Russia was not. The negotiations to implement the agreements of November, 1933, in regard to claims and credits between the United States and the Soviet Union failed. Voroshilov, and military men of both the United States and the Soviet Union in Moscow were upset about the failure to reach a solution.

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

When told of the possibility that the U. S., in retaliation, would withdraw personnel (including military) from the Embassy in Moscow, protests were heard from both American military men in Moscow and Voroshilov, himself. On February 2, 1935, Major Philip R. Fraymonville, U. S. Military Attaché in the Soviet Union, cabled Bullitt then in Washington, "I believe the Red Army offers possibility of developing understanding and friendship which no other group offers. If contact with the Red Army chiefs are further fostered, it seems likely that we may secure in them a group of friends who in party discussions might effectively present case for American friendship."[5] On February 6, 1935, the Naval Attache and the Air Attache were withdrawn, the Consulate General was abolished, and reductions were made in the personnel of the Embassy. Captain David R. Nimmer, American Assistant Naval Attache in the Soviet Union 1934-1935, before he left Moscow, had an interview with Voroshilov. Nimmer reported that Voroshilov "expressed regret at my leaving 'just about the time we had begun to understand each other'... He then interrupted to say that he considered Mr. Bullitt one of his best friends but that the Ambassador had not quite played the game, for the recent break must have been provoked by the reports and telegrams he sent to his

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[5]Ibid., 800.51 W89, U.S.S.R./170: Telegram: The Charge in the Soviet Union (Wiley) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, February 14, 1935, p. 182 ff.

Government. Mr. Bullitt should have presented the picture in respect of debts, Czarist, Kerensky, et cetera, from an angle which by no stretch of the imagination could have led anyone to expect the Soviet Union to acknowledge such debts."[6]

But, relations between the two countries were not beyond repair -- and in July, 1935, just one year after the unusual friendliness shown by the Russians, an agreement was reached to facilitate and increase trade between the U. S. and the Soviet Union. It seemed that summer brought with it a warmness in Soviet-American relations. In return for assurance of the Soviet Government that it would be its policy to increase substantially its purchases of American products, the U. S. extended to the Soviet Union tariff concessions granted in trade agreements with other countries. Moscow had minimized the failure of debt negotiations -- as was seen in the Soviet press. Usually, Russian newspapers took advantage of such diplomatic unpleasantnesses, which were always interpreted as attacks on the U. S. S. R., to launch a bitter campaign against the offending nation. Nothing of the sort occurred with the failure of debt negotiations. The Soviets didn't wish to endanger the hard earned American recognition. But the Soviets did have reason for concern. The long-drawn-out negotiations

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[6] Ibid., 800.51 W89, U.S.S.R./184: Telegram The Charge in the Soviet Union (Wiley) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, February 14, 1935, p. 16ff.

had irritated certain members of the U. S. Congress to the extent that the resolutions were presented in the House and Senate recommending the severance of diplomatic relations with Russia.[7] Congress could, of course, do no more than express its wishes in the matter, as the conduct of foreign relations is the prerogative of the executive branch of the U. S. Government. Secretary Hull directed Congressional attention to this point in a public letter to Senator Key Pitman, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, at the same time advising Pitman that the President did not intend to break off relations with the Soviet Union.[8]

Thus, the Soviets came to a trade agreement with the U. S. in the summer of 1935 -- which resulted in an increase in Soviet-American trade after the signing of the agreement. In a statement to the press, drafted by the State Department, Bullitt tried to offset the debt settlement disappointment to American business by emphasizing the promise of increased trade inherent in the agreement.[9] The success of the arrangement led to its renewal in the years following until 1940. On July 15, 1935 came a message from the State Department for Bullitt. "From Secretary (of the Treasury)

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[7]New York Times, March 21, 1935.

[8]Robert Paul Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy (Princeton: 1953) p. 192.

[9]Foreign Relations, p. 210.

Morgenthau. Congratulations on breaking the log jam between the United States and Russia."[10] The Soviet press published a number of editorial comments and articles with regard to the significance and scope of the agreement. The general feeling was that the agreement was merely the first step in the direction of solving the problem of Soviet-American trade relations and of placing those relations on a basis mutually advantageous to both countries. The Soviet press felt that the agreement represented a shift in the attitude of the Government of the U. S. brought about through the pressure of American industrial circles which were not satisfied with the attitude displayed by the American Government in the past with respect to Soviet trade.[11] A number of articles in the Moscow Daily News, the English language newspaper of Moscow, were devoted to reporting the reactions of the press in the U. S. to the agreement. The American press articles were so chosen as to make it appear that with the exception of the Hearst newspapers, the American press not only hailed the agreement, but was somewhat critical of the American Government for not having taken still further steps to develop closer economic

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[10] Ibid., 611.6131/335a: Telegram: The Acting Secretary to the American Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt), Washington, July 15, 1935, p. 215.

[11] Ibid., 611.6131/339: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 19, 1935, p. 215.

relations with the Soviet Union.[12] The agreement and its renewals did stimulate Soviet purchasing in the United States to the extent that in 1937 America captured first place from Germany in the list of exporters to Russia. It was a revealing commentary on prerecognition trade hopes that this distinction was achieved with the sale of only $42,892,000 worth of goods to the Soviet Union.

Consequently, with the July 13, 1935 signing of the trade agreement between the U. S. and Russia, relations between the two countries seemed to be in the process of ameliorating. Unbeknown to Ambassador Bullitt, a storm had been in the process of being formed since his December, 1933 visit to Russia -- a storm which would tear asunder everything for which the bourgeois from Rittenhouse Square had worked since those March days of 1919 -- a storm which would leave Soviet-American relations for many years in a state of utter deterioration and which, compounded with other disturbances, would transform William Christian Bullitt's political and social views extremely.

On November 17, 1933, the representative of the Soviet Government declared in writing that, "coincident with the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two

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[12] Ibid., p. 216. Among the newspapers cited as the New York Post, the Baltimore Sun is said to have stated that the U. S. in its slowness to come to an understanding with the Soviet Union with respect to trade had "dragged at the tail of events." ibid.

Governments it will be the fixed policy of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics...

> "4. Not to permit the formation or residence on its territory of any organization or group - and to prevent the activity on its territory of any organization or group, or of representatives or officials of any organization or group - which has as an aim the overthrow or the preparation for the overthrow of, or the bringing about by force of a change in, the political or social order of the whole or any part of the United States, its territories or possessions."[13]

At the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International held in Moscow in December, 1933, the American Section of the said Communist International discussed policies and activities of the Communist Party of the United States of America -- and the Plenum adopted a program of activity designed to apply to the United States. In January, 1934, before Bullitt had returned to Moscow, a radio message was dispatched from Moscow by the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the Daily Worker, Central Organ of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., urging that the Daily Worker "even more energetically become a real collective agitator and organizer of the worker's struggle, carrying on a tireless struggle for the interests of the working masses of the American working class."[14] Finally, in December, 1933, a report was delivered

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[13] Ibid., 711.61/547: Statement by the Secretary of State: Press Release, August 31, 1935, p. 258.

[14] Ibid., 811.008/1543a: Telegram: The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt), Washington, August 14, 1934, p. 132.

on the problems of organizing the revolutionary elements within the American Federation of Labor and on the work of the Trade Union Unity League (the American section of the Red International of Labor Unions) at an enlarged meeting of the Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labor Unions in Moscow.[15] Therefore, even before William C. Bullitt had begun to actively take part in his Ambassadorship at the Moscow post, the Soviet Union had broken the "propaganda pledge" of the November, 1933 recognition agreements.

On May 23, 1934, Ambassador Bullitt received a note from Secretary Hull relating, "...From documents submitted to Department it seems fairly certain that the propaganda pledge is being violated by activities stimulated and directed at Moscow."[16] This was the first of many dispatches concerning the Communist's violations of the propaganda pledge, however the telegrams were not regarded as being too important -- until the latter part of the year when both Bullitt and Hull actually realized what was happening and what was to happen. In the autumn of 1934, the Seventh Comintern Congress of the Third International was to take place in Moscow.

On October 5, 1934, Bullitt protested to Litvinov orally and informally with regard to direction from Moscow of the

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 800.51M89, U.S.S.R./57: Telegram: The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt), Washington, May 23, 1934, p.101.

activities of the Communist movement in the United States, and warned him when the Comintern Congress took place that if there "should be attacks on the Government of the U. S. or indications that the Communist movement in the U. S. was being directed by Moscow -- the most serious consequences might result."[17] Litvinov replied that he didn't even know that the Comintern Congress would take place and that he was not aware of any activities of this nature. Bullitt concluded his report to Secretary Hull, "I believe that Litvinov will do what he can to prevent any activities of the Comintern which might be in conflict with his pledge to the Government of the U. S. and I have been reliably informed that the Soviet Government is keeping an extremely tight rein on the Comintern and that the Comintern will not be permitted to do anything which might jeopardize good relations of the Soviet Union with friendly countries."[18]

In the autumn of 1934, the U. S. was beginning to realize, and so was Bill Bullitt, that there would never be a Russian settlement on the debt question. When, on October 10, 1934, Bullitt had a conversation with Litvinov and mentioned both the debts and the Comintern - Litvinov grew purple with rage and declared, "no nation ever starts talking about the activities of the Comintern unless it wishes to

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[17] Ibid., 811.00B/1566: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, October 5, 1934, pp. 156-157.

[18] Ibid.

have as bad relations as possible with us. The activities of the Comintern are merely an excuse for breaking diplomatic relations." Bullitt replied that "the people of the U. S. as well as the Government of the U. S. were extremely sensitive about any interference in our internal affairs and that he might expect the most drastic reaction in case the Comintern Congress should take place and there should be evidence of interference in the internal affairs of the U. S." Bullitt later that day wired to the State Department, "I had the impression today that I was talking with the traditional bazaar bargainer of the Near East."[19]

In September, 1934, the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee announced a postponement of the proposed Seventh Comintern Congress until the spring of 1935.[20] Apparently the date was again advanced before the Congress actually convened. It was not difficult to guess the reasons for the repeated delays. If the Congress had met when originally planned, relations with the U. S. would have been put to the test far too soon after the pledges in Washington. Also, there was the move in Congress to sever relations - and this solely because of the debt situation. But it would be incorrect to exaggerate the influence of

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[19] Ibid., 800.51 W89,U.S.S.R./143: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, October 10, 1934, pp. 157-159.

[20] Communist International XII, (January 5, 1935), p. 37.

Russian-American relations on the choice of a date for the Congress. Other factors were undoubtedly more decisive. By July, 1935, Russia and France had signed their mutual assistance treaty, which was a part of the Soviet decision to take a clear stand against Hitler. Russia had made an agreement with Germany in April, and an assistance pact with Czechoslovakia in June of 1935. By July, Stalin was secure in his leadership, and could call a Congress with absolute assurance that it would docilely follow his orders.

Bullitt began asking more questions -- he wanted to know when the Congress would meet. He talked with M. M. Borodin, the editor of the Moscow Daily News in June, and the newsmen went so far as to say, "It will take place on..." -- then caught himself and said, "I really do not know the date. It is, you know, to be an absolutely secret conference."[21] On July 8, William Bullitt expressed to Litvinov his grave concern with regard to the impending meeting of the Third International. Litvinov said, "What? Is there to be one?" Bullitt replied that there would be one on the twentieth of July. Litvinov replied with a broad grin, "You know more about the Third International than I do. The other day when I was talking with Stalin I said that I had heard there was to be a meeting of the Third

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[21] Ibid., 861.00: Congress, Communist International VII/11: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, June 22, 1935, pp. 219-220.

International on the tenth of this month. Stalin replied, 'Is there?' He knew no more about it then I do." Bullitt answered, "You will have to tell that one to somebody else. You cannot expect me to believe that Stalin knows nothing about the Third International." Litvinov replied, "No, I assure you." The American Ambassador then said, "Well, I feel I ought to say at least that if the Third International does meet and if it concerns itself in any way with the United States, our relations will be so grevely prejudiced that it is impossible to predict the consequences." Litvinov with another broad grin and a wave of the hand passed off Bullitt's statement with the remark, "I know nothing about it."[22]

The next day, July 9, Bullitt received information that the remarks he had made with regard to the effect on Soviet-American relations of the scheduled meeting of the Third International had caused Litvinov, Voroshilov, and Molotov to protest vigorously to Stalin. The American Ambassador did entertain hope that if the Congress did meet, it would steer clear of any interference in U. S. domestic affairs.

Bullitt had been speaking his mind about religious freedom -- for which he was thanked by the Pope. He became noisy about doctrinal paradoxes, for which nobody thanked him. He asked too many questions, ignored all hints and

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[22] Ibid., 861.00 C.C.I. VII/15: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 8, 1935, pp. 221-222.

talked too freely. He told Hull that "the Soviet Union genuinely desires peace on all fronts at the present time but this peace is looked upon merely as a happy respite in which future wars may be prepared. If this basic postulate of the Soviet Government is understood, there is little or nothing in Soviet domestic or foreign policy that is not clear."[23] Bullitt declared that he had yet to converse with a single leader of the Soviet Union who had not expressed his belief in the necessity of world revolution. In July, he had talked with Karl Radek, a Soviet publicist and editor, and the Ambassador warned him that his communist friends at the meeting of the Third International better not behave in such a way as to break Litvinov's pledge to the President and make the continuance of diplomatic relations between the two countries impossible. Radek leaped to his feet, violently angry, and shouted, "We have lived without the United States in the past and we can continue to live without the United States in the future and we shall never permit you or anyone else to dictate to us what we shall do in Moscow."[24] When Radek had left, Mikhailsky (a leading writer, under the pen name of 'Lapinsky' in the Soviet press on American affairs), one of the oldest of the

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[23] Ibid., 761.00/260: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 19, 1935, pp. 224-226.

[24] Ibid., p. 224.

Bolsheviks, who had overheard Radek's remarks, said to Bullitt, "You must understand that world revolution is our religion and there is not one of us who would not in the final analysis oppose even Stalin himself if we should feel that he was abandoning the cause of world revolution."[25]

Bullitt believed that the strength of the Soviet Union was, in the eyes of the Soviet Government, weakness compared to the strength which would be the Soviet Union's at the end of a decade. Everything possible, therefore, was being done to postpone the conflict which was regarded as inevitable. Bullitt felt that Russia feared nothing so much as a general reconciliation of European hatreds, especially a reconciliation between Germany and France. The Soviet Union was afraid, the Ambassador believed, that reconciliation in Europe might be based upon permission to Germany to obtain the economic outlets which she needed by acquisition of the Ukraine. To keep Europe divided, and to postpone the wars which would certainly come if Europe remained divided was the substance, Bullitt said, of Russian policy in Europe. Thus, proceeding from this policy, the Soviet Union concluded the 1935 Treaty of Mutual Assistance with France, and consequently kept the flames of Franco-German hatred burning brightly. The Ambassador declared that the single nightmare of the Soviet Government was the fear of Japan attacking in the Far East, and Germany and

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[25] Ibid.

Poland attacking in the west. If the Soviets had their way, they would maintain peace everywhere until the strength of the nation had been built up to such a point that it would be entirely impregnable to attack and ready, if Stalin should desire, to intervene abroad.

William Bullitt's capacity to read into the strategy and tactics of Soviet foreign policy seems, when viewed from the perspective of the present day Cold War, to be more than adequate ones - quite valuable evaluations. However, after the Comintern affair, after Bullitt left Moscow, his views concerning the Soviet regime's foreign policy were never transformed into U. S. counter-measures, "containment" and the like - until it was almost too late. The United States of America paid a terrific price for entering into the World War II alliance with Soviet Russia - neglecting the lesson which Bullitt and the U. S. had learned in the thirties.

A few days before the Comintern Congress convened, William Christian Bullitt, in a message dated July 19, 1935, to the Secretary of State, made some succinct observations on the Russian attitude towards Japan and the United States - which deserves quotation in full:

> "It is, of course, the heartiest hope of the Soviet Government that the United States will become involved in war with Japan. If such a war should occur, it would be the policy of the Soviet Union to remain outside the conflict and to gain whatever wealth might be acquired by supplying the United

> States with war materials via the west and supplying Japan with war materials in the east. To think of the Soviet Union as a possible ally of the United States in case of war with Japan is to allow the wish to be father to the thought. The Soviet Union would certainly attempt to avoid becoming an ally until Japan had been thoroughly defeated and would then merely use the opportunity to acquire Machuria and Sovietize China."[26]

The picture of industrially backward Russia furnishing war materials to the United States, or the inference that such a conflict would take place in a vacuum without the complicating participation of other powers, especially in Europe, is to stretch the imagination quite a bit. However, the tenor of the argument constitutes a rather remarkable prophecy of things to come. In concluding his evaluation of Soviet foreign policy in his July 19, 1935 report, Bullitt stated, "To maintain peace for the present, to keep the nations of Europe divided, to foster enmity between Japan and the United States, and to gain the blind devotion and obedience of the communists of all countries so that they will act against their own governments at the behest of the Communist Pope in the Kremlin is the sum of Stalin's policy."[27]

On August 17, 1935, the Seventh Congress of the Third International convened in Moscow. The effect of the meeting on Soviet-American relations was profound, for in attendance

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[26] Ibid., p. 225; cf. Foreign Relations, 1934, III, pp. 96-97, 230-232.

[27] Ibid., p. 226.

at the Moscow Conference were the representatives of the American Communist party, who duly reported on the progress of the revolutionary movement under their leadership in the United States.[28] One of the American delegates, Earl Russell Browder, Secretary General of the Communist Party in the United States, gave a speech entitled, "In the Ascent," in one of the opening sessions of the Congress. He declared: "...the Communist Party of the United States [has] the task of the decisive liquidation of the factional struggle and the strengthening of the tie with the masses... In what manner was our Party able to come out of its sectional isolation and penetrate to the masses? ...In a few of the more important strike battles, particularly in the general strike of workers in San Francisco, to the Communist Party belonged the leadership, the decisive influence... Before the American Communist Party stand the problems of mobilization and organization of the millions of the masses of the people."[29] Then, there was the speech printed in the August 6, 1935 issue of Pravda by Georgy Dimitrov, leader of the Bulgarian Communist Party (who had been acquitted in a 1933 trial of complicity in starting the Reichstag fire in Berlin). Dimitrov stated: "In each country, there are

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[28] Gil Green, Earl Browder, VII Congress of the Communist International, Abridged Stenographic Report of the Proceedings (Moscow: 1939) pp. 83-33, 245-248.

[29] Foreign Relations, The Soviet Union 1933-1939, 861.00 C.C.I., VII/27: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 29, 1935, pp. 229-231.

there are knotty problems... Let us take for example an important country of the capitalist world such as the United States of America. The crisis has put into motion the millions of the masses. The program for reviving capitalism has collapsed... At this point it is necessary to state that the creation of a mass party of toilers, a 'farm labor party' could become the appropriate form under American conditions. The program of this party must be directed against the banks, the trusts of monopolies, against the principle enemies of the people, speculating on its distress."[30] On August 11, the American delegate Browder, at the morning session of the Congress, agreed with Comrade Dimitrov's words and felt that they gave a "clear answer" to America's problems.[31]

If the speeches of the American and other Communist delegates at the Congress didn't aggravate Soviet-American relations enough, Stalin's actual participation in the Congress crowned the occasion. On August 20, 1935, the Comintern Congress closed -- and Soviet-American relations almost did the same. Bullitt gave his opinion concerning the United States' next move to Secretary Hull. "The Congress of the Communist International which closed last

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[30] Ibid., 861.00,C.C.I. VII/39: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, August 6, 1935, pp. 235-237.

[31] Ibid., 861.00, C.C.I., VII/46: Telegram: Moscow, August 15, 1935, pp. 239-241.

night was a flagrant violation of Litvinov's pledge to the President... To break relations would satisfy the indignation we all feel and would be juridically correct; but in my opinion this question should be decided neither on emotional nor juridicial grounds but on the basis of a cold appraisal of the wisest course to pursue to defend the American people from the efforts of the Soviet Government to produce bloody revolution in the United States."[32] Bullitt went on to say that if the U. S. broke relations with the Soviet Union because of that nation's breaking of her pledged word, the U. S., of course, would be saying that the Soviet Union could not be trusted -- and America would almost certainly not be able to reestablish relations with Russia during the ensuing decade. The Ambassador stated: "In this decade the Soviet Union either will be the center of attack from Europe and the Far East or will develop rapidly into one of the greatest physical forces in the world. In either event an official observation post of the U. S. Government in Moscow will be desirable not only to gather information on conditions in the Soviet Union and relations of the Soviet Union with the nations of Europe and the Far East, but also, and more important, to inform the Government of the U. S. with regard to activities of

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[32] Ibid., 861.00, C.C.I. VII/56:62:Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, August 21, 1935, pp. 244-248.

the Soviet Government directed against the lives and interests of American citizens."[33] The Soviets would continue to have unofficial agencies reporting on American affairs, and the U. S. would be left in the dark concerning events in Soviet Russia. Bullitt didn't believe that a written protest would be advisable, since it would inspire a nasty reply and no relief. Rather he suggested oral rebukes to Troyanovsky and the Soviet Foreign Office, to be accompanied by restrictions on Russian travel to the United States and the closing of Soviet consular offices. Then, he urged the President to go before the people of America and lay the case before them, detailing the Russian sins, cautioning vigilance against Communist machinations, and explaining the reasons for the decision of the U. S. not to take the final step of diplomatic rupture.[34]

The advice of Bullitt to take no step which would be embarrassing if not impossible to repair should the United States at some future date find Russian collaboration advantageous was diplomatically realistic. But his other recommendations appear less well thought out. Would not a written protest, even with its inevitable unsatisfactory reply, be better understood by the people of the United States than a Presidential charge of crimes against Russia, followed by an anticlimactic justification of continued

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[33] Ibid., p. 248.

[34] Ibid.

relations? The American public was not yet sufficiently concerned with or sophisticated in its thinking about international affairs to understand the decision. The course suggested would, therefore, not only have irritated the Soviet Union with no resulting compensation to America, but more important, weakened whatever support the Administration was receiving in the United States for its foreign policy.

Perhaps the President and the Secretary predicated their decision upon this argument. In any case, Roosevelt felt that the more drastic measures should be "held in reserve" -- an indication of the extent to which his illusions of fruitful cooperation with the Soviets had faded. A rather moderate press release by Hull took the place of a Presidential indictment. Still, in the diplomatic usage of this period, the actions of the U. S. constituted a severe reprimand to Moscow.

Indeed, by this time empty promises had taken their toll. If November, 1933 had marked the zenith of Russian-American cordiality, August, 1935 recorded the nadir. Disappointment and irritation had replaced hope and good will. As Secretary Hull sadly admitted: "We were ... back almost to where we had started."[35]

After filing his recommendations, Bullitt concluded: "Whatever you do, the Bolsheviks will make it hot for us

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[35]Cordell Hull, Memoirs (New York: 1948), I, p. 304.

here. But as Judge Moore says, we are already accustomed to Hades and acclimated."[36] As usual with many of Bill Bullitt's predictions concerning the Moscow regime, this one came to pass -- with the help of Bill Bullitt. He attempted to overcome the disillusionment which had its roots in the increasingly unsatisfactory results of the recognition that he had so enthusiastically promoted. The Comintern affair, the August storm, proved to be the turning point in his attitude towards the Soviets. From that time on, his remarks left no doubt as to his hostility to Soviet Russia. Washington directed Bullitt to hand the Kremlin a note protesting the violation of the propaganda pledge, and the Soviet reply, handed to Ambassador Bullitt by Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs N. Kretinskii on August 27, 1935, was a sweeping denial of the U. S. complaints. Bullitt went into action. The American publicist, Louis Fischer, describes what followed: "...Bullitt regarded the Comintern Congress as a personal insult. [He] did not merely deliver his note of protest to the Soviet Foreign office. Energetic individual, he launched a fierce propaganda campaign in Moscow against Moscow. He met the American correspondents every day and urged them by their dispatches to fan the fire of anti-Sovietism in America. He ignored precedents and summoned non-American foreign

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[36] Ibid., 861.00,C.C.I. VII/63: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, August 2, 1935, p. 249.

correspondents to do the same thing in their own countries. He also worked on foreign diplomats to have their governments protest against the Comintern Congress. Some did so without Bullitt's vehemence and with no conviction that it would help. After that, Bullitt's presence in Russia became impossible."[37]

It was a personal as well as an official defeat. Some in the United States blamed Bullitt for the chilling of relations, however more did so in the Soviet Union. In March, 1936, Ambassador Bullitt arranged interviews for Mr. Roy Howard (editor director of Scripps-Howard newspapers and editor and president of the New York World Telegram) with Stalin and Litvinov. Marshall Stalin cleverly evaded the issue of his direction of the Communist Party of the United States and expressed hopes for excellent relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Litvinov told Howard that no difficulties would have arisen between the two nations if it had not been for Bullitt's hostility to the activities of the Comintern Congress.[38]

Mr. William Appleman Williams, in his book Russian-American Relations 1781-1947, states that the Comintern, in the main, was not a call for revolution in America, that

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[37]Louis Fischer, Men and Politics (New York, 1941), p. 303.

[38]Foreign Relations, 711.61/595: Telegram: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, March 2, 1936, pp. 288-289.

Bullitt recognized this fact, but sought to magnify the problem -- and that the Roosevelt Administration was just as guilty as Bullitt for "pressing a highly legalistic issue to the point of serious aggravation" at "the hour of Signor Mussolini's adventure in Africa."[39] However, in this author's opinion, there can be no question that the proceedings of the Seventh Congress were a clear violation of the guarantees made at Washington, and that the U. S. had every right to submit a strong protest to the Soviet Union. The anger of American officials was more the measure of exhausted patience than of surprise and shock. The meeting of the Congress was an open challenge that could not be ignored. The "United Front" policy, of which Dr. Williams felt proved the good spirit of the Congress, was a new communist tactic as of the 1934 Comintern sessions -- and it strove for the union of all parties, Communist and non-Communist, in a common struggle against Fascism. As part of the new program, the International changed its line on the Roosevelt Administration and reappraised it as a progressive liberal regime with which the Communists might temporarily cooperate. It is quite possible that the necessity to repudiate this unwelcome endorsement in the interests of domestic politics influenced the decision of Roosevelt to make a public protest. If Bullitt sought to

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[39] William Appleman Williams, American-Russian Relations 1781-1947 (New York: 1956), p. 7.

"magnify" the Comintern affair, it was because it was worth magnifying -- however, his actions after the stormy August of 1935 surely didn't further the cause of peace, and, thus, the first American Ambassador to the Soviet Union came under a great deal of criticism.

As has been the case at the time of the debt negotiation failure, Moscow made an effort to minimize the tension which grew out of the American protest over the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. The Soviet press refrained from any editorial comment on the incident. Consequently, there was no attempt to inflame the public against the U. S. Rather an atmosphere of regret that America had taken the unhappy step of protesting permeated the brief coverage. In an effort to offset the accusations of Washington, Soviet officials asserted that countercharges could have been made with justification by Moscow. Ambassador Troyanovsky, referring to the various anti-Bolshevik Russian groups with headquarters in the United States, suggested that American look to the beam of her own eye.[40] In March, 1936, Joseph Stalin made the same comment. Still another approach used by the Soviet envoy, was to disagree disarmingly with the Comintern statements and theses in private conversations with American officials in Washington.[41] However, the most

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[40]The New York Times, August 27, 1935.

[41]Foreign Relations, The Soviet Union 1933-1939, pp. 260-262.

interesting defense was the time tested insistence upon the non-connection between the Russian government and the Comintern -- an argument obviously unsupported by the terms of the November 17, 1933 Washington agreement.

Although Bullitt had great provocation for his abrupt about-face, the bitterness of his reaction while still at his post was unfortunate. The United States Ambassador in Germany, William Dodd, was greatly impressed by the drastic change in the attitude of Bullitt toward the Soviet Union after the Comintern affair. After having a discussion with Bullitt concerning the Soviet Union, Dodd recorded the following in his diary on November 25, 1935: "I was amazed at this kind of talk from a responsible diplomat who had done so much to get Russia recognized in 1933. The President must know the man's mentality, but if so, how could he have appointed him Ambassador to Soviet Russia?"[42] Then, while in Berlin, Bullitt had an interview with newspapermen on December 1, 1935 and supported the case of Japan against Russia in the Far East.[43] Also, while in Berlin, Bullitt advised the French against certain deals pending with Russia. Dodd wrote in his diary: "I had been so shocked at his [Bullitt's] advice to the French Ambassador in Berlin not to favor the Russian-French peace pact that I

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[42]William E. Dodd, Jr. and Martha Dodd (eds.), Ambassador Dodd's Diary (New York: 1941), pp. 277-278.

[43]Ibid., p. 290.

reported to the State Department."[44] Again, on his way back to Moscow from Washington, Bullitt visited Berlin in February, 1936 -- and worried Ambassador Dodd even more than he had on his first visit. Dodd felt that Bullitt couldn't appraise situations well, and gave as an example the following comment by the embittered Philadelphian: "...this morning, he condemned sharply the cooperation between England, France, and the Balkan states in the hope of bringing Russia into a moderate policy and keeping the peace in Europe. He said Germany would capture Austria and Czechoslovakia in two weeks' time and quickly bring all Europe under her control."[45] Dodd concluded his comments on Ambassador Bullitt by stating: "Bullitt said that before he sailed last December for Washington, he knew that England had declined a great loan to Russia. Learning that France was about to loan her old Russian ally of 1914 one billion francs, it is reported that Bullitt went to a strategic person in the French Government and convinced him that Russia would never repay the loan. Thus he had defeated the Russian negotiations. I was not sure myself whether the Russians would pay, but it seemed unusual for an American Ambassador to Russia to defeat Russo-French negotiations."[46]

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid., pp. 308-319.

[46] Ibid. All of Dodd's observations were used in a later-day attack on Bullitt in V. P. Potemkin (ed.), Istoriia diplomati (Moscow, 1945), II, pp. 609-610.

William Bullitt returned to Moscow, and kept up his one-man campaign against the Narkomindel -- the Soviet Foreign office. On March 4, 1936, with the help of George F. Kennan, then a Secretary at the Embassy, Bullitt wrote the following message to Washington:

> "Sir: I have the honor to submit herewith certain personal observations on conditions in this country. I believe that what follows presents an accurate picture of life in Russia in the year 1936, but a regard for truth compels me to admit that the remainder of this dispatch was written not by myself but another American envoy, the Honorable Neil S. Brown of Tennessee, in his despatches to the Secretary of State in the years 1851, 1852 and 1853. Plus ça change, plus c'est le même chose.
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> This is a hard climate, and an American finds many things to try his patience, and but few that are capable of winning his affections. One of the most disagreeable features that he has to encounter, is the secrecy with which everything is done... The Russian mind seems naturally distrustful, and this is especially so with the Government officials. Everything is surrounded with ceremony and nothing is attainable but after the most provoking delays. Nothing is more striking to an American here on his first arrival, than the rigor of the police. It would seem that the capital (St. Petersburg) was in a state of siege; and among all the astringents put into requisition for the preservation of peace and order none is so abhorrent as the censorial power...
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> ...They conceive that the motive which induced Peter the Great to open the door to traders and artisans, has been answered, and that they have learned sufficiently the lessons of civilization to maintain its crafts and its maxims by themselves. And yet Russia cannot boast of a single invention in mechanics, that has been practical or copied out of the country. All they have is borrowed, except their miserable climate and even upon that,

> they are paying an enormous rate of usury, in the defences, and privations of winter... No nation has more need of foreigners, and none is so jealous of them...
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> I had a good deal during last winter to try my patience, for the Government possesses in an exquisite degree, the art of worrying a foreign representative without giving him even the consolation of an insult...no communication at least of a public nature, is safe in the Post Office, but is opened and inspected as a matter of course.
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> ...Display is a policy as well as a passion with the Russian Government. The popular mind is well adapted to this sort of finesse. A strange superstition prevails among the Russians that they are destined to conquer the world."[47]

Before leaving his post in the late spring of 1936, the Ambassador wrote his own dispatch of counsel, both sad and wise. Reluctantly, he concluded that the best that could be expected of Soviet-American relations was an uneasy correctness. Real friendship was impossible. Inasmuch as the United States needed a "listening post" at the capital of so great and influential power, "patience" should be the watchword. "We should neither expect too much nor despair of getting anything at all. We should be as steady in our attitude as the Soviet Union is fickle. We should remain unimpressed in the face of expansive professions of friendliness and unperturbed in the face of slights and underhanded opposition.

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[47] Foreign Relations, The Soviet Union: 1933-1939, 124.61/105: The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, March 4, 1936, pp. 299-291.

We should make the weight of our influence felt steadily over a long period of time in the directions which best suit our interests. We should never threaten. We should act and allow the Bolsheviks to draw their own conclusions as to the causes of our acts.

> Above all, we should guard the reputation of Americans for business like efficiency, sincerity and straightforwardness. We should never send a spy to the Soviet Union. There is no weapon at once so disarming and effective in relations with the communists as sheer honesty. They know very little about it."[48]

Bullitt also recommended that the United States make every effort to keep war from coming to the Far East. If either Japan or the U. S. S. R. won, he predicted, China would be lost. He also recommended that Washington work for a French-German reconciliation, presumably to prevent a war that would give Russia an opportunity to spread Communism in Europe. Excellent advice which came too late for the problems of 1933-1938, but which would have been followed with profit a decade later. Bullitt had learned his lesson; he should have been more practical and less idealistic with regard to the Soviet Union. It remained to be seen whether the United States of America had learned the same lesson.

William Bullitt "began by loving the Russians well and

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[48] Ibid., 861.01/2120: the Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, (Extracts), Moscow, April 20, 1936, pp. 291-296.

not wisely and ended by disliking them neither wisely nor well. The Russians trusted him in neither stage and told him nothing. He lost his temper and most of his friends."[49] In the spring of 1936, President Roosevelt decided that it was better not even to have an ambassador in Moscow but to leave the embassy in the hands of a Chargé d'affaires. Bullitt left Moscow more in sorrow than anger. He returned to the United States and, on the President's written order, began to study the problem of reforming and regenerating the Department of State and the Foreign Service. He occupied Room 201 in the State, War, and Navy Building -- a room irreverently referred to by State Department Clerks as "Hull's Death Cell." Raymond, Moley, a former Assistant Secretary of States, had occupied 201 when he incurred Secretary Hull's displeasure in 1933. One magazine carried an article about Bullitt entitled: "Retreat From Moscow To 'Death Cell.'"[50] For two months he sulked there, snapping, "I have no such intention," when reporters suggested he might want to resign.[51]

European diplomats were of the opinion that William Bullitt did not so much fail at his task in the Soviet Union

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[49]"William Christian Bullitt: January 25, 1891-", Current Biography, December, 1940, p. 123.

[50]Time, XXVIII, September 7, 1936, p. 12.

[51]News-Week, VIII, September 5, 1936, p. 9.

as arrive inopportunely, at a moment in Russian counter-revolutionary xenophobian history when it was unlikely that any enthusiastic, democratic foreigner could have succeeded. Bullitt had been criticized for being pro-Soviet in 1919, when Bolshevism was an anathema - and because of his dissension with Wilson, he was propelled into the arms of the isolationists. He was accused of "turning yellow" on Russia in 1933, when Communism was becoming intellectually stylish -- and because of his dissension with Stalin, was propelled into the arms of the appeasers in England and France.

At the Patrick Henry Bicentennial celebration in Hanover County, Virginia, in July, 1936, William Bullitt appeared as President Roosevelt's representative. With every listener keenly aware that the subject of Russia had long been uppermost in his mind, he declared: "Dictatorships, based on secret police and firing squads, have been set up in many lands. The noblest words that can issue from the mouth of man have been prostituted and the noblest sentiments of the heart of men have been played upon by propaganda to conceal the simple truth: that dictatorships are tyrannies imposing their dogmas on an enslaved people."[52]

52"Foreign Service, Retreat From Moscow," Time, XXVIII, September 7, 1936, p. 12.

CHAPTER VI

BEHIND THE SCENES IN PARIS: A HARBINGER OF THE SOVIET THREAT

Before William Bullitt could finish his study of the problem of reforming and regenerating the United States Department of State and the Foreign Service, the U. S. Ambassador to France, Jesse Straus, became violently ill and had to resign. President Roosevelt asked Bullitt to take the post in Paris.[1] The forty-five year old Philadelphian welcomed the change with relief. Some of those close to him admitted that he had made some mistakes, but promised that he had reformed, "that from now on he will be teachable and tactful." Said one commentator, "Bullitt is one of the President's risks. And ours also."[2]

Thus, Bill Bullitt became United States Ambassador to France on August 25, 1936. A few days later, the Literary Digest carried an article entitled, "Natural Envoy: Bullitt,

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[1]Letter from William Christian Bullitt to Milton de Kalb Brogley, December 5, 1947, in Milton de Kalb Brogley's William C. Bullitt and Russian American Relations, Master Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1949, p. 43.

[2]"William Christian Bullitt," Current Biography, December, 1940, p. 123.

Going to Paris, Knows High French Officials By First Names."[3] The story related, "As far back as he can remember of his 45 years, Bullitt has visited the French capital at least once annually."[4] William Bullitt couldn't have been more delighted about his new job. One magazine stated, "Known unofficially in diplomatic circles as a 'natural' for any diplomatic position because of his wealth, education, travels, experience in world affairs and hobnobbing capacities with foreign diplomats, Bullitt is considered an ideal choice for the new post."[5] Ambassador Bullitt left for France on September 23, 1936 aboard the U. S. liner Washington. A few days before he embarked, a newspaper reporter asked the Ambassador what he thought of the Roosevelt Administration. In most unambassadorial tones, he blandly replied. "They're the nicest bunch I've ever played around with."[6]

The world was well on the path leading to World War II when Bullitt arrived in Paris. The Nazi dictatorship was firmly entrenched in Germany. In 1934, there was an attempted Nazi coup in Austria -- and Premier Dollfuss of Austria was assassinated. In 1935, Italy attacked Ethiopia. In 1936, the Rhineland was remilitarized and the Spanish Civil War flared up. In Russia, there were severe domestic

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[3]"Natural Envoy: Bullitt: Going to Paris, Knows High French Officials By First Names," The Literary Digest, September 5, 1936, pp. 10-11.

[4]Ibid., p. 10.

[5]Ibid., p. 10.

[6]Ibid., p. 10.

upheavals, which resulted in an extensive realignment of the social structure of the entire population as well as of the Communist Party. The Great Purge (1935-1938) was well under way -- which claimed, according to conservative estimates about 7 to 8 million people, while according to others, 23 million became purge victims.[7] The world was gradually building up to explosive proportions.

When Bullitt arrived in Paris, laudatory newspapers dubbed him "that spectacular American." The Ambassador stepped out of his limousine into the courtyard of the Élysée Palace in the first week of October, 1936, took the salute of a battalion of the French Garde Républicaine, and presented to cordial President Albert Lebrun his credentials as U. S. Ambassador. Bullitt declared, "I come to France not as a stranger, but as one who for many years has known the magnificent achievements of French civilization."[8] It was therefore ludicrous that the royalist press of Paris should greet the new Ambassador with stormy reminders of the fact that he was once married to a lady who was once married to John Reed, a U. S. Communist buried in a niche of the Kremlin at Moscow, and with the surprising observation that Mr. Bullitt's late mother was a half-Jewess whose

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[7]Georg Von Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia (New York: 1963) p. 238.

[8]"France: 12 Year Ambassador," Time, October 26, 1936, p. 24.

maiden name was Louisa Gross Horwitz.[9] But, few things could come between the French and Bill Bullitt. He loved the "top-hat work" that had to be done. He wore a dark-red carnation in his buttonhole every day and had many well-made clothes from London. The French felt that William Bullitt acted like, looked like, even smelled like an ambassador. As the days and months passed, Bullitt's popularity with the French grew greater and greater. His food and drink came to rank so high in European diplomatic circles that King Zog of Albania, before his marriage, wrote Bullitt as man to man to ask whether, for his wedding breakfast and state feasts, he could "please borrow" Bullitt's cook. The cook was the former chef of the Hungarian Regent Horthy - the one cook in Europe about which the King had heard was quite competent to meet the approaching gastronomic crisis with style. Bullitt consented and had a new story to tell at the dinner table. The King was satisfied, and the chef had a grand trip and received the famous Albanian Ordre de Bessa, conferred by the grateful monarch.[10]

At one Embassy ball for six-hundred guests, including the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Bullitt served 490 bottles of his favorite champagne, Pomery 1928, a worthy Pouilly Fume, and the best proprietary whiskeys and brandies, besides

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[9] Ibid.

[10] "Profiles: Mr. Ambassador I: William Christian Bullitt, The New Yorker, December 10, 1938, p. 30.

fruit juices, and cakes, and at one-thirty in the morning, draft Munich beer with baked beans and frankfurter. For the first time in the Embassy there was dancing to a jazz band. The party ended at 5:30 A. M.[11] The Munich beer and the band were the highlights of the whole affair -- but, soon Munich would take on quite a different meaning for William Bullitt.

Besides the U. S. Embassy in Paris, Bullitt had a country place which he rented in a wooded area and on the borders of the fountained lake of the great chateau of Chantilly. Bullitt loved his 18th century chateau of St. Firmin because it was very near the place where the two great French horse races, the Chantilly Prix de Diane and the Prix du Jockey Club were run. The New Yorker reported that the Ambassador loved horse racing: "... he is craziest about racing, and the first thing he reads at breakfast is the racing page of the London Times."[12]

In this atmosphere, William Bullitt conveyed to the French his hatred of the Soviet government. This wouldn't, at first glance, appear to be of supreme importance -- however Ambassador Bullitt was quite influential in formulating American foreign policy, and also became dangerously involved in advising the French on their foreign affairs in this period when the world was careening toward disaster.

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[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

P-6 As Ambassador to France (1936-1941), Bullitt here parades before the Arc de Triomphe on Memorial Day. Just as the Soviet Union had become his implacable enemy, so France became his cherished friend. He was exceptionally close to the French leaders, and constantly advised them on matters concerning the Soviet Union. In fact, he warned all who would listen to him about the Russian menace.

The idea that the United State might formulate a comprehensive program of action and then bring influence to bear in order to implement it was quite alien to the principal inhabitants of the State Department during this period. Policy was the product of cables received from abroad rather than of a dynamic conception of American interests. In part, such thinking was due to the tradition of isolation and a lack of experience on the part of the professional diplomats. They had had so little to do for so many years. But it was also a consequence of inadequate political analysis. Thus, American emissaries in key posts abroad could exert a considerable influence on the development and the conduct of American foreign policy. This was particularly true of a man such as William Bullitt. President Roosevelt distrusted foreign service officers as a class, and Bullitt maintained a particularly close relationship with the President. He was in constant communication with F.D.R. by letter, cable and telephone. The two men even worked out a special code for their transatlantic conversations, and talked cryptically about Yale -- Harvard baseball scores and the ages of the President's elderly relatives.[13]

Doctrine specifically forbade a U. S. Ambassador to make foreign policy for the U. S. -- but Bullitt went

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[13]Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert (ed.), The Diplomats 1919-1939 (Princeton: 1953) p. 654 cc Joseph Alsop and Robert Kinter, American White Paper (New York: 1940); Jim Farley's Story; Bertram D. Hulen, Inside the State Department (New York: 1939).

beyond that. He not only was shaping American foreign policy vis a vis the Soviet Union, he also served in more than an advisory capacity to the French on Franco-Russian relations. The Kremlin was angered by Bullitt's activities in Paris, and much of the advice that the scion of Rittenhouse Square gave to the French was put into action.

On November 6, 1936, Bullitt had a conversation with the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Yvon Delbos. Delbos said that he had been having another controversy with the Soviet Government about their interference in the internal affairs of France. He said that he had instructed Robert Coulondre, French Ambassador in Berlin to go to Moscow to tell Litvinov that the French Government demanded the Soviets to cease directing and "heating up" the French Communists. He said that the reply of Litvinov had been that the Soviet Government had nothing to do with the French Communist movement, and Litvinov declared, "Then do you wish the Soviet Government to begin giving decorations to the French Communists?"[14] Delbos told Bullitt that he had called in Potemkin, Soviet Ambassador in Paris, and told him that the French "were not altogether fools and that they had heard that there was a man named Stalin who had a certain influence on both the Soviet Government and the Comintern

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[14] Foreign Relations of the United States of America 1936, Diplomatic Papers, Volume II Europe, 852.00/3922: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Acting Secretary of State, Paris, November 20, 1936, p. 578.

and that if the Soviet Government intended to maintain good relations with the French Government the present attacks on the French Government by the French Communists which were ordered and organized in Moscow must cease."[15] Needless to say that if the French leaders at any time began to forget about the Communist threat, Bill Bullitt, at least until Munich, constantly reminded them.

After a few years at his post, there was a large volume of concrete evidence about the Nazi threat awaiting assimilation or evaluation -- but still Bullitt's views about the situation in Europe were dominated by his distrust of the Soviet Union. He believed that in order to counteract the policy of the Soviet Union, the United States should instruct its "diplomatic representatives in Europe to use all opportunities in personal conversations to point out the danger to Europe of the continuation of Franco-German enmity and to encourage reconciliation between France and Germany."[16] After a year and a half in Paris, Bullitt remained more or less constant to this view. His reception in France was precisely what he must have hoped for, and failed to attain in Russia. Whereas polo equipment for the Red Army, baseball games and zoo parties for Bolshevik functionaries had failed to soothe the Soviet beast,

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Gordon Craig and Felix Gilbert, The Diplomats 1919-1939, p. 654.

elaborate fetes and a superb chef at the embassy brought him the most intimate confidences of high French society. Bullitt found Paris and all her celebrities a glittering and bewitching contrast to Moscow. So great was his popularity, especially in governmental circles, that many French newspapers dubbed him minister without portfolio in the kaleidoscope of French cabinets. And in this atmosphere Bullitt responded with affection, devotion and trust. Just as the Soviet Union was the implacable enemy, so France became the cherished friend. It followed from this, first, that the Franco-Soviet alliance should not develop beyond the innocuous limits set by the treaty of 1935; and, secondly, that the French position should be strengthened by a rapprochment with Germany. What Bullitt had advocated in the spring of 1935 he continued to favor until after the debacle of Munich.

The bête noir of William Bullitt was still the Soviet Union, but Great Britain was playing, Bullitt felt, the role of a minor villain. He confided to Ambassador Dodd in Germany that he cared "not a damn" for Britain, and, after a conversation with Sir Eric Phipps in Paris, he concluded that the British Ambassador had instructions "to prevent the French from having any tête-à-tête conversations with Germany; that the policy of Great Britain is still to keep the Continent of Europe divided."[17]

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[17]William E. Dodd, Jr. and Martha Dodd (eds.), Ambassador Dodd's Diary 1933-1938 (New York: 1941), p. 309.

Joseph E. Davies was William C. Bullitt's replacement as U. S. Ambassador to Russia. Before Davies left for Russia in January, 1937, he had a conference with Troyanovsky, the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, D. C. Troyanovsky, speaking "personally," told Davies that he was apprehensive that Davies' stay in Moscow might be embarrassed at the beginning by some little coolness on the part of the Soviet officials arising out of differences and misunderstandings he had heard had developed between Mr. Litvinov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and Ambassador Bullitt. Davies later told of his reply: "To this I, of course, rejoined that I was entirely sympathetic with the very great disappointment which Ambassador Bullitt had experienced in the failure of the Soviet Government to live up to what appeared to me to have been a plain commitment."[18] When Davies arried in Moscow, he talked with Voroshilov who, although he was a friend of Ambassador Bullitt, believed that a great many difficulties had been created by him. Davies later cabled Secretary Hull, "To this I immediately replied, and in no uncertain terms, that I had the greatest admiration for Ambassador Bullitt, knew him to be a strong, forthright man who dealt directly and with the belief that honorable obligations would be fulfilled in the spirit in which they were entered into, and that the important fact

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[18]Joseph E. Davies, Mission to Moscow, (New York: 1941) p. 13.

was the continued existence of the condition and not the causes therefor."[19]

Russia hadn't forgotten Mr. Bullitt -- and Mr. Bullitt was making sure that it hadn't by his activities in France. It should be noted that while Bullitt was in France, 1936-1941, relations between the U. S. and the Soviet Union improved somewhat (until August, 1939), specifically during the ambassadorship of Joseph E. Davies, 1936-1938. "But this had little effect upon American opinion, which seemed to find its worse fears and its strongest prejudices confirmed by events in Russia."[20]

As the months passed, William Bullitt gave more and more advice to the French vis à vis the Soviet Union. On February 20, 1937, Delbos, French Minister for Foreign Affairs, called on Bullitt and had a two hour conversation with him. Delbos told Bullitt that it was presumed that in case of an outbreak of war over the Czechoslovakian issue Russia would be able to give great assistance to Czechoslovakia. Bullitt expressed skepticism. He explained that Germany's first act in making war on Czechoslovakia would be to bomb all the Czech landing fields so that if Russian planes did reach Czechoslovakia they wouldn't be able to land. Delbos said that when there was the slightest hint of tension between

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[19] Ibid., p. 14.

[20] Harold H. Fisher, America and Russia In the World Community (Claremont, Cal.: 1946) p. 74.

Czechoslovakia and Germany, Russian planes would fly at once to Czechoslovakia. Bullitt, in a telegram to Hull, told of his reply to Delbos. "I asked him if he had thought of the political consequences adding that if, in a state of tension between Czechoslovakia and Germany, thousands of Russian planes should fly to Czechoslovakia for the obvious purpose of threatening to attack Germany public opinion in both England and the United States would regard Czechoslovakia and Russia as the aggressors and not Germany."[21] Delbos concluded that it was his belief that Stalin for the moment had decided to pursue a more moderate policy in interfering in the affairs of the outside world. Few people knew about the mass executions which were taking place in Russia, but these internal difficulties in the Soviet Union hindered Soviet foreign policy only temporarily.

The Berlin-Rome axis was established in October, 1936. It was followed by the conclusion of the German-Japanese Anti-Comintern Pact on November 25th. The Kremlin probably did not seriously fear encirclement -- but the threat of it could be used successfully as a propaganda slogan in support of a new foreign policy -- as Litvinov's new course of collective security and close collaboration with the Western powers. However, Soviet policies, during these years, were conducted along two distinct lines. Moscow was

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21 Foreign Relations of the United States of America: 1937: Diplomatic Papers, Volume 1, General, 740.00/117: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, February 20, 1937, p. 250f.

of the opinion that the new economic crisis which broke out about 1937 would seriously shake the capitalist world. The increasing number of unemployed in England and in the United States, coupled with the aggressive policy of the Anti-Comintern powers, led to the most pessimistic prognosis for the democratic West. The hour of Communism seemed once more to have struck. Contrary to promises made and despite the popular front truce, the opportunity for more vigorous Communist propaganda could not be passed by. A left wing victory in Spain, it was hoped, would set off similar developments in other countries.

The increase in Bolshevik ideological propaganda was the chief reason for the West's distrust of the Soviet Union, and it interfered with the harmony of collective security. When this was followed by ever more sensational reports of the show trials in Moscow and the purging of the Red Army, the Soviet Union's prestige and importance in the eyes of the Western powers began to sink. However, it was the Czech crises which led to the final breakdown of the system of collective security between West and East.

The Nazis wanted to annex the Sudeten German population of Czechoslovakia. If they attacked Czechoslovakia, would Russia come to the aid of Czechoslovakia? Bullitt said no. The French felt Russia would, but soon came to understand otherwise. Robert Coulondre, French Ambassador

to Berlin, told Bullitt in Paris that he was certain that Russia wouldn't support Czechoslovakia in case of a German attack on Czechoslovakia. Coulondre reported that he had talked with Litvinov in Moscow and the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs was asked pointblank, "If Germany attacks Czechoslovakia, will you send support to Czechoslovakia?" Litvinov replied, "No." Then later, he covered up by saying, "We should want to see what France would do and would do whatever France might do."[22] Bullitt and Coulondre agreed that Litvinov's first answer was decisive and sincere.

On May 20, 1937, Bullitt lunched with Leon Blum, President of the French Council of Ministers. Blum stated that Litvinov had assured him categorically that if Germany should attack Czechoslovakia and if France should go to war with Germany to defend Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union would make war on Germany at once. One can anticipate Bill Bullitt's reply. He stated that he didn't see how the aid of the Soviet Union could be very effective in view of the condition of Soviet roads and railroad leading to the west and in view of the fact that Soviet planes and armies couldn't cross Poland or Rumania. Blum felt that there were other alternatives than to move toward a rapprochement with the Soviets. Bullitt mentioned the

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[22] Ibid., 740.00/149: Telegram. The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, April 22, 1937, p. 79.

"wholesale exilings and shootings" in the Soviet Union, and said that it would be hard to convince the British Government to have close relations with Russia.[23]

Ambassador Bullitt's "free advice" continued, and a few months later he had a serious discussion of the European situation with Delbos. He asked Delbos "if there were any possibility that the French Government in any future Locarno negotiations would make 'exceptions' with regard to the French alliances with Poland and Czechoslovakia but would omit any 'exception' dealing with the treaty of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union." Delbos replied that it would be impossible -- he feared that the Government would "unquestionably be overthrown by the Communists. Moreover, he doubted the wisdom of abandoning the Soviet Union at the moment when he still feared greatly that Germany and the Soviet Union would come to an immediate agreement if France should abandon Russia altogether."[24]

Bullitt began to feel that the possibility of a European war in the immediate future was unlikely. The U. S. Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes, commented on a conversation he had with President Roosevelt: "I remarked that I didn't like the European situation..., and [F. D. R.] said he didn't either. He said, however, that

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[23]Ibid., 740.00/178: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, May 20, 1937, pp. 652-655.

[24]Ibid., 740.00/225: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, November 22, 1937, p. 158.

whereas Bill Bullitt and others a few weeks ago were sure that a general European war was not far away, they now felt equally sure that there wasn't going to be any European war in the immediate future. He remarked that when the international experts felt sure that war was coming, he was easy in his mind, but that when they all saw nothing but peace, then he began to worry."[25]

On November 13, 1937, Ambassador Bullitt left Paris for an eight day visit to Warsaw and Berlin. He talked with the Polish minister for Foreign Affairs, Colonel Joseph Beck and other members of the Polish Government, and in Berlin, among the many people he had conversations with were Baron Konstantin von Neurath (the German Minister For Foreign Affairs) and General Hermann Goering (German Minister for Aviation). The German Minister for Foreign Affairs told Bullitt, "Tell your French friends that we are quite ready to establish the best possible relations with them." He made it clear, however, that the German Government, so far as peace was concerned, intended to take no initiative. General Goering related that "there was no direct conflict whatsoever today between Germany and France." When Bullitt asked him what his views were with regard to the Soviet Union, Goering replied that the Red Army on the European

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[25]Harold Le Claire Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes: Volume II The Inside Struggle 1936-1939 (New York: 1953), p. 103.

frontier had ceased to be a serious fighting force if indeed it had ever been one. He said that the reports of the prowess of Soviet aviation in Spain were extraordinarily misleading."[26] When the American Ambassador departed from Germany, he envisioned a German-French rapprochement within the immediate future -- which would leave the Soviet Union isolated.

When he returned to Paris, Bullitt attempted more than ever to make the Franco-German rapprochement a reality -- so much so that Ambassador Dodd in Berlin felt Bullitt was a Fascist. By February, 1938, Delbos was seriously considering the matter and asked Litvinov in Geneva what he thought of the idea. Delbos stated that the policy of rapprochement with Germany might establish an atmosphere of peace in Europe which would be to the ultimate advantage of the Soviet Union as well as France and Germany. Litvinov disagreed violently. Bullitt, thus, wired Secretary Hull, "The French Communists, on orders from Moscow, would certainly oppose such a rapprochement."[27]

It appears today that William Bullitt was not looking for the data that mattered, as, for example, was Winston Churchill. Churchill had started with some hypotheses

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[26] Foreign Relations: 1937, Vol. 1, 123 Bullitt, W.C./382: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, November 23, 1937, p. 159f.

[27] Foreign Relations of the United States of America: 1938: Diplomatic Papers, Volume 1, General, 871.4016 Jews/82: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State), Paris, February 1, 1938, p. 21.

about the nature of international politics which bore considerable relation to existing reality. Bullitt did not have this advantage. To a very large extent his dispatches were in the classic diplomatic tradition. That is to say, they consisted, more often than not, of gossip, accounts of conversations with prominent officials in Paris and scraps of unassimilated information, rumors, horseback opinions written at the gallop, and predictions. Craig and Gilbert, in The Diplomats, 1919-1939, state that Bullitt was a reporter rather than an analyst -- and that so much of his data came from official sources that he tended to adopt the interpretations of the government to which he was accredited.[28] This is only true to an extent. One might be able to say with truthfulness that Bullitt was a reporter in France -- but can one make the same generalization about the man who made so many disturbingly accurate predictions while serving as Ambassador to Russia? Before Munich, it was particularly difficult to resolve a sound policy when threats to the established order were emanating from so many sides -- from Japan and possibly the Soviet Union as well as from Germany and Italy. Indeed, the situation was almost out of hand from the standpoint of making rational and calculated decisions. Bullitt used his influence to confirm and reinforce the views already held by Edouard

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[28]Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert (eds.), The Diplomats, 1919-1939 (Princeton: 1953), p. 658.

Daladier - President of the French Council of Ministers in 1938. However, Bullitt confirmed and reinforced Dalodier's views because he believed in them - and there was many a time when the French leader came to Bullitt for advice. Back in the U. S. in May, 1938, Bullitt had a long conversation with Secretary of Interior, Harold L. Ickes. The Secretary related in his diary: "I had a good chance to talk with Bill Bullitt. I got the impression that he is a realist in politics and international affairs. He thinks Italy will find Ethiopia a great financial burden. He thinks that France is bound to win in Spain... He looks for German subjugation of Czechoslovakia. He commented on the fact that Hitler's timing had always been perfect; that he had moved from one objective to another and so far had attained his ends without having to fire a gun... The deed will be done in such a way that Russia and others will **claim** justification for not going to the aid of Czechoslovakia... He thinks that Japan will win the battles in China but lose the war."[29]

When he wrote his dispatches, they were written in journalistic fashion -- however, this certainly doesn't mean that William Bullitt was not a sound analyst of political affairs. But, the fact remains that prior to Munich, in September, 1938, Bullitt **saw** no real immediate danger of a

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[29]Harold Le Claire Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes: Volume II The Inside Struggle 1936-1939 (New York: 1953), p. 380.

world war. As the German pressure on Czechoslovakia increased, he became more pessimistic, as did Daladier, and estimated that the chances of war and peace were about evenly balanced. What he feared more than Hitler's fanaticism was some desperate action of German or Russian "agent provocateurs." He still toyed with the possibility of bringing France and Germany together, and only excluded the suggestion from a speech he was to give early in September, 1938 when the French Minister informed him that this was not the appropriate moment for such a proposal.

In answer to a French inquiry concerning the Czech crisis at the beginning of September, 1938, the Soviet Union had suggested that a joint statement be issued by the British, French and Soviet governments, an appeal to the League of Nations, and a joint military plan with the Czech General Staff worked out. The Kremlin informed the Czech government that it was ready to carry out the assistance pact of 1935 if France honored her part in it. A protest was made against the concentration of Polish troops on the Czech border. When the United States offered to act as mediator, looking to a peaceful settlement of the conflict, the Soviet government expressed its interest in an international conference. It seemed a matter of course that Russia would be invited.

"However, the Western powers made no use of the Russian offers. After the great domestic upheavals of the

past few years, the West felt justified in assuming that the strength of the Red Army had been weakened to such a degree that the Soviet Union could not, for the time being, be considered an effective partner in international affairs. Further, extensive Soviet interference in the central European situation was in any event unwelcomed."[30] At the Munich Conference, which took place from September 29 to September 30, 1938, Hitler's demands were accepted. As French aid to Czechoslovakia was thus made impossible, the Soviet Union, too, was relieved of its obligations.[31]

When news reached Paris of the agreement in Munich, William Bullitt rushed to the apartment of George Bonnet (French Minister for Foreign Affairs) with tears in his eyes and his arms full of flowers, to convey le salut fraternel et joyeux de l'Amérique.[32]

Bullitt, because he feared the Soviet Union, consistently underestimated the nature and imminence of the German threat during the summer of 1938. He was probably confused by the latest turn of events -- as were many people throughout the world. He must have pictured the United States as the

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30George von Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia (New York: 1953), p. 271.

31Newspaper reports that Daladier had been authorized to speak for the Soviet Union in Munich and that the French and British governments had consulted Russia on the Czech question, were denied on October 2nd and 4th. Jane Degras (ed.), Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, III, 1933-1941 (London, 1951-1953), p. 307.

32George Bonnet, Défense de la paix (Geneva: 1946-1948), I, p. 294.

disinterested peacemaker who would bring together the contending factions in Europe. Bullitt ended up by urging a fairly active role upon the President. Already in July he was castigating certain nations for resorting to the "murder of defenseless men, women and children;" he asserted that without international morality there can be no human life worth living."[33] By September, Bullitt coupled the time-worn American nostrums for peace (trade and disarmament) with the statement that if war should break out in Europe no one could predict whether or not the U. S. might become involved.[34] As the crisis over Czechoslovakia deepened, his interest in an active American policy underwent a corresponding growth. On September 24, he actually urged F.D.R. to make a concerted effort to preserve the peace -- the net result of Bullitt's efforts was a series of Presidential appeals to the heads of the Powers immediately involved in the crisis.

Not only had he pushed the threat of the Soviet Union temporarily into a corner of his mind, he had actually begun to cast about for measures by which the President could shape the European situation according to the requirements of American interests. On October 3, 1938, Bullitt reported that "Daladier sees the situation entire, clearly

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[33]The New York Times, July 9, 1938, p. 4.

[34]Bonnet, Defense de la Paix, I, p. 207.

realizes fully that the meeting in Munich was an immense diplomatic defeat for France and England, and recognizes that unless France can recover a united national spirit to confront the future, a fatal situation will arise within a year."[35]

The situation had suddenly simplified itself to Bill Bullitt. In fact, Bullitt saw the new dispensation so clearly that he fell prey to every rumor about German intentions and sent clouds of excited dispatches to Washington. The Anglo-French coalition cried out for accretions of strength, even if that involved an approach to the Soviet Union. He doubted that one could rely much on treaties with the Russians but agreed with Daladier that no stone should be left unturned, "even though one might expect to find vermin under it." His personal feeling was that if Edouard Herriot, President of the French Chamber of Deputies, went to negotiate a treaty in Moscow he should be accompanied by someone as unscrupulous as the Bolsheviks.[36]

In December, 1939, Bullitt returned to the U. S. A. for a few weeks, and told Secretary of Interior Ickes, that "Germany in due course will try to take the Ukraine, which is the richest wheat area of the Soviet Union. In the process Germany will extend herself to such a degree that

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[35]W. L. Langer and S. E. Gleason, The Challenge To Isolation (New York: 1952), p. 37.

[36]Ibid., p. 70.

she cannot stand the strain. She will break under it in the end ... by leaving Russia to her fate, England and France will be diverting the threat of Germany from their own lands."[37]

On March 9, 1939, Bullitt lunched in Paris with Daladier and the Polish Ambassador to France. Both of the European diplomats were of the opinion that nothing could be counted on as far as the Soviet Union was concerned. They both felt that it was certain that internal conditions in the Soviet Union would prevent the Red Army from taking any active part in any war anywhere. Bullitt agreed, and stated that if Hitler was willing it wouldn't take a half hour to form an alliance between Germany and the Soviet Union -- "Stalin was panting for such an agreement."[38]

A few days later Slovakia declared her independence on orders from Berlin, and consequently German troops invaded the remaining Czechoslovak territory. Hitler announced the creation of the protectorate Bohemia Moravia on March 17. The Soviet Union did nothing more than send a quietly worded response on March 18. It disputed the constitutional right of the Czech President Hacha to agree to the German measures, and refused to recognize the incorporation of

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[37]Harold LeClaire Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, II, pp. 519-520.

[38]Foreign Relations of the United States of America: 1939: Diplomatic Papers, Volume I, General, 770.00/597: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, March 9, 1939, p. 30.

Czechoslovakia into the German empire. New ways had to be found if Soviet Russia was not to be excluded from all participation in the settlement of European problems or, worse, completely isolated. In order to escape isolation, which was bound to become dangerous if Poland were to share the fate of Czechoslovakia, two roads were open. Either try to come to an agreement with the Western powers in order to strengthen the resistance to Hitler, or ally oneself with National Socialist Germany in order to participate in the division of Eastern Europe.[39]

If the Soviets were having trouble, so was Bill Bullitt. On March 20, 1939, he telephoned President Roosevelt from Paris and began by saying: "Mr. President, of course the English Foreign office is listening in to this conversation and we will have to be careful what we say. You and I know that there are a bunch of pusillanimous, double-crossing, tricky people over there who can't be relied upon even to carry out their undertakings. And undoubtedly the French Foreign office is listening in too and having our conversation transcribed. But you know that bunch, too. They are just as bad as the English..."[40] The President listened to Bill Bullitt sounding off and concluded the conversation by saying, "Well, Bill, I agree with you in everything you have

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[39]George von Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia (New York: 1963) p. 272.

[40]Harold Le Claire Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, II, pp. 602, 603 ff.

said."[41] The President was delighted with this episode, offering, as it did, an opportunity to tell both the British and French Foreign Offices unofficially just what he thought of them.

Two days later, Bullitt asked the Rumanian Ambassador in Paris if Rumania would be prepared to receive assistance from the Soviet Union. The Rumanian Ambassador replied to this question in exactly the same words that the Polish Ambassador had used to Bullitt when the American Ambassador put the same question to him with regard to Poland a few days before. Both European Ambassadors declared, "In time of peace we cannot make any agreement whatsoever to permit Russian troops to enter our territory or to receive assistance in the form of munitions, guns, tanks, or airplanes from the Soviet Union, but in time of war we would be ready to take help from the devil himself."[42]

On May 3, 1939 Litvinov was replaced as Commissar for Foreign Affairs by Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov, who assumed this post in addition to his office as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars which he had held since 1930. This initiated the new course of Soviet foreign policy. For the Kremlin the path to an agreement with Germany was now open. Suritz, the Soviet Ambassador in

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Foreign Relations 1939, I, 762.71/43: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, March 30, 1939, p. 79.

Paris told Bullitt two days later that he was absolutely certain that the dismissal of Litvinov would make no change whatsoever in the foreign policy of the Soviet government.[43] On the eighth day of May, Bullitt cabled Secretary Hull: "On the question of future Russian policy I have received today an optimistic interpretation from the source that I found always the most reliable when I was Ambassador in Moscow... Stalin is more anti-Semitic than ever. The dominant members of the Politburo since the purges of last year have been Zhdanov, Andreyev, and Molotov all of whom are extremely anti-Jewish... Litvinov's failure to reach agreement with England offered an excellent opportunity to get rid of Litvinov and his intimate Jewish collaborators. The foreign policy of the Soviet Union would remain unchanged and it might prove easier to arrive at an agreement with Molotov than it had been with Litvinov."[44]

William Bullitt began to feel that it was necessary to move closer to the Soviet Union in face of Nazi Germany. On May 16, 1939, the American Ambassador in Paris wired Hull, "[Daladier] has a few illusions as I ... with regard to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government had done everything it could to overthrow his Ministry. Nevertheless,

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43Ibid., 861.01/2156: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, May 4, 1939, p. 247.

44Ibid., 861.01/2168: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, May 8, 1939, pp. 251-255.

he believed that it was essential to have Russia in the combination. Only thus could a sufficient combination of force be built up to deter Hitler from risking war."[45]

On May 20 Molotov and the German Ambassador, Count von der Schulenburg, discussed for the first time political means of strengthening German-Russian trade relations. From then on the gradual development of closer German-Soviet relations began to unroll before the eyes of international observers, starting with cautious explorations by subordinate officials, confidential conversations and hints, followed by official talks between the responsible policy makers up to the final decision in August, 1939. The Soviet government managed to camouflage the German-Russian talks as skillfully as did Hitler's Foreign Ministry.

Bullitt reported that Daladier told him on June 28, 1939 that the Soviet government had repeatedly assured the French and the British governments that it was not negotiating in anyway with the German government. Bullitt expressed doubt, and Daladier said that of course he knew he could not trust any Russian assurances, but that neither the French nor British Embassies nor Secret Services had been able to unearth any information indicating that the Russians were negotiating with the Germans.[46] Ambassador Bullitt

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[45] Ibid., 740.00/1500: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, May 16, 1939, pp. 254-255.

[46] Ibid., 740.00/1822: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, June 28, 1939, pp. 277-278.

warned him that the possibility of such negotiations going on at that time were still quite good.

Meanwhile, von der Schulenburg was telling Molotov that the German anti-Comintern agreements were really meaningless, that the English were the true common enemies of Russia and Germany, and that Russia and Germany should have closer trade relations, etc. Molotov wanted closer political relations. The English and the French received information from their ambassadors in Moscow, Sir William Seeds and M. Paul Émile Naggiar that there was nothing to the reported rumor of a German-Russian rapprochement. Seeds and Naggiar were convinced by the loud and honest protestations of the Soviet War Commissar, Klementi Voroshilov, who was carrying on the discussions with the English and French in Moscow in blank ignorance of the doings of Stalin and Molotov. Only the Chinese benefited from the knowledge of what was taking place. A private emissary, sent by plane from Chungking by Chiang Kai-Shek, visited Bullitt in Paris on August 8, 1939 and received news of what was afoot. The information, cabled back to Chungking, caused the Chinese Generalissimo to refuse to conclude a treaty offered by Russia, and pressed for by several influential members of the executive Yuan. Bullitt had learned of the negotiations, warned the U. S. State Department, the British, and the French many times during the summer of 1939 -- but to no avail. Actually, the U. S. had been on warning against such a development

since 1934, while the English and French, also warned, simply refused to credit the incredible. Bullitt, the prophet of annoying accuracy, reported that soon after the Roehm bloodbath demonstrated the efficiency of the German dictator, Stalin offered Hitler a partnership against the Western world.[47]

It was one of history's minor ironies that during those fateful August days the German embassy in Moscow arranged a very successful garden party at which Strang, the head of the British mission, won first prize in a tennis tournament.[48] By August 16, the very day when Voroshilov intimated to the English and French missions that if Poland would only admit a Russian Army the Soviets would join the front gaint Hitler, the terms of the Russo-German pact had been fully agreed upon between von der Schulenburg and Molotov.

On August 22, 1939 Daladier told Bullitt in Paris that "the action of the Soviet Government in signing a non-aggression pact with Germany, the secret clauses of which were unknown, placed France in a most tragic and terrible situation."[49] Bullitt later in the day cabled Secretary

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[47]Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner, American White Paper (New York: 1940), p. 52f.

[48]George von Reuch, A History of Soviet Russia, p. 278.

[49]Foreign Relations 1939, I, 740.00/2106: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, August 22, 1939, pp. 301-304.

Hull the following on the Daladier conversation:

> "He said that he could not understand how the French diplomats and negotiators could have been so deceived by the Russians. He reminded me that at least six-times since last January I had warned him that most serious negotiations were under way between the Germans and the Russians and said that he has told all the French Government services to attempt to verify my statements to him but had been reassured that there was no negotiations other than commercial negotiations in progress between Germany and the Soviet Union. The entire diplomatic structure which he had attempted to build up had beep destroyed by this act of the Russians."[50]

Daladier discussed the problem of the French Communists with Bullitt on August 25, 1939. The French leader was incensed by the attitude of the Communist papers in Paris which, subsidized from Moscow, were saying that France shouldn't fight in support of Poland. He stated that he intended to seize the Soviet subsidized Humanité that evening, and that he would rather have his struggle with the Communists now then later. Bullitt declared that it was better to have enemies in the open then hidden in corners, and that the French Communists with certain rare exceptions owed their allegiance to the Soviet Union.[51]

At ten minutes to three on the Morning of September 1, 1939, the telephone rang next to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's bed. He was awake in an instant. "Who is it?"

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[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid., 760c62/1010: Telegram. The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, August 25, 1939, pp. 365-366.

"This is Bill Bullitt, Mr. President." "Yes, Bill." "Tony Biddle has just got through from Warsaw, Mr. President. Several German divisions are deep in Polish territory, and fighting is heavy. Tony said there were reports of bombers over the city. Then he was cut off..." "Well, Bill, it's come at last. God help us all."[52] After a few more words, Bullitt hung up and the President began calling Hull, Welles and others. Soon officials were speeding to their offices through dark empty streets. In the White House Roosevelt fell asleep until 6:30 A. M., when Bullitt phoned again, to say that he had talked with Daladier: France would go to Poland's aid. The President, with his usual iron nerve, got a few minutes' sleep before U. S. Ambassador to Great Britain, Joseph P. Kennedy, phoned from London to report that Britain would fight. Roosevelt did not try to nap again. World War II had begun.

The next day, Bullitt talked with the Polish Ambassador to France, Lukasiewisz, who reported a speech which Soviet War Commissar Voroshilov had made in which he had stated that the agreement between Germany and the Soviet Union would not interfere with commercial exchanges between Poland and the Soviet Union. Ambassador Bullitt declared, "It may mean that the Soviet Government intends to give doses

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[52]James M. Burns, Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox (New York: 1956), p. 394.

of support to both sides in the war which has now begun with a view to keeping the war going as long as possible so that suffering may be prolonged to the extreme and that in the end the Soviet armies intact will be able to march over the Continent."[53]

By September 7, 1939, Bullitt observed that the Soviet Embassy in Paris had packed all its archives and was making preparations to leave immediately in anticipation of an attack by the Red Army on Poland. The American Ambassador wired the American Secretary of State the following suggestion: "...Incidently, if the Soviet Union at this moment should attack Poland the Government of the United States might no longer be interested in maintaining relations with a government so entirely dishonorable."[54]

When Hitler's attack on Poland inaugurated the Second World War, the Soviet Union had been for some time engaged in tedious frontier battles with the Japanese. The Red Army was committed to aiding the Mongolian People's Republic and Soviet troops participated in the fighting which took place throughout the summer along the Chalchin Gol river in Manchuria. On September 15, 1939, an agreement was signed

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[53] Foreign Relations 1939, I, 761.6211/170: Telegram The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, September 2, 1939, pp. 348-349.

[54] Ibid., 740.0011 Eur. War, 1939/204: Telegram, The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, September 7, 1939, p. 204.

in Moscow. Hostilities were terminated and a border commission formed. Germany asked the Soviet government on September 3, the day of the British and French declaration of war on Germany, "to mobilize its forces against Poland and to occupy the territory which it had been allotted in the secret agreement."[55] On September 10, Molotov said that the Soviet Union needed more time toprepare for the invasion. Apart from the desire to reach settlement with the Japanese first, it seemed advisable for Russia's reputation both abroad and at home to start intervention only when it would no longer have an actual military character. "Not until the Germans reported -- prematurely as it turned out -- the imminent fall of Warsaw on September 15 (the city actually resisted until September 27), did the Soviet government begin to speed up its own invasion."[56]

The Polish ambassador in Paris told Bullitt on September 17 that the previous evening "Molotov had summoned the Polish Ambassador in Moscow and handed him a note stating that since the Polish Government was no longer able to protect the population bordering on the Soviet Union, Soviet troops would enter Poland for the protection of those populations."[57]

55Jame Degras (Ed.), Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy (London: 1953), III, p. 372.

56George von Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia (New York: 1963), pp. 282-283.

57Foreign Relations 1939, I, 740.001 Eur. War 1939/341: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, September 17, 1939, pp. 429-430.

The Soviet troops met hardly any resistance; the fate of the Polish army had already been sealed. Polish losses were 300,000 men dead, wounded and taken prisoner, while the Soviet losses were only 737 dead and 1,862 wounded. Thus, the fourth partition of Poland had taken place. The Soviet Union gained 20,000 square kilometers and almost 13 million inhabitants, and presented itself to the people as a new "gatherer of Russian soil" -- exponent of ancient Russian national claims. In Paris, William Bullitt concluded, "... the Soviet Government is not acting so much as an ally of Germany as preparing the way for an eventual Bolshevization of Germany as well as the Balkans and all the rest of Europe."[58]

In Paris, Alexis Leger, Secretary General of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, declared that it was 98 per cent certain that the Soviet government had promised to participate in an offense against France which, he felt was being prepared by Germany. He said the Soviets would send 2000 bombers in the assault. Bullitt disagreed with Leger and stated that it was against all the interests of the Soviet Union to assist Germany to knock out France and England completely. Leger did not agree. Bullitt knew that without great difficulty he could get his point across, but reported to Secretary of State Cordell Hull: " I have avoided

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[58] Ibid., 740.0011 Eur. War 1939/498: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, September 22, 1939, p. 449.

seeing Daladier for several days since I have felt that as American Ambassador I must avoid having any influence on the terrible decision which now faces France."[59]

By mid October, 1939, the Soviet Union had made assistant pacts with the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. All of the pacts were supplemented by trade agreements which changed the modest volume of the years following 1917 into mass deliveries which soon led to the impoverishment of the Baltic countries. Those among the Baltic politicians who had some insight knew exactly what lay in store for their countries. The road to final annexation by the Soviet Union had already been mapped out and the hopes which at one time had been placed in the Western powers, particularly England, had been shattered. Next, came Finland. Following the settlement with the Baltic states, negotiations were opened with Finland on October 5. However things went by no means as smoothly as with the Balts. The Finns put up a stubborn resistance. Negotiations were broken off on November 13. Finland began to mobilize and reinforce its troops on the Karelian front. The Soviet Union responded on November 28 with the abrogation of the non-aggression pact.[60]

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[59] Ibid., 70.0011 Bur. War 1939/498: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, September 22, 1939, p. 449.

[60] George von Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia, pp. 289-290.

An awareness of the delicate balance of the world in the winter of 1939 and of the odds working against the Allies, did not prevent William Christian Bullitt from reviving his bitter hostility to the Soviet Union. Although the policies of the Kremlin had done much to precipitate the German invasion of Poland, it is not clear, even in retrospect, that any hostile act short of an attack on Russia itself would have brought the Soviet Union into the war. In 1939-1940, however, it seemed that Stalin might yet choose sides, and many well informed and experienced people therefore believed that it would be well to act with discretion vis à vis the Soviet Union. Bullitt did not share this view. On the afternoon of November 28, 1939, Ambassador Bullitt telephoned Cordell Hull from Paris that "the Soviet Union had just denounced its nonaggression treaty with Finland and would attack Finland in the immediate future."[61] He told Hull that if the United States could do anything in the circumstances it better do it quickly. Bullitt's warning and advice were acted upon by F.D.R. and the U. S. Department of State. Hull took the matter up with Mr. Roosevelt and they decided to send a message to Moscow and Helsinki saying that the U. S. government "was following with serious concern the intensification of the Finnish-Soviet dispute and added it would view with extreme regret any extension of the

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[61] Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (New York: 1948), Volume I, p. 705.

present area of war and the consequent further deterioration of international relations. Without in any way becoming involved in the merits of the dispute and limiting its interests to the solution of the dispute by peaceful processes only, this Government would if agreeable to both parties, gladly extend its good offices."[62] Finland welcomed the office, but Russia did not.

On November 30th, 1939, thirty Russian divisions attacked at eight points along the extensive border between Finland and the Soviet Union, and the same morning Helsinki was bombed by the Red Air Force. The Finnish Winter Campaign of 1939-40 had begun. Bullitt promptly took action. Despite his knowledge that Germany by herself was almost more than a match for Britain and France, he was instrumental behind the scenes in having the Finnish case brought before Geneva, and he urged the U. S. to participate in the act of expelling the Soviet Union from the League of Nations.[63] Secretary Hull with the approval of President Roosevelt told Bullitt that though the United States expressed its dislike of Soviet actions and had placed a moral embargo in the sale of airplanes, it would not urge the Allied powers to take a strong stand against Russia when the matter came before the League. "The policy expressed by Mr. Hull was that of speaking up to Russia when the occasion required,

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[62] Ibid., p. 706.

[63] W. L. Langer and S. E. Gleason, The Challenge To Isolation 1937-1940 (New York: 1952) p. 333.

still ... to retain as good relations with the Soviet Union as possible, and never to give her the slightest impression that we were either a present or a potential enemy. The door was always wide open to friendship, and Hull was willing to meet Russia at least halfway."[64] Both Hull and President Roosevelt believed that every effort should be made not to drive Russia completely into the arms of the Axis.

Ambassador Bullitt turned to his European friends to expel Russia from the League. If the United States wouldn't agree with him, other nations could be counted on to take a hard-line policy with regard to the Soviets. Further, Bullitt advocated the movement to help the Finns by sending them arms, ammunition and volunteers. Throughout the winter, discussions were held between the governments and General Staffs of Britain and France regarding the dispatch of an Expeditionary Force to Finland. As for the delivery of supplies, there was only one route that could be used. This was via Narvik, through neutral Norwegian and Swedish territory. However, the Western powers could not follow through with their plans. Norway and Sweden were not prepared to prejudice their neutrality. If Norway and Sweden had agreed to let the Expeditionary Force pass through their respective territories, the Allies (and thus eventually the United States) would have been at war with both Germany and the Soviet Union. The Allies did succeed in another objective.

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[64]Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, I, p. 709.

Soviet Russia was excluded from the League of Nations on December 14, 1939. The expulsion, in which Hull refused to share, left no apparent mark on the armor of the Soviet mind; but it was a daring step to advocate at a time when another weight on the Nazi side of the scale might have proved fatal to the cause in which Bullitt was so inextricably involved.

In France, by January, 1940, there was a considerable demand from the Right to break off relations with the Soviet Union but Daladier decided against this plan, and used the wave of emotion against the activities of the Soviet Union to attempt to crush the Communist agents of the Soviet Union in France. In May, 1940, Bullitt was presented with a plan by the new Secretary General of the French Foreign office -- Francois Charles Roux. Roux stated that "the British Government believed that the present moment was an appropriate one to suggest to the Soviet Government that the Germany armies were overrunning Europe with such speed that it would not be long before they might be able to turn against the Soviet Government and that the Soviet Government in its own interest should diminish supplies to Germany."[65] The French leader then asked Bullitt if the American government would get in contact with the Soviets and suggest that "as two great neutral peoples who might

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[65] Foreign Relations of the United States of America 1940, Volume 1, General, 740.001/Eur. War 1939/3198: Telegram: The Ambassador in France (Bullitt) to the Secretary of State, Paris, May 21, 1940, p. 600.

some day be menaced by Germany, the American Government and the Soviet Government should withhold any supplies possible from Germany."[66] The American Ambassador expressed extreme skepticism as to the utility of any such *demarche*, declaring that such a *demarche* would be worse than useless. Secretary Hull cabled Bullitt: "We fully approve the attitude which you assumed with respect to this request ... a *demarche* such as that suggested would serve no useful purpose just now."[67]

In the spring of 1940, the Nazis published a *White Book* which purportedly was compiled from confidential papers of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Bullitt in a conversation with the Polish Ambassador to the U. S., Count Jerzy Potocki, in Washington, D. C. on November 21, 1938, was reported to have stated that the United States would "finish any war in Europe on the side of the Allies."[68] The isolationists in the U. S. were enraged. But, the Kremlin also was furious over the remarks Bullitt made concerning the Soviet Union. The Polish Ambassador was reported to have sent the following message to the Polish Foreign Minister, Josef Beck:

> "He [Bullitt] spoke of Russia with contempt. He said the last purge ... has resulted in the complete disorientation of the Red Army, which is not capable of any active war exertions. In general, according to him, Russia is at present the sick man of

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[66] *Ibid.*

[67] *Ibid.*, 740.0011 Eur. War 1939/3198: Telegram: The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France (Bullitt), Washington, May 21, 1940, p. 600.

[68] "Nazi White Book", *Time*, April 8, 1940, p. 15; *The New York Times*, March 30, 1940, p. 1.

> Europe. He compared it with the pre-war Ottoman State... Bullitt stated that the democratic states absolutely require two years for their complete armament. In between, Germany supposedly will continue with her expension in an easternly direction. It would be the wish of the democratic states that it come to a bellicose showdown between Reich and Russia. Since the potential strength of the Soviet Union is not known it could be that Germany would advance too far from her base and be condemned to a long and weakening war. Just then, according to Bullitt, the democratic states would attack Germany and force her to capitulation... Bullitt was of an emphatically unfriendly and derogatory frame of mind regarding Soviet Russia."[69]

At the White House, the White Book was described as sheer propaganda, "to be taken with one or two grains of salt. 'With even more salt', echoed Ambassador Bullitt,"[70] who was in the United States at the time. Representative Hamilton Fish of New York, ranking Republican member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, threatened to introduce a resolution in Congress to impeach both Ambassador Bullitt and President Roosevelt -- while others, as Senator Rush D. Holt of West Virginia, simply condemned Bullitt.[71]

Meanwhile Oswald Garrison Villard, the noted American journalist, returned from a visit to France to report that "Bullitt practically sleeps with the French Cabinet and there is no doubt that in many respects he is more French than the

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[69] The New York Times, March 30, 1940, p. 4.

[70] "Nazi White Book," Time, April 8, 1940, p. 15.

[71] The New York Times, March 31, 1940, p. 1.

French themselves."[72] Before Bullitt returned to France, he had a long conversation with his old friend Secretary of Interior Ickes, and told him that he didn't really want to go back to Paris. Ickes later commented in his diary: "One reason that Bill does not want to go back is that he is carrying such a heavy responsibility. He said that the French consult him on everything and do everything that he suggests. He speaks of Daladier in high terms but some of this may be due to the fact that Daladier does accept his advice so readily."[73] Also France was under threat of Nazi occupation -- and this upset Bullitt a great deal. The American Ambassador's nerves were on edge. A few days before departing for Europe, he was having an interview in his office in the State Department with J. M. Patterson, publisher of the New York Daily News and Doris Fleeson, Patterson's Washington correspondent, when U. S. Ambassador to Great Britain, Joe Kennedy, unexpectedly came into the room. He cheerfully entered into the conversation and before long he was saying that Germany would win, that everything in France and England would go to hell, and that his one interest was in saving his money for his children. He began to criticize the President very sharply, whereupon Bullitt took issue with him. The altercation became so

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[72]Harold L. Ickes, The Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Volume III, The Lowering Cloud 1939-1941, pp. 123-124.

[73]Ibid., pp. 132-133.

violent that the journalists left quickly. But Joe continued to berate the President. "Bill told him that he was disloyal and that he had no right to say what he had before Patterson and Fleeson. Joe said that he would say what he Goddamned pleased before whom he Goddamned pleased -- or words to that effect."[74] Bullitt told him that he should be loyal to the administration or keep his mouth shut. They departed in anger.

Bullitt returned to Paris, and witnessed the fall of his beloved France in June, 1940. The Nazis had conquered Denmark, Norway, Luxembourg, Holland, and Belgium - now they turned to France. Although the American Ambassador had been carrying on a vigorous anti-Nazi campaign, he couldn't forget the Russian menace. He saw before him Communist agents openly aiding the Nazis as they moved across the land. He saw Communists in many towns and villages producing panic among the civilian population by spreading fantastic tales of murder by the German troops of men, women and children. He later declared, "By this means 10 million civilians were harried in fear from their homes and clogged all the roads, so that the French, British and Belgium Armies could not maneuver, so that transport of supplies became almost impossible and a magnificent fighting force became a clotted mass of men."[75] At the critical moment of the fighting in Belgium, Communist railway men

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[74] Ibid., pp. 146-47 .

[75] The Department of State Bulletin, August 24, 1940, pp. 121-126.

stopped all traffic on the Belgium railways so that there was no transport by train for the French, British and Belgium Armies. Bill Bullitt witnessed these events, and felt sorry for the many honest French democrats and liberals who had been snared by Communist propaganda and who had argued that it would be undemocratic to deny to the Communists the rights of any other political party. A few months later he stated, "The French patriots and democrats who protected the Communists did not discover until it was too late that the Communists were acting as spies and agents of the dictators, that the Communist Party was merely camouflaged as a political party and was in reality a conspiracy to commit patricide at the direction of a foreign dictator. They discovered too late that the Communists were traitors who were claiming the protection of the state ... only in order the better to prepare for its destruction."[76]

When he was Ambassador to the Soviet Union, William Christian Bullitt became cognizant of Communist strategy which had as its ultimate goal world revolution. He couldn't forget the many Soviet diplomats who had candidly told him that fact. Thus, when he arrived in Paris, he began spreading the word. He declared in a letter to the author:

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[76] Ibid.

> "All members of the French Government knew that I considered Stalin entirely unreliable -- a Caucasian bandit."[77]

He warned the French; he warned the Germans; he warned the Chinese; he warned the Rumanians, and he purportedly warned the Poles -- in short, he told everyone who would listen to him about the Soviet threat. He realized that Nazi Germany was the immediate danger, and that the Soviet Union was the ultimate one. On June 10, 1940, the French government left Paris for Tours, and Paris was declared an open city. France's fall was a personal tragedy for Bullitt, but it also increased his fear of Fascist and Communist subversion -- especially the latter. Two gallant gestures remained. First, the American Ambassador, in his own dramatic way, stayed in Paris after German troops entered the city on June 14, and "acted with the military governor in turning the undefended city over to the Germans without loss of life."[78] Secondly, upon his return to the United States in July, William Bullitt warned his country of the Nazi peril, and as the war progressed, reminded American leaders of the lessons he had learned since those cold winter days in Moscow in 1934 -- lessons which the United States seemed to have forgotten.

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[77]Letter from William Christian Bullitt to William David Angel, Paris, France, April 12, 1964.

[78]Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, I, p. 789.

CHAPTER VII

A SMALL WAVE OF REALISM AND A VAST SHORE OF INNOCENCE

In the first week of September, 1940, after William C. Bullitt had returned to the United States, Senator Rush D. Holt of West Virginia stood on the floor of the U. S. Senate and declared:

> "... today when there is a Communist scare over the country, William C. Bullitt comes back to oppose the idea of communism and 'reds' boring from within. These are the same Communists who were here in 1934 when Mr. Bullitt had an opportunity to see them. They are the same Communists who were in France in 1934 when he endorsed them. Now we find that the situation has changed only because Mr. Bullitt desires the United States to get into this war and the Communist scare will help do the job... I hold the same opinion about him that Mr. Woodrow Wilson held during the Treaty fight when ... Wilson told the truth about Mr. Bullitt."[1]

Senator Schafer of Wisconsin stated:

> "Mr. Speaker, our multi-millionaire, New Deal, warmonger Ambassador Bullitt is loose in America today... I suggest that they [the authorities] get hold of Mr. Bullitt and lock him up right away."[2]

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[1] United States of America Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 76th Congress, Third Session, Volume 86, Part 10, p. 10656.

[2] Ibid., p. 10519.

Ambassador Bullitt had returned to the U. S. in July -- he was the wave that rolled upon the shores of American innocence. The wave had been building up since as far back as 1934 when the Ambassador first began experiencing the "little misunderstandings" in Moscow. Now, in 1940, when Bullitt's knowledge of Soviet strategy and tactics had grown to large proportions -- he returned to give America assistance in the trying days that were to come. As a wave carves up the shoreline, so too did William Bullitt attempt to shape American foreign policy -- to make it capable of meeting not only the Nazi menace but also the Soviet threat. However, the age of American innocence in world affairs had not yet ended. Bullitt's goal was to substitute a realistic theory of international politics for the theory, or lack of theory, that prevailed in the United States at that time.

The New Deal had moved American politics left, and had opened the doors of the trade unions and the Washington bureaus to the university intelligentsia at the very moment when that intelligentsia had been penetrated by the Communists. The Communist Party in the U. S. had lost all initiative and internal democracy and came under the absolute control of the Russian bureaucracy. As the Daily Worker of New York, the official organ of the American Communist Party, declared "peace-with-capitalism" in the Popular Front days, a new kind of underground Communist moved into Washington -- unnoticed among the purer, pragmatic New Dealers. Thus,

Alger Hiss, Lee Pressman, Henry Collins, John Abt, Noel Field, George Silverman and others came to hold positions in the U. S. government. These new secret workers had never been open members of the party; they did not merely hide, but pretended to be what they were not -- bureaucrats who were just transmitting secret material to the Russians and who considered themselves, as American Communist Earl Browder declared, working "in the spirit of Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln."[3] Upon returning to the U. S., Bullitt spent a few days with F. D. R. at Hyde Park, and warned him of this danger -- the Ambassador had seen a similar situation in France. Bullitt told the President that the reliability of Alger Hiss was quite questionable.[4] Roosevelt laughed at the suspicions of Ambassador Bullitt. But then again, how could F. D. R. have done otherwise? Was not Hiss one of those young men, mocked by the reactionary press as "brain-trusters", it had been the President's special pride to bring into political life?

Roosevelt was just one of many in America who belonged to a world in which liberals and conservatives (and even radicals) were assumed to share the same moral values, the values of the old Judeo-Christian ethical system, however secularized. Also, the American mind had been long conditioned

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3Leslie A. Fiedler, An End to Innocence: Essays on Culure and Politics (Boston: 1952) p. 17.

4Ibid., p. 21.

by the "front organizations" of the late 1930's, through which the bulk of the liberals learned to maintain the paradox that:

> "(a) there were really no Communists, just the hallucinations of 'witch hunters', and
> (b) if there were Communists, they were, despite their shrillness and bad manners, fundamentally on the side of justice."[5]

This was the America to which William C. Bullitt returned in 1940. At Hyde Park, the President told Bullitt that the Administration could not get U. S. defense preparations moving fast enough. F.D.R. stated that it might be necessary for a "fireside chat" to warn the country that "our very physical security was at stake."[6] The President and Bullitt agreed that the latter should make a speech, telling the truth about the peril, at Independence Hall in Philadelphia on August 18 -- "and that, unless the reaction should be intensely unfavorable, he [F.D.R.] would follow with a 'fireside chat' on or about August 25."[7] The Ambassador made the speech,[8] and warned the people of America that war was as near as it was in France one year before -- and he conveyed his impressions of the Nazis and the Soviets. In

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[5] Ibid., p. 18.

[6] "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," William C. Bullitt, Life Magazine, August 30, 1948, p. 83ff.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Cf. William C. Bullitt, Report to the American People (Boston: 1940).

response, he received more than 22,000 letters and telegrams -- 97% of them favorable. The President was delighted, but he wouldn't make his speech. Bullitt later explained: "It was a presidential election year. His [the President's] White House advisers persuaded him that if he told the truth, he would loose the 1940 election ... in his campaign address at Boston on October 30, 1940, he said: 'While I am talking to you mothers and fathers, I give you one more assurance. I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars'.... This was the low water mark in presidential morality; but the President won the election."[9]

Bullitt's speech was used by Roosevelt as a "trial-balloon" - to test public opinion. Bullitt didn't like to be used, as Wilson found out in 1919. However, the Ambassador was an intimate friend of F.D.R. -- and couldn't and wouldn't break with him over the speech. In Congress, the isolationists cried for Bullitt's impeachment. Senator Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri declared, "... if Ambassador Bullitt should succeed in getting us into war he will find a safe place for himself to hide out during the progress of the war. That is what he did during the last war ... he found himself a safe 'coffee-cooling' job in the State Department."[10]

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[9]"How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," W. C. Bullitt, Life, August 30, 1948, p. 83ff.

[10]The New York Times, August 19, 1940, p. 4.

One newspaper correspondent declared that "Mr. Bullitt, the brilliant and erratic Ambassador to France, made a radio speech ... in the manner of Orson Welles announcing the arrival of Martian hordes in New Jersey."[11] Senator Ashurst of Arizona stated, "To imagine Bill Bullitt keeping quiet would be to imagine a fat sylph or an iron balloon."[12] But there were many people who favored Bullitt's words. Senator Lee of West Virginia believed the Ambassador did his patriotic duty by speaking out. The Honorable Senator said, "If he had not done what he did, in the light of what he knew about the facts -- not his opinion, but his knowledge -- he would not be the patriot I take him to be."[13] Bullitt's associate, Senator Joseph F. Guffey of Pennsylvania related the following on the floor of the Senate concerning Bullitt's speech:

> "...Before they dismiss his warnings as foolish and groundless, the Senators might also remember, that from the day when Bullitt exactly forecast the results of the Versailles Treaty in Paris in 1919, he was proven a surprising accurate, if not often irritating and indiscreet prophet."[14]

William Christian Bullitt was labeled "a dissenter" by many people throughout his life. Current Biography for

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[11] United States of America Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 76th Congress, Second Session, Appendix, p. 5155, St. Louis Post Dispatch.

[12] The New York Times, August 9, 1940, p. 4.

[13] Congressional Record, 76th Congress, Second Session, August 21, 1940, p. 10658.

[14] Ibid., pp. 5176-5177.

1940 related, "The story goes that Felix Frankfurther asked him [Bullitt] many years ago: 'Well, Bill, have you learned to keep your shirt on yet?' 'Absolutely,' replied Bullitt. 'It's nailed down this time.'"[15] But in 1940, the nail must have been jarred loose -- for he certainly wasn't "wearing his shirt" during this period of his life.

Bullitt was upset about many things, and one of the things that troubled him the most was the health of the President. Two days after the Ambassador arrived in the U. S. and after seeing F.D.R., Bullitt reported to Secretary of Interior Ickes that the President was very tired and his mind refused to grasp an idea with the vigor that he had heretofore shown. Neither was the President inclined to take a suggestion or an idea and follow it through to a logical conclusion. Ickes reported that Bullitt made a suggestion to the Secretary about F.D.R.: "Bill thinks that the President ought to turn all details over to the members of the Cabinet and let them run their own departments," and Ickes concluded, "Of course, the tragic thing is that the President, as tired as he is, is isolating himself more and more... Altogether, it is not either a happy or too hopeful a situation, considering that the world is in such desperate straits."[16]

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[15]"William Christian Bullitt," Current Biography, 1940, p. 133.

[16]Harold Le Claire Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes: Volume III, The Lowering Cloud: 1939-1941 (New York: 1953), November 23, 1940, pp. 374-375.

P-7 Roosevelt and Bullitt, shown with the President's Secretary "Missy" Lehand, formed a close friendship during World War I, when Bullitt first joined the State Department and Roosevelt was Assistant Navy Secretary, three doors away. On the Ambassador's return from France in the summer of 1940, he warned F.D.R. about the Nazi and Soviet threats to U. S. security. Bullitt's warnings were ignored. He was disturbed about Americas innocence in foreign affairs and about the failing health of the nation's President.

Besides the President's health, newspaper columnists were upsetting the Ambassador. Just after Bullitt's arrival in Washington, U. S. Undersecretary of State, Sumner Welles criticized the Soviet Union severely for that nation's acquisition of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. A sizeable section of the press thereupon castigated Mr. Welles. They called his blast "presumptuous meddling" and pointed out that should the U. S. ever actually lock horns with Japan, since England was fully engaged on the other side of the world, the only possible ally for the U. S. in the Pacific would have been the Soviet Republic. One paper commented, "...it is not speculation that a few days after Mr. Welles' fulmination Russia disappointed England by announcing through Foreign Minister Molotov the continuance of friendly relations with Nazi Germany. In passing Molotov gave Uncle Sam a resounding kick in the seat."[17] Then, some columnists began to add two and two together and realized that the ebullient Ambassador Bullitt had returned prior to Welles' blast.

Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, on July 24, 1940, wrote in their syndicated column "Washington Merry-Go-Round" the following: "Inside fact regarding the scathing State Department blast at Soviet Russia for seizing the Baltic

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17 United States of America Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 76th Congress, Third Session, Appendix, Volume 86, Part 17, p. 5000 from the New Orleans La. Item-Tribune of August 11, 1940.

states was that it was drafted largely in Hyde Park, and that Ambassador William Bullitt had a lot to do with its drafting. Undersecretary of State Welles merely acted as the mouthpiece.... Bullitt was the man who persuaded Roosevelt to recognize Soviet Russia in the first place, and apparently he still has the last word on the country he now hates so bitterly. So probably there will be no warming up to Russia, no matter what Japan does in the Pacific."[18]

The daughter of Senator Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri, Genevieve Clark Thompson, wrote a few days later in the New Orleans Item-Tribune an article entitled: "The Strange Career of the Ebullient Ambassador Bullitt - Fine Hand of Envoy Discovered Behind Welles' Castigation of Russia." She related:

> "... while [Hull] was laboring with his inexhaustible patience to bring about effective harmony and cooperation in the Americas it seems that one of our exuberent young ambassadors again dug his fingers into the diplomatic jam pot.... The most mystifying feature of [Welles'] remarkable pronouncement was that it should have come from Mr. Welles ... no such explosive words have heretofore fallen from the lips of the present Under Secretary... It is reported that the State Department had prepared a statement couched in proper diplomatic verbiage... This statement was forwarded for approval to the President at Hyde Park. When it arrived William C. Bullitt... was Mr. Roosevelt's guest at his country seat. And Mr. Bullitt is burdened with no self doubt regarding

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[18] Ibid., pp. 321ff. "Washington Merry Go Round," by Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, New Orleans States, July 29, 1933.

> his ability to supply the right answer to any and every question which arises in foreign affairs."[19]

Mrs. Thompson's article was printed in the appendix of volume 86, part 17, of the U. S. Congressional Record in 1940. Bullitt wrote Senator Clark and protested. He told Bullitt to write his daughter in New Orleans. Bullitt did so, and Mrs. Thompson stated that she got all of her information from articles written previous to hers (especially the Pearson-Allen article) - and she asked the Ambassador why he hadn't protested those articles. On August 26, 1940, Bill Bullitt wrote to Mrs. Genevieve Clark Thompson:

> "... Personally, I have been the subject of so many stories that in one way or another were inaccurate that I have given up trying to correct stories -- especially those in the so-called gossip columns - unless they seem to effect directly the public interest. I believe, however, that when an article is inserted in the Congressional Record it becomes an official record of such importance that it must be correct if it contains misstatements."[20]

Ambassador Bullitt went on to deny all of Mrs. Thompson's charges, and stated that he had complained to Mr. Pearson concerning his article. Bullitt wrote: "Upon receipt of my letter, Mr. Pearson telephoned to me and said that he had already been informed by the Acting Secretary of State

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[19] Ibid., p. 5000: "The Strange Career of the Ebullient Ambassador Bullitt-Fine Hand of Envoy Discovered Behind Welles' Castigation of Russia," by Genevieve Clark Thompson, The New Orleans Item-Tribune, August 11, 1940.

[20] Ibid., p. 5445: "Reply of Bullitt," The New Orleans Item-Tribune, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Mr. Welles, that his story was totally without foundation in fact. He added that he regretted greatly that he had published it."[21]

On October 7, 1940, Harold L. Ickes received word from Bullitt's secretary that the Ambassador was becoming very restless and unhappy. Ickes later reported: "He has no status in Washington and is becoming sensitive about his anomalous position to the degree that he is not going around or seeing people. This means a good deal in Bill's case because, normally, he sees a great many people and he is never still."[22] Ickes later stated that when he mentioned to President Roosevelt that Bill Bullitt was waiting around for a job, the following took place: "The President scoffingly said to me: 'Bill wants to be Secretary of State, and I can't do that.' In explanation, he said, that Bill talked too much, and I got the impression that he also thinks that Bill is too quick on the trigger. Of course, I doubt whether I would appoint Bill Secretary of State if I were Roosevelt, but I certainly would rather have him than Hull, whom I regard as a false alarm."[23] However, Bullitt had in mind being appointed Secretary of the Navy - but people said he couldn't sit long enough at a desk to do any kind of executive job which was really a necessity in 1940. On

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Volume III, pp. 343-344.

[23] Ibid., p. 344.

November 7, Bullitt submitted his resignation as Ambassador to France to F.D.R., but the President wouldn't accept it. He told Bullitt that he wanted to appoint him Ambassador to the Court of St. James, but Bullitt declined because he felt that his daughter, Ann, needed a permanent home. The President kept telling Bill that he didn't want him to get out of the Administration but apparently there was nothing definite that he could offer. He assured Bill that he was going to do a lot of rearranging but Bullitt was a little skeptical. On November 17th, the Ambassador released a statement to the press which related that he was still an ambassador -- but that he wanted to get out: "I have felt that I could be of more service to my country if I were free to write and speak without the restrictions imposed by official position."[24] Throughout his career, Bullitt never seemed hampered by "restrictions imposed by official position" -- but four years later, the public would see just how unrestricted Bullitt could be. Meanwhile, there was talk that he would be made Ambassador to Mexico,[25] and on January 11, 1941 William Bullitt officially resigned as Ambassador to France, and the President accepted the resignation.

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[24]"Statement by Ambassador Bullitt, The Department of State Bulletin, November 16, 1940, p. 437; cf. The New York Times, November 14, p. 18, November 17, iv: p. 2.

[25]cf. The New York Times, January 2, 1941, p. 9.

William Bullitt was now free to a great extent -- he could move around, meet people, and talk. Needless to say, he did plenty of the latter. On February 27, 1941 he addressed the Overseas Press Club of America at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City and discussed among other things -- J. V. Stalin. He stated that the Soviet Leader had once told him that there was one job that no man could carry out effectively -- the job of the President of the United States. When Bullitt asked for Stalin's reasons for the statement, the dictator replied that when he decided that something ought to be done it was done at once, whereas a President of the U. S. before doing anything, had to persuade 130,000,000 people that it ought to be done -- which would always take so long that it would be too late for action to be effective. Bullitt told the Press Club his reply:

> "I argued that he must not judge the people of the United States by the people of the Soviet Union; that Americans were quick to grasp and analyze facts, well-educated, and magnificently informed by a free press and a free radio. Stalin laughed."[26]

Was America of the early 1940's quick to grasp and analyze facts? Bullitt thought that it was, and so he set out to explain the facts to all who would lend him an ear. On April 27, 1941, he delivered an address entitled "Our

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[26] United States of America Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 77th Congress, First Session, Appendix, Volume 87, Part 10, February 27, 1941, p. A35: The Honorable William C. Bullitt to the Overseas Press Club of America at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, N. Y.

Western Front" at Constitution Hall, Washington, D. C. Bullitt spoke of the Chinese battle against Japanese aggression, and told of how the Chinese had hoped in vain for Soviet aid -- and how they had seen Stalin embracing the Japanese envoy on the platform of the railroad station in Moscow, breaking his promise to respect forever the sovereignty of China over all parts of China. Bullitt related: "They have seen the Soviet dictatorship promising [the Japanese] that if Japan should become engaged in war - that is to say, in war, with the British or ourselves - the Soviet Union would remain neutral. One hope of China has always been that in the end the Soviet Union would give China effective military support against Japan."[27] The Japanese-Soviet non-aggression pact had been signed on April 13, 1941, and two weeks later William Bullitt was reporting to Americans Stalin's betrayal of his Chinese "friends." The Soviet Union was freed of the risk of war on two fronts, in the case of a clash with Germany - later it also gave Japan the chance to take the offensive in the Pacific. Bullitt didn't bother to explain to his audience the skillful maneuvering of Stalin - Bill Bullitt was too busy emphasizing the outright treachery of the Russian leader. This theme prevailed in generally all of the speeches of the scion of Rittenhouse Square.

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[27] Ibid., Part 11, April 27, 1941, p. 1961: The Honorable William C. Bullitt at Constitution Hall, Washington, D. C.

A few days after his speech in Washington, Bullitt had lunch with his friend Harold Ickes. He told the Secretary that the President was too tired to do anything he undertook to do. When Roosevelt got tired, Bullitt related, he dumped important matters into the lap of another man who was not only tired but physically below par - Harry Hopkins. Bill Bullitt stated that he was against the narrowing of the official circle around the President, but had no idea what to do about it - although he reported that he never had any trouble in getting in to see the President. The ex-Ambassador suggested that perhaps the Cabinet could sign a round robin to the President. Bullitt and Ickes canvassed the members of the Cabinet, but came to the conclusion that only four or five would have dared being so venturesome. Bullitt declared that too much solicitude was felt at the White House about the President's health; the main point in everyone's mind was not to help England save the world and to become aware of Stalin's strategies - but to protect the President. In a letter to the author, William C. Bullitt remarked:

> "Some day, perhaps, some historian will take the trouble to record the physical and mental decay of poor Franklin Roosevelt from May, 1940 to his death... As I had known him intimately for many years, I even told him he ought to resign as he was no longer competent to be President."[28]

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[28] Letter from William Christian Bullitt to William David Angel, Paris, France, April 12, 1964.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a man deferred to by every man and woman in the world not in favor of totalitarianism; he was the first man in history to be elected President three times; he helped to pull the United States out of a major depression which crippled the country; he was cherished and loved as a father by his people - and by many who were not his people. Few ventured to disagree with him. He was surrounded by "yes-men". Harold Ickes stated that there were really only three men close to the President who dared to disagree with him - William C. Bullitt, Bernard M. Baruch (the noted American financier and member of the "Brain Trust") and Harold L. Ickes. Ickes commented in his diary: "The group surrounding [Roosevelt] includes only one or two people, with Harry [Hopkins] as the principle "yes-man" but few others. Bill thinks that Harry Hopkins ... will not try to bend the President against his own will."[29]

In New York City, the Daily Worker, the official organ of the American Communist Party, was serving as a mouthpiece for Soviet foreign policy. On September 19, 1939, the paper carried a Declaration of the National Committe, Communist Party, U. S. A.: "The war that has broken out in Europe is the second imperialist war... It is a war between rival imperialisms for world domination. The workers must be against this war."[30] In Washington, the government

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[29]Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Volume III, June 8, 1941, pp. 338-339.

[30]United States of America Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 80th Congress, First Session, Volume 93, Part 9, p. 11426ff.

received information that Hitler was going to attack Stalin, and the U. S. State Department informed the Soviet government to expect the attack in the early summer of 1941 - and the Department also communicated to Stalin the chief points of Hitler's strategic plans.[31] In the June 20, 1941 edition of the Daily Worker, there appeared an editorial entitled: "Wall Street Indulges In Wishful Thinking About the Soviet Union." The article related:

> "...The extravagenzas now being dressed up as 'news' of a crisis between Germany and the Soviet Union ... have been resorted to time after time in the past... As happened so often in the past, the Soviet Union will be able to take care of itself in the midst of the capitalists sharks."[32]

For the Bolsheviks the war which began in 1939 represented the long hoped-for conflict among the capitalist states which could become the springboard for world revolution. By patiently biding his time, Stalin could expect to achieve more than by a premature participation in the war. The war worked for the Soviet Union. Only after the Axis powers and the Western allies had torn each other to shreds and Germany was finally vanquished, perhaps with the help of the United States, only then, "perhaps at the eleventh hour, Stalin must have thought, would the moment for Russian intervention have arrived, and then only in order to share

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31"How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," William C. Bullitt, Life, August 30, 1948, p. 83ff.

32William Christian Bullitt, The Great Globe Itself (New York, 1946), p. 347.

in the loot. This was Stalin's tactic in 1939 in the Polish campaign and again in 1945 in the war against Japan. He presumably also planned to act that way in the West's struggle with Hitler."[33]

On June 22, 1941, at 4 o'clock in the morning, German troops suddenly invaded Russia without warning. The Soviet troops stationed on Russia's Western border were overwhelmed by the surprise German attack. Hitler's armies stormed into Russia. William C. Bullitt declared, "The twin princes of darkness, who hand in hand had enslaved the peoples of central and eastern Europe, began to destroy each other's power."[34] The next day, the Daily Worker printed a "Statement of the Communist Party:"

> "...This military aggression ... is an attack ... upon the peoples of the United States and of the entire world... The Soviet Government is now waging... a just struggle for the cause of the freedom of all nations and peoples. The Soviet Union liberated the peoples of the Western Ukraine, Western White Russia, Bessarabia, and the Baltic States... Thus it served the best interests of the working class and peoples of the entire world... The American people ...will see in the cause of the Soviet Union the cause of the freedom of all nations peoples..."[35]

In August, 1940, the President said to Bullitt: "Bill, if my neighbor's house catched fire and I know the fire will

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[33]Georg von Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia (New York: 1963), p. 308.

[34]"How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," Bullitt, Life, August 30, 1948, p. 85ff.

[35]William C. Bullitt, The Great Globe Itself (New York: 1946), pp. 247-248.

spread to my house unless it is put out, and I am watering the grass in my back yard, and I don't pass my garden hose over the fence to my neighbor, I am a fool. How do you think the country and the Congress would react if I should put aid to the British in the form of lending them my garden hose?"[36] Bullitt replied that both the people and Congress would approve. Thus, early in 1941, Congress, over the protests of the isolationist leaders, authorized the sale, loan, lease, transfer, or exchange of war materials to any country whose defense the President considered vital to the defense of the United States. The amount of aid which could be given was limited, but the President allowed considerable discretion in placing a valuation upon such goods and in arranging the terms of the transfer. After the German armies invaded Russia, American Lend-Lease aid was then extended to the Soviet Union. In ability to handle American public opinion, Franklin D. Roosevelt was unrivaled. At his best, he was a political genius. However, shortly after the passage of the Land-Lease Act, President Roosevelt made a mistake -- a mistake which William Bullitt later described as the greatest mistake of the President's life.

In 1941, an immense opportunity to bring out of the horrors of the war a lasting peace was offered to the American government. The struggle between Stalin and Hitler gave the U. S. dominant political power in the world. The U. S.

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[36]"How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," William C. Bullitt, Life, August 30, 1948, p. 83ff.

government could have laid down the terms on which it was prepared to give aid to the Soviet Union. For the moment, the United States held the power to direct the destinies of the world. However, power in international affairs is a fleeting thing. President Roosevelt knew that. He had often said that President Wilson's failure to achieve solid settlements in Europe after the close of the First World War was due to the fact that he did not insist on specific acceptance of his specific program while the opponents of the Kaiser were dependent on the U. S. for victory.

Bullitt and others warned President Roosevelt in the summer of 1941 that if the President should help Stalin to victory without previously obtaining from the Soviet dictator definite, written, public pledges with regard to the future of Europe and Asia, he would find himself in a far worse situation at the end of the Second World War than that in which Woodrow Wilson had found himself at the close of the First - the weight of power in both Europe and Asia would pass from the U. S. to the Soviet Union -- Stalin might mount the saddles of both Hitler and the Japanese militarists. Bullitt pleaded with Roosevelt to get Stalin's formal, written, public pledge that he would respect the boundary of Europe as it existed in August, 1939, that he would raise no objection to the formation of a confederation of European states, and that he would make no demands on China.[37] It

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[37] Ibid.

seemed reasonable to Mr. Bullitt that F.D.R. would act favorably on his suggestion. But the President rejected his plan on the ground that, although there was no doubt that Stalin would make such promises, there was equally little doubt that Stalin would break the promises as soon as it might suit him to do so. Thus, the President concluded, pledges from Stalin were not worth having. So F.D.R. sent his personal representative, Mr. Harry Hopkins, to Moscow to confer with Stalin. The result was that the Soviet Union received one billion dollars' worth of Lend-Lease aid by the end of the war - the Russians did make demands upon China - and finally a confederation of all the European states was impossible because the eastern and central European states had lost their independence.

Years later, William Bullitt spoke of the three main reasons why he attempted to persuade the President to attain pledges from Stalin:

> "1. Stalin could not have broken his pledges or made demands inconsistent with those pledges so long as he and his country were dependent for their lives on aid from the United States.
> 2. Stalin could not have objected to a declaration of American aims with regard to Europe and the Far East, or to diplomatic moves to achieve those aims. The President of the U. S. would have been free to lay the foundations of a European confederation etc.
> 3. If Stalin had broken his pledges, the American people would have been warned at once that they must take immediate precautions against Soviet imperialism."[38]

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[38] Ibid.

Bullitt's delusion about the "idealistic social experiment," Russia, had been shattered in 1934. Now he attempted to make the leaders of the United States aware of their delusion. It was a repeat performance - America possessed an illusion about Soviet Russia just as Bullitt had been so sympathetic to the Soviets in his youth. But in the years 1919-1933, only a few were deluded by Moscow - in 1940-1944, a nation and its President underestimated the Soviet threat. As a young man, Bullitt was a supreme example of American innocence. He felt that anything in the world could be accomplished if he set his mind to it. Everyone in the world, he felt, shared the same moral values - however secularized. In 1940-45, the United States of America possessed a similar delusion - a murderous delusion.

In early December, 1941, Anthony Eden, the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs went to Moscow, and Stalin had the effrontery to demand that the British government should agree at once to Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, portions of Finland and Romania and the whole eastern part of Poland. Back in the United States, in spite of the fact America was in a position of great political weakness, the Department of State, as Hull recorded in his memoirs, took the position:

> "that the test of our good faith with regard to the Soviet Union should not be our willingness to agree to the recognition of extended Soviet frontiers at this time, but rather the degree of determination

> which we show loyally to carry out our promises to aid the Soviet government with equipment and supplies."[39]

Bullitt later declared, "We had to prove our good faith to Stalin - who had ordered the murder of millions and had broken his word whenever it had suited him to break it."[40]

War is not a prizefight. The winner does not go home from the ring and receive a purse containing peace and prosperity. "Military efforts unaccompanied by equal political and moral efforts produces no constructive result."[41] F.D.R., under the influence of Harry Hopkins, adopted a "solution" which was a supreme example of wishful thinking. Hopkins considered Stalin appeasable - Bullitt did not. Bullitt related in a letter to the author:

> "Personally, I argued passionately against the policy on which Harry Hopkins and others had persuaded the ill President to embark."[42]

William Bullitt was asked by President Roosevelt to prepare a memorandum setting forth objections to the Administration's policy vis à vis the Soviet Union. After F.D.R. had read the document, he called Bill Bullitt into his office and stated: "Bill, I don't dispute your facts, they are accurate. I don't dispute the logic of your reasoning. I just have a hunch that Stalin is not that kind

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Letter from William C. Bullitt to William David Angel, Paris, France, April 12, 1964.

of a man. Harry says he's not and that he doesn't want anything but security for his country, and I think that if I give him everything I possibly can and ask nothing from him in return, noblesse oblige, he won't try to annex anything and will work with me for a world of democracy and peace."[43]

Bullitt reminded the President that when he talked of noblesse oblige he was not speaking of the Duke of Norfolk but of a "Caucasian bandit" whose only thought when he got something for nothing was that the other fellow was an ass and that Stalin believed in the Communist creed which calls for conquest of the world. The President replied:

> "This conversation reminds me of one I had with Woodrow Wilson in 1918 when Ludendorff had broken through the junction of the French and British armies. I came over to his office and said: 'Mr. President, you must throw our troops into that breach today. If you don't the British will be rolled back against the Channel and destroyed and then the French and ourselves will be rolled up.' Wilson looked at me and said: 'Roosevelt, I don't want to put our troops in to stop up that hole. What you predict may happen, but my hunch is that it won't happen. It is my responsibility and not yours; and I'm going to play my hunch.' That's what I say to you, Bill. It's my responsibility and not your; and I am going to play my hunch."[44]

Thus, the United States attempted to turn Stalin from Soviet imperialism to democratic collaboration.

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[43]"How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," William C. Bullitt, Life, August 30, 1948, p. 83ff.

[44]Ibid.

In Russia, the Red Army and the Russian people were displaying epic bravery - thus, the field for propaganda was being prepared in favor of the Soviet government. The Russians were fighting for their soil with magnificent tenacity, and their courage rightly had aroused the sympathy of the world. On this fertile ground, the power of the White House was used to sow a crop of propaganda. Mr. Joseph E. Davies, who had been Ambassador to the Soviet Union from November 16, 1936, to the spring of 1938, was encouraged to publish a volume entitled Mission to Moscow,[45] and to produce a motion picture with the same title. In his book and film Mr. Davies spread before the American people an alluring picture of the Soviet Union. In a New York Times' review of Davies' book, the paper carried a full page endorsement of the book by that old friend of democracy - Maxim Litvinov, who declared:

> "...the greatest value of the book seems to me to be that, by bringing the Soviet Union home to the American public through its pages, Ambassador Davies is continuing at home his mission to Moscow. And this mission - the creation of a better understanding between the two countries - acquires special importance now, when their peoples have become companions in arms, and will, after the fighting is over, be busied with common tasks of reconstruction."[46]

Understanding between nations is one of mankind's worthiest goals. In the early 1940's was it possible for the people of both nations to understand one another when

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[45]Cf. Joseph E. Davies, Mission to Moscow (New York: 1941).

[46]New York Times Book Review, March 22, 1942, p. 12.

the Communist regime in Moscow came between them? It certainly must have sounded possible to both peoples that they could fight together against Nazi aggression - but could the people have a hand in the "reconstruction" of the post-war world? Stalin had his own plans for the world at the end of the war, and the people in the Soviet Union had little to say about his "reconstruction." Concerning, the motion picture Mission to Moscow, the Chicago Tribune declared:

> "It is a nice question whether Hollywood's ingratitude exceeds its stupidity. The film of falsehood, Mission to Moscow, was intended to whoop up the dear, good bolsheviets, but the propaganda backfired... the picture served only to discredit those who had any part in its making. There is no excuse in national necessity for these attempts to prettify the Russian tyranny. The Russians are fighting in this war for their own skins... Stalin would still be on Hitler's side if the Germans hadn't doublecrossed him."[47]

Few had the insight which Bullitt, the Chicago-Tribune and others had. Most Americans wanted to believe that the Soviet Union was what they wished it to be. Americans' hopeful wishes predisposed them to accept any laudatory lie and to discount every refractory fact. All the agents of the Soviet government in America, all the members of the Communist party, and all the dupes who were "fellow travelers," made hay with American public opinion while the Red Army fought heroically and the White House sun shone. The systematic campaign for, as Mr. Bullitt calls it, "the

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[47] Chicago Tribune, June 25, 1943, p. 4.

bamboozlement" of the people of the United States with regard to the nature and aims of the Soviet government was highly successful, and on the surface Soviet-American relations were greatly improved.

Joseph Davies wasn't stopping his pro-Soviet campaign with the publication of his book and the direction of his film - he then set out to deliver a number of speeches. Addressing 22,000 people at a Chicago Russian Aid Rally, he commented:

> "... by the testimony of performance and in my opinion, the word of honor of the Soviet Government is as safe as the Bible... The Soviet Union stands staunchly for international morality."[48]

A few days later, former Ambassador Davies declared:

> "...From personal experience and observation in the Soviet Union, I am convinced that the Russians would never violate a treaty or promise of any kind... The record of the Soviet Union is one of complete observance of its agreements... If I were lost in the wilderness and badly injured, I would as soon have Stalin, Litvinoff or Voroshilov for my companion as any other men in the world, because I would know that they would stand by me and see me through safely if it were in their power to do so ... the Russians like ourselves ... have no territorial ambitions."[49]

Davies didn't mention the fact that Stalin had broken as many international agreements as Hitler. In Washington, the President and Hopkins gradually began to be swept away

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[48]New York Daily Worker, February 25, 1942 in William C. Bullitt's, The Great Globe Itself (Boston: 1946), p. 255.

[49]New York Daily Worker, February 28, 1942, Ibid., pp. 255-256.

by the waves of propaganda they had started. Able and patriotic officers of the Department of State and the Foreign Service who knew the truth about the Soviet Union and who refused to lie in favor of the Communist dictatorship were moved to unimportant posts. Americans accepted the agreeable lie to the unpleasant truth; and "while our fighting men were winning the war our government went blithely on loosing the peace."[50]

Bullitt's past always seemed interesting to the newspapers during this time, and on July 2, 1941 came a story from Paris. Fernand de Brinon, representative of the Vichy government in Paris, told newspapermen that he recalled a conversation he had with William C. Bullitt. The Frenchman stated: "He told me, 'if France enters a war, the U. S. will back you 100 per cent against Germany, but don't have any illusions. You won't receive any military aid because we are 200 per cent opposed to your ally, Soviet Russia."[51]

On July 18, 1941, the New York Times carried an article "Moscow Favors Restored Poland." The Soviet Vice Commissar for Foreign Affairs, S. A. Lozovsky, at a conference with the foreign press in Moscow, related that the Soviets favored "in principle" the restoration of independence and liberty to all of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and

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[50] "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," William C. Bullitt, Life, August 30, 1948, p. 97.

[51] The New York Times, July 2, 1941, p. 4.

"other German-enslaved nations."[52]

William Bullitt was getting restless in Washington by the fall of 1941. In mid-September, he went into the President's office to force the issue of getting a job. Bullitt had begun to suspect that he was being given the "run-around." The President told him that he wanted to use him but that no position was open which was commensurate with Bill's standing and abilities. Bullitt told F.D.R. that he understood the situation perfectly - that Harry Hopkins was responsible for his exclusion. The President vigorously denied this and said that Harry had nothing to do with it. Bill told Roosevelt that four people had related to him incidents in connection with Harry, which proved to him that it was Harry's doing. The President replied, "You may say to these people that the President of the United States says that this is a damned lie."[53] Bullitt later told Harold Ickes of the conversation, and concluded that Hopkins was, in effect, Assistant President. Ickes recorded in his diary the following concerning Hopkins: "... here is a man with tremendous power whom the Congress and even public opinion cannot reach. I must confess that it is a very clever arrangement. Bill Bullitt ruefully remarked to me that it seems that the President had to have someone near to him who was dependent upon him and who

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[52]The New York Times, July 2, 1941, p. 4.

[53]Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes, III, September 24, 1941, pp. 615-16.

was pale and sick and gaunt."[54]

However, Bullitt was finally given something to do. On November 22, 1941, he became F.D.R.'s Ambassador-at-Large, going to the Middle East as a personal representative of the President in early December. He served as a fact finder on this mission, but he did take part in some negotiations with the Russians. After the Soviet-Polish accord of 1941, a Polish army had been organized from former war prisoners andrefugees on Russian soil. While Bullitt was in Iran, he was instrumental in getting some 60,000 of the Polish troops transferred from Russian Caspian ports to Iran. The New York Times declared that Bullitt's interest in the Poles and his flair for negotiating with the Russians tied in with the facts that his mother was of Polish ancestry and that he had always been interested in Soviet affairs.[55] It could easily have been that Mr. Bullitt felt that the presence of these troops in Iran served to prevent any immediate Soviet plans for annexing that Arab country and "liberating" it. When Bullitt returned to the United States on January 30, 1942, he learned that he was in line for another job in Washington. On June 23, 1942, William Bullitt was appointed Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Navy.[56]

In Russia, Hitler's armies were beginning to run into stiff Soviet resistance. The Germans were reaching what was

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[54] Ibid.

[55] The New York Times, April 19, IV, p. 2.

[56] The New York Times, June 24, p. 13.

to be their furthest penetration of the Soviet Union -- and the Russians fought courageously for "Mother Russia." The initiative was passing into Russian hands by the end of the winter campaign of 1942-1943. For the duration of the war, Stalin had eliminated much of the previous domestic quarrels and tensions which rocked Russia. A domestic truce and patriotic solidarity cloaked all the controversies and ideological deviations of the thirties. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 had brought the United States actively into the war. American support of Soviet military operations in the form of loans and shipments intensified. Shipments were sent mainly via the Pacific and, alternatively, by the northern route via Murmansk and Archangelsk. Britain protected these shipments, but Nazi submarines made the trip quite a strain on both the British Navy and the Americans involved. Beginning in 1942 the Soviet Union urgently required planes, particularly fighters. For a long time, the Soviet government objected to American suggestions for ferrying them to Russia via Alaska and Siberia. A good deal of distrust still existed between the Eastern and Western Allies - but America, at least, was doing her best to establish cordial relations with Russia.

On February 19, 1942, Rear Admiral William H. Standley was appointed U. S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union. A few weeks later, in the first week of March, the Ambassador told American newspaper reporters that Russia was getting

American supplies in quantity but was keeping the fact from the people and was leading them to believe that Russia was fighting unaided.[57] The next day, March 9, the news was written in the headlines of papers all over the U. S. The Washington Post's front page headline read: "U. S. Aid Hidden From People of Russia, Standley Charges."[58] Then, that evening, the Washington Evening Star printed on its front page the headline: "Standley Made Russian Charges Without Authority, Welles Says."[59] The Kremlin, needless to say, was furious -- but so was the White House. On March 10, the Washington Post declared on the front page: "Moscow Reporter On Leave Here Says Lend-Lease Figures Published In Pravda And That People Know All About U. S. Aid."[60] Another item on the front page declared: "Axis Radios Have a Field Day Reporting Friction Among Allies."[61] The Honorable George H. Bender of Ohio declared on the floor of Congress on March 10 that if Standley's comments were false once, the Ambassador in Russia acted in a reprehensible and entirely irresponsible manner. Congressman Bender proceeded:

> "However, it is not conceivable that Admiral Standley did not talk to or consult with the members of our State

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[57] Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins (New York: 1948), p. 705.

[58] The Washington Post, March 9, 1943, p. 1.

[59] The Washington Evening Star, March 9, 1943, p. 1.

[60] The Washington Post, March 10, 1943, p. 1.

[61] Ibid.

> Department staff in Russia. Who is on the staff? Who keeps Admiral Standley informed in Russia of what goes on in the Soviet press? With whom did Admiral Standley consult when he was in America recently? Did he consult with our former Soviet Ambassador, Mr. William Bullitt, who is noted for his hatred of the Russians? Mr. Bullitt is now in the Navy Department."[62]

Even when Mr. Bullitt eased up in his almost continual castigation of the Soviet Union, newspapermen, Congressmen, Senators, Communists, and the like - never stopped crediting the man with everything that came between the Soviet Union and the United States. Did he influence Admiral Standley? The question remains unanswered today - just as do many of the events surrounding the life of the ebullient Mr. Bullitt.

On March 11, 1943, Bullitt appeared at the Philadelphia United Nations Forum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - along with Governor Harold Stassen of Minnesota, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and others. Bullitt told the audience that the U. S. had the power to make the world accept a just peace in the post-war period and he stated: "While we have it we must use it or lose the peace... President Wilson lost his fight in 1918 because he did not use his power when he had it... We have to face the fact that international negotiations are controlled by national interests or imagined national interests."[63]

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[62] United States of America Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 78th Congress, First Session, Volume 89, Part 2, March 10, 1943, p. 1982ff.

[63] The New York Times, March 12, 1943, p. 7.

American Communist Earl Browder charged in a speech he made on April 2 that certain American citizens were conspiring to overthrow the Soviet government. He told his Brooklyn, New York listeners that William C. Bullitt was one of the ringleaders, and he asserted Bullitt had launched a campaign for the "carrot and club" method of dealing with the Soviet Union.[64] In mid July, the Soviet trade union magazine War and The Working Classes criticized Bullitt for his noted hatred of the Russian people, and mentioned that he was still in the U. S. government. It went on to assail Bullitt for promoting post-war reconstruction plans which it termed hostile to the Soviet Union. The magazine made particular objection to the "Polish plan" for an east European federation consisting of a bloc of small and medium-sized nations. War and The Working Classes concluded:

> "It is not difficult to see that while the plan presumably is directed against future German aggression, it is no less directed against the Soviet Union."[65]

Bullitt resigned as Special Assistant to Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, on July 23 to run for mayor of Philadelphia.[66] The campaign was to be one of the city's most heated ones, but, at first, Bullitt couldn't help

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[64] The New York Times, April 2, 1943, p. 6.

[65] Ibid., July 19, 1943, p. 6.

[66] The New York Times, July 24, p. 26.

speaking of world affairs. In October, he delivered a speech to the Polish Relief Committee of Philadelphia and stated: "The Poles have learned through the centuries that peace cannot be sought by appeasing a dictator - any dictator - that each concession is followed by a new partition until there is nothing left to partition."[67] Unfortunately, Franklin Delano Roosevelt wasn't in the audience.

The disenchanted ex-diplomat had come face to face with American innocence on his return home from France. He had wanted to "mature" Americans to recognize the threats in Europe and Asia. He had failed. Soon, he would try again "without the restrictions imposed by official position."[68]

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[67] United States of America Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 78th Congress, First Session, Appendix, Volume 89, Part 11, September 12, 1943, p. A4085.

[68] "Statement by Ambassador Bullitt," The Department of State Bulletin, November 16, 1940, p. 437.

CHAPTER VIII

FROM THE SIDELINES:
WITH PEN IN HAND,
A FINAL PLEA

When Philadelphia's mayoralty race began in October, the Chairman of the Republican National Committee, Mr. Harrison E. Spangler, arrived in the city and declared that Bullitt was sent to Philadelphia to take over control of the city's government for "the inner New Deal crowd." He stated that Roosevelt, Hopkins, Henry Wallace (U. S. Vice President), Frankfurter, Ickes, and U. S. Senator Joseph F. Guffey all picked Bullitt to be mayor of Philadelphia.[1] Opposing Bullitt was the Republican nominee and incumbent, Mayor Bernard Samuel - "as conservative as his opponent is ebullient," reported the New York Times.[2] One of the major issues of the campaign was the city's wage tax - which Bullitt proposed to eliminate. As the campaign got under way, the city filed an equity suit against Bill Bullitt to compel him to furnish complete and satisfactory information on his city wage tax returns for 1940, 1941 and 1942. He

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[1]United States of America Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 78th Congress, First Session, Appendix, Volume 89, Part 11, p. A169.

[2]The New York Times, September 26, 1943, IV, p. 4.

was accused of evading the filing of any returns. As the race progressed, it became marked by more whispering and invective. Bullitt was labelled a fascist, an anti-Semite, the Irish Catholics were told he would fill City Hall with Jews, and of all people, Bullitt was said to be a Communist. Roosevelt came to his defense and declared from the White House that "a pamphlet circulated by the Republicans questioning Mr. Bullitt's patriotism was "a mass of falsehoods."[3] Finally, Bullitt posed for a series of pictures which appeared in Life magazine, depicting some of the sorrier aspects of Philadelphia life. Philadelphians weren't proud of their "dirty linen" - and certainly didn't smile when all of it was exposed in a magazine of great circulation. Samuels won the election with a majority exceeding 65,000 votes.[4] Bullitt retired from politics, becoming a special war correspondent for Life, Time, and Fortune magazines. He was on the sidelines now. He could no longer make policy decisions or advise others to make them. So, with a pen in his hand, he made a final plea to the American people.

In May, 1943, the Soviets announced that they were disbanding the Comintern. This did not fail to have its effects on the Western Powers as it seemed that the Soviet Union was giving up all plans for world revolution. But, Moscow was growing increasingly irritable because the Second

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[3]Ibid., October 31, 1943, IV, p. 7.

[4]Ibid., November 3, 1943, p. 19.

Front had failed to materialize -- the Russians were still carrying the battle against the Nazis alone. Roosevelt tried to improve Stalin's mood by sending him a message in May through Joseph E. Davies suggesting a personal meeting. The President had recalled Ambassador Standley after the latter's indiscretions in March and would have liked to entrust Davies with the job again if his health would have permitted. Hopkins, who in turn was suggested by Davies, was indispensable to the President in Washington. After a lengthy discussion with Stalin, Davies managed to break the ice and got him to agree to a meeting with Roosevelt on July 15. However, because of a violent diatribe that Stalin addressed to Churchill, the meeting was indefinitely postponed.

At an Anglo-American Conference in Quebec in the fall of 1943, Harry Hopkins submitted a document dated August 10, 1943, which had been written by American military experts and concerned the Russian situation. The thesis of the document was that Russia's post-war position in Europe would be a dominant one, which no other power, including Great Britain, would be able to oppose. For this reason, it was concluded by the American government that everything possible had to be done to obtain Russia's friendship. This more or less outlined the policy which was to guide the decisions made at Teheran and Yalta.[3]

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[3]Georg von Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia (New York: 1963), p. 351.

On November 28, Roosevelt and Churchill met with Stalin at Teheran. To the President, an ingrained optimist who believed in the efficacy of cross-the-table confabulation, the fact that he and Stalin were face to face was at least half his battle. Throughout the sessions he made every endeavor to meet Stalin's mind, to understand his point of view and to assure the Russian of his own complete good faith. It seemed to him that the creation of a reciprocal spirit of confidence among the Big Three was more desirable than specific compacts. Roosevelt then conducted a seminar at Teheran, for Stalin's benefit, in the good-neighbor policy. Tracing the improvement in inter-American relations since the U. S. abandoned dollar diplomacy and Theodore Roosevelt's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, President Roosevelt stressed the advantages accruing to the U. S. as the only great power in the hemisphere. Roosevelt emphasized the absence from American hearts of any desire for the lands of their neighbors, and he recommended the policy of strong powers being paramount in their own regions. The President later told Mr. Forrest Davis of the Saturday Evening Post about Stalin's reply.

> "At this point, the Marshall volunteered a sweeping declaration of his desire to conciliate his neighbors, saying flatly that he had no desire to own Europe. His country, he added, is only half populated and the Russians have plenty to do at home, without undertaking great new territorial responsibilities."[6]

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[6]William C. Bullitt, The Great Globe Itself (New York: 1946) p. 18.

F-8 THE CHARM SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY is here shown in action at President Roosevelt's first meeting with Stalin at Teheran. The President firmly believed that the Soviet dictator could be won over to peaceful, democratic ways -- ignoring the advice of William Bullitt. The United States paid a terrific price for entering into the World War II alliance with the Soviet Union -- neglecting the lessons which Bullitt and, supposedly, the U. S. had learned in the 1930's.

President Roosevelt accepted the assurance with gratification, and at once voiced his belief in the Marshall's good intentions. The President carefully refrained from saying anything which might have been disagreeable to the Soviet dictator. He attempted to charm Stalin. On the pleas of an attack of indigestion, F.D.R. absented himself from the crucial discussion of the future of Poland between Stalin and Churchill. In the United States, Bullitt later commented that "it was obvious that only a united stand by the U. S. and Great Britain could save the Poles from enslavement."[7] After explaining what took place at Teheran, Mr. Forrest Davis concluded, "Mr. Roosevelt, gambling for stakes as enormous as any statesman ever played for, has been betting that the Soviet Union needs peace and is willing to pay for it by collaboration with the west."[8]

In February, 1944, at a dinner of the New York Academy of Public Education at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, William Bullitt commented in his speech: "...the central problem of peace is in Europe rather than in Asia and that if post-war Europe consists merely of spheres of influence instead of something like a federation another war is likely... A divided Europe will lead to differences and finally to another conflict."[9] A few months later, he wrote an article

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[7]"How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," Part II, William C. Bullitt, Life, September 6, 1948, p. 86.

[8]William C. Bullitt, The Great Globe Itself, p. 20.

[9]The New York Times, February 19, 1944, p. 7.

for Life magazine entitled "The Future of France." Bullitt stated that the Provisional French government objected to the fact that there was no European state in the inner council of the Allies -- that the fate of Europe was being decided by Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States, and China without the participation of a single representative of the 402,000,000 Europeans who lived to the west of the Soviet Union. He declared that the Provisional government in France felt:

> "that little wisdom is being shown by the present leaders of the world, and that the present lines of thought of the 'four great men' are likely to produce not peace but a third world war... They are developing not a united Europe but a Europe divided against itself."[10]

Several weeks passed, and then an article appeared in Life which caused a great deal of controversy. Who was the author? Of course - it was Bill Bullitt, who had gone from France to Italy to report on the Italians' attitude concerning his favorite subject - the Soviet Union. His story was entitled: "The World From Rome: The Eternal City Fears A Struggle Between Christianity and Communism." He began by relating, "...Today...Rome sees again approaching from the East a wave of conquerors... And dominating the hearts and minds, indeed, the talk of all men throughout Italy is the question: 'Will the result of this war be the subjugation

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10"The Future of France," William C. Bullitt, Life, August 14, 1944, pp. 78-83.

of Europe by Moscow instead of by Berlin?'"[11] Bullitt stated that the Romans were asking themselves why the U. S. government was giving Russia 10 billion dollars which was aiding the Soviets set up a dictatorship over a large portion of Europe -- while extending little aid to Italy. The former diplomat concluded by reporting to American readers a "sad joke going the rounds of Rome":

> "What is an optimist? A man who believes that the third World War will begin in about fifteen years between the Soviet Union and western Europe, backed by Great Britain and the United States. What is a pessimist? A man who believes that western Europe, Great Britain, and the United States will not dare to fight. That is as far as Roman optimism dares to go, since the Italians feel that failure of the United States and Great Britain to stand strongly for independence for all the states of Europe has made certain a new world war."[12]

Storms of protests were lodged at the office of Life magazine the next day. Life stated that it felt that whatever was printed on its pages was at least deserving of public perusal, and said that the opinions of Mr. Bullitt weren't necessarily those of the editors. When the next issue of the magazine came out, Life had devoted its entire "Letters to the Editor" section to the reaction of readers to Bullitt's words of warning. The magazine's editors declared, "Let critical readers keep in mind Life's long record of work and prayer for a new world of international cooperation and peace."[13]

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[11] "The World From Rome: The Eternal City Fears A Struggle Between Christianity And Communism," William C. Bullitt, Life, September 4, 1944, pp. 94-109.

[12] Ibid., p. 109.

[13] "Letters to the Editors," Life, September 25, 1944, p. 4ff.

The lead-off letter was from K. Demidoff, a writer for Pravda. Demidoff wrote an article entitled "A Bankrupted Spy" in Pravda concerning Mr. Bullitt, and his letter to Life was an extract from his Moscow written work. The Russian declared that Bullitt was a "bankrupted spy" who sympathized with Adolf Hitler, staked his career on a German victory over Russia and continued to carry on "dirty anti-Soviet work" in the columns of Life magazine. Demidoff accused Bullitt of attempting to promote a "crusade" against the Soviet Union, and related that Bullitt had held important political posts but that his career had been suddenly and strangely broken off, and that "his homeland turned away from him during the war." The Soviet journalist continued:

> "...The reasons for the bankruptcy of Bullitt are that he always was only a spy and never a serious political leader... He attempted to make his career on dirty anti-Soviet work. His entire political capital was staked on Hitler, striving for an alliance between France and Hitlerite Germany... I counted at least 30 lies in Bullitt's article...one lie in every five lines which is a world's record and should make Goebbels' organization look upon Mr. Bullitt with envy... It would probably be more correct...to say that Bullitt didn't meet with such Italians but in his eagerness he lied about all of this."[14]

The noted American playwright, Mr. Howard Lindsay, a Soviet sympathizer, declared:

> "I think Mr. Bullitt's article has done great damage. Had the piece been written

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[14] Ibid.; cf. The New York Times, September 5, 1944, p. 7.

> by an Italian, your readers could have accepted it as a report of the present Italian point of view. Had Mr. Bullitt written as a reporter, stating the Italians' point of view with detachment, it would still have had its place in Life as part of your factual coverage of events. But Mr. Bullitt has clearly used the present situation in Italy and Life for his own purposes, to exploit his personal point of view."[15]

The Leftist Gaetano Salvemini assailed Bullitt, commenting:

> "Mr. Bullitt might have found in California everything he discovered in Rome. He himself is 'the Romans' and 'the Italians.' There are people who cannot take a step without inserting their own 'I' everywhere. Mr. Bullitt is an unobtrusive man. He never says 'I'. He humbly says 'the Romans' or the 'Italians.'"[16]

In 1919, in all his innocence, William Bullitt cried out to the American people that Russia was a young lamb to be taken into the society of civilized nations. By 1936, in all his disillusionment, William Bullitt cried out to the American people that the Soviets were deceitful wolves not to be taken in as true friends. In the early 1940's, the American people, in all their innocence, ignored Bullitt's pleas. To many he appeared to be a bigoted dissenter. America paid a dreadful price for its innocence. Although a great deal of Bullitt's criticism came from the Left, American public opinion was still against his views -- as were many of the nation's leaders.

In November 1943, on his way to Teheran, Franklin Roosevelt had a conference in Cairo, Egypt with Churchill

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[15] Ibid.

[16] "Mr. Bullitt's 'Romans,'" Gaetano Salvemini, The New Republic, October 2, 1944, pp. 423-426.

and the Chinese President, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. The three signed and published the following declaration: "It is their purpose that Japan shall be stripped of all islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the First World War in 1914, and that all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China."[17] At Yalta on February 11, 1945, President Roosevelt broke the pledge which he had made to the Chinese government at Cairo and secretly, behind the back of China -- signed with Churchill and Stalin an agreement by which vital rights of China in Manchuria were sacrificed to Soviet imperialism. Stalin demanded this agreement and he promised to enter the war against Japan "two or three months after Germany has surrendered."[18] At the close of the Yalta Conference, Stalin was in excellent humor. He drank many toasts with his American guests. Mr. James F. Byrnes, who five months later became Secretary of State, recorded: "The Marshall left his place and came to clink his glass with mine... The truth is, he is a very likable person... There is no doubt that the tide of Anglo-Soviet-American friendship had reached a new high."[19]

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[17]"How We Won the War and Lost the Peace," Part II, William C. Bullitt, Life, September 6, 1948, pp. 86-103.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid.

A few months earlier, F.D.R.'s Secretary of Agriculture and former Vice-President, Henry Wallace, the hands-across-the-sea approach to the Soviet Union made flesh, traveled to Soviet Asia. During his visit, he passed through one of the largest slave-labor camps in Asia, but on his return to America declared that he hadn't seen anything blameworthy in the Soviet Union. Later, he was to plead that he had been taken in by the wily camouflage of the Soviets, and (most interestingly) that he had been instructed not to look too hard for negative evidence, but to concentrate on what might bind the U. S. to her ally in amity.[20]

God was kind to Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He always had great confidence in his luck, and his luck held. He died on April 12, 1945 -- before the actions of the Soviet government in Poland, Hungary, Austria, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, the portion of Germany occupied by the Red Army, Iran, Manchuria and Korea, had forced him to admit that he had lost his gamble "for stakes as enormous as any statesman ever played for." Not even with all his genius could President Roosevelt appease the unappeasable.

Bill Bullitt had been trying to enlist in the U. S. Army, but was told he was too old. In September, 1944, he joined the French Army with the rank of commandant (equivalent to major in the U. S.) with the condition that he could retain his American citizenship. On April 14, 1945, he was

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[20] Leslie A. Fiedler, An End to Innocence, Essays on Culture and Politics (Boston, 1952), p.

named military governor of Baden-Baden which had just a few days before been captured by the French.[21] A little while later, while walking down the side of a road, he was hit by a moving vehicle. The ebullient ex-ambassador had to slow down for a while in a hospital, but soon he undertook the writing of a book.

In 1946, Bullitt's activities in the U. S. Department of State, his long association with Soviet-American relations, and his position as a public figure culminated in his book, The Great Globe Itself. He called the book a "preface to world affairs." In the foreward, Bullitt stated that the power of the U. S. was only temporary for it was likely that other nations would soon have the atomic bomb. He commented that the only nation in the world which the United States should fear was the Soviet Union. He warned Americans of the Communist plan for world domination and quoted Lenin as saying: "It is necessary...to use any ruse, cunning, unlawful method, evasion, concealment of truth" -- before the world triumph of Communism.[22] Then, he described in full the bankruptcy of F.D.R.'s "grand design." Within the pages of the book can be found many examples of the profound insight into Soviet foreign policy which William C. Bullitt possessed.

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[21]The New York Times, April 15, 1945, p. 8.

[22]William C. Bullitt, The Great Globe Itself (New York: 1946), p. 6; cf. Lenin, Collected Works, volume xxiv, p. 128, Russian edition.

He saw the possibility of Russia's invasion of Turkey long before action was taken by the Congress to prevent that invasion:

> "Stalin may order his troops to attack Turkey relying on war weariness to prevent Great Britain from honoring her agreement to go to war in support of Turkey if Turkey should be attacked, and relying on indifference to prevent the U. S. from giving aid to Turkey and Great Britain. If, however, we should leave no doubt in Stalin's mind that we would not permit further aggressions by the Soviet Union to succeed, there would be no armed attack by the Soviet Union on Turkey or any other of its neighbors."[23]

He had recognized for many years the threat of Soviet imperialism:

> "No official of the American Government is justified in defending his failure to act in accord with the vital interests of the American people by the excuse that the American public opinion is not yet ready to face the fact of Soviet imperialism, unless he has done his utmost to give the facts with regard to the acts and aims of the Soviet Government to his fellow citizens... Given the facts, the American people would recognize instantly that Soviet imperialism threatens not only peace and liberty in Europe and Asia but also their lives in the United States, and would demand action now to protect their vital interests."[24]

Bullitt also was conscious of the weakness of the United Nations because of the veto power held by the Russians in preventing action of which Moscow didn't approve.

> "We know well that the U. N. under its present constitution has no power to stop wars which involve the interests of any

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[23] Ibid., p. 176.

[24] Ibid., p. 184.

> one of the permanent members of its Security Council...so long as the Soviet Union remains a permanent member of the Security Council of the U. S., it will have an absolute veto on any official action by the U.N. But the other members of the U. N. cannot sit by and let the Soviet Union swallow weaker nations without rendering the U. N. a contemptible corpse."[25]

Bullitt advocated the joining together of all those nations who cherished their freedom. He related: "...We [the U. S.] have neither enough wisdom nor intelligence nor will to carry by ourselves the entire load of preventing aggression... The Soviet Union is on the attack. The democracies are in retreat, not because they are weaker than the Soviet Union -- we ourselves are stronger -- but because they have not clarified their thinking and unified their forces to oppose Soviet aggressions."[26] The magnanimous gullibility of the United States in permitting the Communist Party to function in the U. S. in 1946, was also discussed in The Great Globe Itself: "We permit a branch of the Communist Party to function in the U. S. The Soviet government will not permit branches of the Democratic or Republican or Socialist Parties to function in Moscow."[27]

Bullitt declared that Americans had a double task -- "to stop aggression by the Soviet Union, and to turn the present uneasy armistice into a lasting peace."[28] He set

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[25] Ibid., pp. 185, 186, 188.

[26] Ibid., p. 191.

[27] Ibid., p. 209.

[28] Ibid., p. 177.

forth the following program which he felt would accomplish both goals:

> "1. Support the United Nations...
> 2. Give the people of the U. S. the facts...
> 3. Stop utterances describing the Soviet Union as a peace loving democracy...
> 4. Furnish Congress the facts which prove that Soviet imperialism can be prevented from extending its control over Europe, the Far East, and the Near East.
> 5. Maintain the superiority of our air force, increase the production of the atomic bomb...
> 6. Do not give the Soviet Union the atomic bomb or any economic financial assistance that she may be able to hasten the day for her own manufacture of the bomb.
> 7. Assist the democracies economically...
> 8. Develop and strengthen the inter-American League...
> 9. Form a European Federation of democratic states...
> 10. Start conversations with the other democracies of the world, designed to prepare within the framework of the U. N., united and immediate action in case of further Soviet aggression...
> 11. Maintain steady and active opposition to the efforts of Soviet Imperialism to swallow Manchuria, North Korea, North China, Iran, Turkey and those states of Eastern and Central Europe and the Balkans it now controls.
> 12. Treat the Soviet Union with the most scrupulous fairness, frankness and reciprocity...
> 13. Tell the peoples of the Soviet Union the truth...
> 14. Act, and use our influence with the other democracies, to hasten the process of raising the dependent peoples we and they now control, to democracy and independence..."[29]

William Bullitt stated that "the most legitimate use of force on earth is to gain time to permit the growth of moral ideas."[30] He felt it would take some time for moral

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[29] Ibid., pp. 212-214.

[30] Ibid., p. 109.

ideas to grow in the Soviet Union, and concluded his book by saying:

> "We shall find no peace in appeasement of Stalin. We may find peace if we have the courage to stop the aggressions of the Soviet government now, and the good will to hold out, again and again, a hand of friendship to the Russian people, saying: 'March with us - for your freedom and ours'...THERE IS A PATH TO PEACE."[31]

Controversy has always surrounded William Bullitt, and the Great Globe Itself added fuel to the fire. The famous historian H. S. Commager stated that persons should attempt to understand Russia and commented that Mr. Bullitt "does not even make the effort." Commager said: "So gross are the distortions, so fallacious the arguments, so blatant the omissions, so immoral the proposals of this book that it can only serve to promote misunderstanding. The Great Globe Itself, the phrase is taken from the Tempest, might well be called Hysteria, Unlimited."[32] H. S. Hayward, reviewing the book in the Christian Science Monitor, related: "This is a significant addition to the expanding shelf of new books probing Russia's every action. It aims to help the U. S. make its decisions - by warning that Russian and American aims are incompatible."[33] The prominent columnist, Frank R. Kent, wrote in his review of Bullitt's book, "As trenchant, documented, and convincing an indictment of the Russian

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[31] Ibid., p. 217.

[32] The Weekly Book Review, July 14, 1946, p. 4.

[33] The Christian Science Monitor, September 10, 1946, p. 12.

leaders, their methods, and their purposes has not before been made."[34] J. N. Hazard of the Political Science Quarterly reviewed The Great Globe Itself and concluded: "The book is provocative and will stir readers to sharp criticism or lusty praise. It is something of a popular call to arms."[35]

Immediately after Bullitt's book was published, an interesting series of articles appeared in the New York Times by Brooks Atkinson who had just returned to the United States after a year as Times correspondent in Moscow. He fully agreed with Mr. Bullitt's view that friendship with Russia was impossible and that there could be no mutual sympathetic understanding among the two nations at that time. Similar statements were being made in magazines and newspapers throughout the U. S. Some officials in Washington began to realize the sad fact -- America had been deluded. At last, it seemed that the nation would recognize the threat of Communism -- and, at last, it seemed that the period of American innocence had ended.

However, in 1946, Henry Wallace's Soviet Asia Mission was hailed by many as a book which contributed a great deal toward a sound American foreign policy vis à vis the Soviet Union. A reviewer in the Christian Science Monitor commented:

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[34] United States of America Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 79th Congress, Second Session, Appendix, Volume 92, Part 12, p. A4313.

[35] The Political Science Quarterly, December, 1946, p. 599.

"Mr. Wallace's approach to the Russian problem is on the whole right."[36] Another book reviewer declared, "Too bad the book has been so long in appearing."[37] The New Republic related, "...Soviet Asia Mission is...a timely document on international understanding."[38] The New York Times said, "Wallace has a point to make and he makes it designedly."[39] The New Yorker concluded, "...it is naturally a lot more significant than most globe-trotting spiels."[40] What was Wallace's argument? He warned the American people about men such as William Christian Bullitt:

> "The enemy of peace are those who are deliberately trying to stir-up trouble between the United States and Russia... Before the blood of our boys is scarcely dry on the field of battle, these enemies of peace try to lay the foundation for World War III. These people must not succeed in their foul enterprise."[41]

In 1946, one would expect that Americans understood what result was produced when a national government was forced to enter into a coalition with Communists. The story had been written in blood and slavery in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Albania, Hungary, and

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[36] The Christian Science Monitor, July 23, 1946, p. 12.

[37] Kirkus, May 1, 1946, p. 213.

[38] The New Republic, July 22, 1946, p. 83.

[39] The New York Times, June 23, 1946, p. 3.

[40] The New Yorker, July 13, 1946, p. 83.

[41] "Arms Versus Appeasement: Wallace's Siberia and Bullitt's Great Globe," Philip Hirnham, Commonweal, August 9, 1946, pp. 404-407.

Czechoslovakia. But when General George Marshall went to China, in December 1945, cooperation with Communists seemed to him and to President Harry S. Truman a necessity. In the early summer of 1946, to force President Chiang Kai-shek to take Communists into the Chinese government, General Marshall had the Department of State refuse to give licenses for export of ammunition to China. Thus, he prevented the Chinese Nationalists from buying munitions in America. Meanwhile, the Chinese Communists received great quantities of supplies from the Soviet government and overran large areas.

One thing was certain by the end of 1946, American innocence in foreign affairs had to be destroyed or America would be destroyed. Two of the greatest mistakes of World War II had concerned the Soviet Union. Two world leaders had been deluded. Hitler had underestimated Russian military power and Franklin D. Roosevelt had underestimated Russian political power. The Nazis had been defeated, and the Kremlin had liberated the homeland and had extended Soviet territory by about 193,000 square miles with a population of almost sixty million.[42] In addition to the Baltic countries, Eastern Poland and Bessarabia, North Bukovina, East Karelia with Petsamo and Porkhala, and the northern part of East Prussia now belonged to the Soviet Union. The Soviet sphere of influence reached even beyond, farther than Manchuria

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[42]George von Rauch, A History of Soviet Russia (New York, 1963), p. 381.

in the Far East, in Europe covering the whole of eastern Central Europe from Finland to the Aegean Sea and to the Adriatic.

If Russia had been the bane of Adolph Hitler and Franklin Roosevelt, it proved to be even more so of William Bullitt. Hitler, presumedly, did not live to see the full consequences of his mistake. Likewise, President Roosevelt died before realizing the full extent of Stalin's breach of "good faith." However, William Christian Bullitt lived with his delusion, his disenchantment, and his dissension. His misjudgement of the Bolshevik regime in 1919, his enthusiasm for the "idealistic social experiment," his efforts to establish harmonious relations between the United States and Russia, his triumphant arrival in Moscow as Ambassador, his cordial relationship with the Russian leaders, his disillusionment with the Soviet dictatorship, his irritatingly accurate prophecies which were heard by some but ignored by many more, his discord with two Presidents of the United States, his final pleas for a "hard line", realistic foreign policy all made William Bullitt's life one which was constantly haunted by the Russian problem.

Did history mold William Bullitt or did he aid in molding history? Was he a profound bigot or a profound prophet? In 1919, he was one of those American liberals who lived in a garden of illusion. When he walked through those empty, cold, wintry Russian streets during his secret

mission, William Bullitt was being acted upon by history -- although he would have been the last one, at that time, to have admitted it. He was an excellent example of American innocence. He felt that all people throughout the world shared the same moral values. He emphasized the ideal goals of international peace, justice, and brotherhood. He had a very optimistic view of man and history, and regarded his ideal goals as political possibilities in the foreseeable future. By December, 1933, he believed that he could restore some of these ideals to a world which seemed to have forgotten them. Then, he became disappointed. John Randolph, the noted American statesman (1733-1833), once said, "Mean spirits under disappointment, like small beer in a thunder-storm, always turn sour." Had Bullitt turned sour after realizing that the dream of his youth had turned into a hardened dictatorship? Discontent is like ink poured into water, which fills the whole fountain full of blackness. Did Bill Bullitt's discontent with Soviet Russia cast a cloud over his mind -- rendering it more occupied about the evil which disquiets than about the means of removing it?

Bullitt was an emotional man with a keen and widely informed mind. In 1939, one magazine reported that Bullitt's friends "say that he rages inwardly when he has to inhale exhaust fumes on a crowded street. His complexion turns a beet red when he sees some culprit spit or toss gum

wrappers on the side walk."[43] Needless to say, Bullitt was highly excitable. The magazine continued: "Bullitt's incapable of remaining calm in the midst of accusations and innuendoes. At a mere misstatement concerning his motives, the blood mounts to his face and his bald, freckled head is suffused with a lovely crimson."[44] Bullitt possessed a strain of romanticism in his nature. Raymond Moley, a member of President Roosevelt's "Brain Trust," commented in 1939 on this characteristic of William Bullitt: "Foreign affairs were to his imaginative mind, full of lights and shadows, plots and counter plots, villains and a few heroes -- a state of mind that seemed to me dangerous, if not constantly subjected to the quieting influence of some controlling authority."[45] However, perhaps Bullitt's interest in this aspect of foreign affairs resulted from his experience as Ambassador to the Soviet Union. Thus, what Mr. Moley judged came from Bullitt's "imaginative mind" might easily have come from the actual experiences of a disappointed diplomat. But, there is no doubt that William Christian Bullitt tended to be dramatic, excitable - in short, very emotional. Thus, when he became disenchanted in Moscow, he carried on a campaign against the Soviet Union in the Soviet

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[43]"He Rose From The Rich," The Saturday Evening Post, March 11, 1939, p. 5.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Raymond Moley, After Seven Years (New York: 1939), p. 136.

Union. And consequently, when he became Ambassador to France, he didn't hesitate to give all the dignitaries serving their respective nations in Paris the impression that America was a land of talking diplomats. However emotional the Ambassador was, he wasn't continually bigoted during his stay in France - for in France, people listened to and agreed with much of his advice and he was tolerant of other people's views. Also, after he recognized the threat of Nazi Germany, he favored a cautious rapprochement with the Soviet Union. But, in 1940, he returned to the United States; he broke with his intimate friend Franklin D. Roosevelt over the handling of the Russian question; he failed to get an appointment to a high ranking position in Washington; he heard the speeches of Joseph E. Davies; he saw America's delusion for it was similar to one he had possessed in his youth; he witnessed the Red Army's advance into Europe and enslavements of sixty million people. He warned American leaders, but to no avail. He warned the American people, but failed to convince them of the Soviet threat. Thus, William Bullitt reverted to the bigotry that had so possessed him in his last few months in Moscow. Few people took him seriously; America was attempting to appease Stalin; the Red Army continued to move into Europe.

If Bullitt was a "mean spirit" who "turned sour" after his disappointment with the Kremlin, he did so only because

America's security and survival in the post-war world depended upon her leaders and her people "turning sour" -- recognizing the Moscow regime for what it was and meeting the Soviet threat with a sound, realistic foreign policy. Thus, if Bullitt was a bigot, he had a good reason to be one. The opinions from which he dissented proved to be completely wrong -- so wrong that the United States of America emerged from World War II into a bipolar world -- a world which had been made possible by those who had disagreed with men such as William Bullitt.

The ex-ambassador gained a great deal of wisdom from his disillusionment. Few Americans had an insight into Soviet foreign policy as did William Bullitt. Few Americans predicted in 1934 that the next few years would witness a Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact. Few Americans predicted in the summer of 1938 that if the United States ever became involved in a war with Japan, the Soviet Union would avoid becoming a U. S. ally until Japan had been thoroughly defeated and would then merely use the opportunity to acquire Manchuria and Sovietize China. By 1936, few Americans knew about the nature of Russian Communism, its strategies, its tactics, and its goals as did William Bullitt. Finally, during World War II, few Americans realized that Stalin was unappeaseable, and that while Americans were winning the war -- they were losing the peace.

In Congress, the Honorable Gordon L. McDonough of California summarized the opinions of many people in the

post-war United States when he stated:

> "... the prophetic advice, the comprehensive views, and the clear understanding of former United States Ambassador William C. Bullitt of the future plans and foreign policy of Russia should be a guide, a warning, and an indication to the United States and to the rest of the world of the plans, purposes, and designs that Russia had as far back as 1936 on acquiring and annexing to her sphere of influence all of the countries in Europe which she could influence or dominate with her communistic philosophies... Much of the diplomatic and political losses in world prestige and confusion could have been avoided if we had been as alert to the warnings of Mr. Bullitt as we were to the warnings of Paul Revere in 1776."[46]

The Honorable Walter H. Judd of Minnesota, while commenting on the career of Mr. Bullitt, declared in the U. S. House of Representatives:

> "No American has had a more brilliant record in diplomacy and especially in diagnosing the true nature of Soviet communism and prescribing the proper way to treat it. Tragically, our State Department ignored his advice and led our country and the world to its present perilous state."[47]

However, Bill Bullitt wasn't always correct in his actions and opinions. Sometimes he spoke when it might have been better for him and his country if he had remained silent. When he returned from France in the fall of 1940, he advised the U. S. government that the Pétain regime in France was quite trustworthy, represented the French people,

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[46] United States of America Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 80th Congress, First Session, Appendix, Volume 93, Part 12, July 11, 1947, p. A3477.

[47] United States of America Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 81st Congress, Second Session, Appendix, Volume 96, Part 10, pp. A3433-A3436.

and he concluded that the United States should loan the new government great sums of money.[48] The fact was that the Vichy government in France was simply a puppet regime of the Nazis. Bullitt was wrong - and a few weeks later he admitted that instead of speaking out he should have given his opinions in the form of a carefully prepared written statement. There were many similar events in Bullitt's career. Thus, Newsweek declared in 1941: "When Bullitt undertakes a job, no one can know what will happen. In his public career there have been both brilliant strokes and blundering miscalculations."[49]

Bullitt's opinions about Soviet Russia in the years before he was appointed to his Moscow post were miscalculations. But, after 1936, he had few misconceptions about the Soviet menace, and most of his warnings were brilliant prophecies. Certainly, by 1938, after Munich, Bullitt began to aid in the molding of history. In his youth, history did not crush him, but it did leave him an embittered diplomat. As World War II approached, he warned the United States about the danger of a "liberal idealistic" approach to international politics -- and he, himself, began to shape America's foreign policy in Europe. When he returned to the United States in 1940, he soon found that few people would listen

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[48]Harold Le Claire Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, III, The Lowering Clouds: 1939-1941 (New York: 1953), September 15, 1940, p. 322.

[49]"The Meaning of the Bullitt Mission," Ernest K. Lindley, Newsweek, December 8, 1941, p. 21.

to his advice concerning the Soviet Union -- and, instead of getting closer to the Washington policy formulators, he became a political outcast, a magazine correspondent. However, he didn't stop his campaign to deepen America's awareness of the complexities and ambiguities, as well as the opportunities, of international politics and to deliver the nation from utopian illusion on the one hand and cynical despair on the other. Many critics declared that Bullitt was more preoccupied with evil than with the means of removing it. However, by 1938, he was constantly warning the United States government to treat the Kremlin in a realistic, reciprocal manner.[50] If he always seemed to emphasize the negative aspects of Soviet foreign policy, he continually gave an answer to the problem -- an answer which turned out to be "irritatingly correct."

William Christian Bullitt's greatest hopes had a way of crashing down upon him. His disappointments accumulated. In 1919, his delusion brought him political misfortune. By 1936, his disenchantment brought him personal sorrow. By 1945, his dissension brought him nothing but criticism -- while America's delusion nearly resulted in a national

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[49]Cf. United States of America Congressional Record, 80th Congress, First Session, Appendix, Volume 93, Part 11, p. A2032. Testimony of the Honorable William Christian Bullitt at Investigation of un-American propaganda activities in the U. S. House of Representatives, Committee on un-American Activities, Washington, D. C., Monday, March 27, 1947.

catastrophe. By the end of 1946, the Soviet Union had emerged from World War II in a position which was far removed from that of 1919 - when Bullitt and Steffens had visited their "heaven." A Bolshevik Empire had been born which was closely linked with the name of Stalin. Only the United States of America could compete with this world empire. Would Americans finally leave the garden of their illusion? The age of American innocence was dead -- or was it? Would they learn the significance of William Bullitt's delusion, disenchantment, and dissension? Would they mold history or be molded by it?

> "You will either aid in molding history, or history will mold you, and in the case of the latter, you can rest assured that you will be indescribably crushed and maimed in the process... History is not a blind goddess, and does not pardon the blindness of others."[51]

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[51] This statement was made by Whittaker Chambers in 1931 when he was affiliated with the American Communist Party. However, just as William Bullitt changed his opinion about the Soviet regime, so too did Mr. Chambers. But in 1931, when Chambers was a communist, he made the above declaration insinuating that he was molding history, just as Bullitt thought he was in 1919, and just as F. D. R. thought he was in 1941. However, all three men were wrong -- history was acting upon them during their respective periods of delusion when they were dupes of communism. Cf. Leslie A. Fiedler, An End to Innocence: Essays on Culture and Politics (Boston: 1952), p. 3.

APPENDIX

On March 25, 1964, the author wrote a letter to the Honorable William Christian Bullitt, and asked him two questions. The first once concerned the period of Mr. Bullitt's life as Ambassador to France (1936-1941). There was little source material to be found on the subject of Ambassador Bullitt's anti-Soviet activities in France. Thus, the author asked for any information Mr. Bullitt could give on this topic. But a few days after the letter was mailed, the author found that the State Department's Foreign Relations series for the years 1936-1940, along with a few other books, supplied many examples of Bill Bullitt's advice to the French government vis à vis the Soviet Union. Secondly, the author had become curious if Mr. Bullitt had specifically warned President Roosevelt against attempting to appease Stalin after 1941. At the time the letter was written, there was every indication that Bullitt did give his opinion -- for he rarely was silent on such important matters. But, the author couldn't locate any sources to verify the hunch. However, a week after the letter had been sent to France, the author discovered exactly what he was looking for -- in Bullitt's own article in Life, "How We Won the War and Lost the Peace." Consequently, both questions had been answered before Mr. Bullitt's reply; however, the Ambassador's words did reveal that the ebullient Mr. Bullitt hadn't lost any of his ebulliency, and his reply added a great deal to the

author's endeavor to write an accurate account of one man's role in Soviet-American relations 1919-1946. The Honorable William Christian Bullitt's letter follows:

"

Paris, France
12 April 1964

Dear Mr. Angel:

I have just received your letter of 25 March 1964, as I have been in the Sahara and elsewhere.

Although, in self protection, I usually refrain from answering questions-of which I receive hundreds each year-I shall try to answer your two.

1. You will find no records of my many conversations with French officials on the subject of the Soviet Union, unless someone has published very recently fake memoirs that I have not seen. Incidently, you can believe Leon Blum, Daladier and many other Frenchmen; but Georges Bonnet, Minister for Foreign Affairs, is an absolute liar, whom I never trusted.

All members of the French Government knew that I considered Stalin entirely unreliable, -- a Caucasian bandit.

2. A volume would be required to answer your second question. Some day, perhaps, some historian will take the trouble to record the physical and mental decay of poor Franklin Roosevelt from May 1940 to his death. I cannot do that on the remainder of this sheet of paper. Personally, I argued passionately against the policy on which Harry Hopkins and others had persuaded the ill President to embark. As I had known him intimately for many years, I even told him he ought to resign as he was no longer competent to be President.

There is directness in your writing, and I admire "Washington and Lee". Hence this reply

Good luck and God bless you.
William C. Bullitt"

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