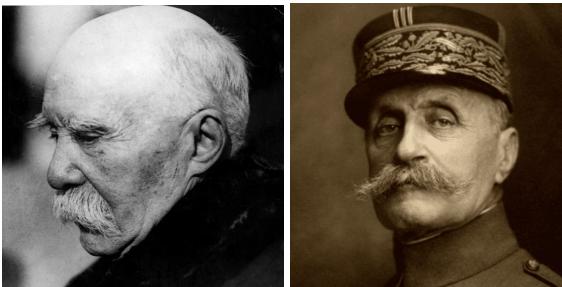


The Origins of the French Intervention in the Russian Civil War – Handout

Michael Brodskiy



- Initially, the policy was "to hasten the end of the anarchy in Russia and to facilitate the reestablishment of order and a legal government." — Stephen Pichon
 - Ukraine was used as a leverage point (by recognizing its independence)

- Brest-Litovsk talks, beginning in December 1917, worried the French
- Military Intelligence suggested rapprochement
- Limited ties with Bolsheviks were approved around mid-February
- Tried to appease Bolsheviks
 - Ties improved, in early March Niessel corresponded with Trotsky regularly

- On March 20th, after becoming the Military Leader, Trotsky requested military support
 - Guillaum Lavergne, who replaced Niessel, approved

Major French Players

- Quai d'Orsay – Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
 - Philippe Berthelot – Deputy Director
- Georges Clemenceau – Prime Minister
- Henri Albert Niessel – General of the Russian Mission
- Ferdinand Foch – Chief of General Staff
- Stephen Pichon – Foreign Minister
- Joseph Noulens – Ambassador to Russia



- Ministry of War offered limited support to Lavergne
- Noulens asked to reanalyze situation, proposed a break in ties

REVERSAL IN POLICY



- Quai d'Orsay began to worry more about spread of *guerre sociale*
- Policy began to reverse, relations deteriorated
- First, on April 5th, Lavergne was “given a certain freedom of action”
- Next, on April 9th, Noulens requested control over Lavergne

- Noulens had his request approved on April 16th
- Thus, policy reversal took place from April 5th–16th
- Foch's resignation played a main role in allowing policy reversal
 - Historians believe this because he signed most pro-rapprochement documents



IN CONCLUSION ...



- French disorganization contributed to reversal
 - Many players, with differing perspectives
- Lots of uncertainty
 - Marxist revolution never-before-seen
 - Many factors to consider in analysis
- This makes either historian perspective partially true