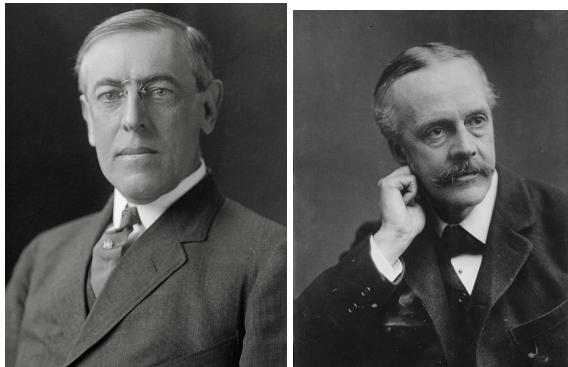


# **America's Secret War against Bolshevism: U.S. Intervention in the Russian Civil War – Handout**

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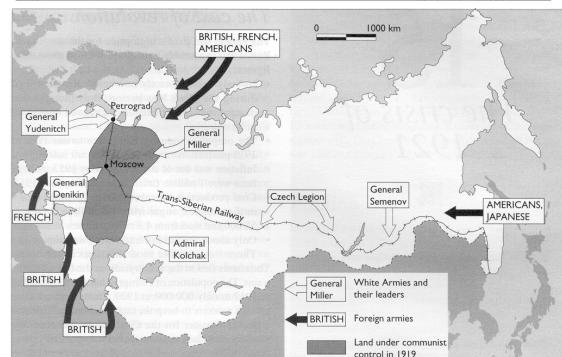


### Context

- Towards end of first World War, Russia was plunged into revolution and subsequent civil war
- Russia gave significant territory to Germany to leave peacefully (Brest-Litovsk Treaty)
- Bolsheviks* (pro-Leninist "reds") were at war with anti-Bolshevik forces (monarchist "whites" and agrarian "greens")
- Worry of German spread to port cities of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk
- It was time for Allies to shift policy

### Important Documents and Figures

- Supreme War Council (SWC) – An American military headquarters based in Europe and established after the Russian Revolution to more easily control American military policy
- Woodrow Wilson was the American President
  - Joint Note 31 was approved by the SWC, and justified intervention
  - Aide Memoire* was an attempt by Wilson to define American stance on intervention
- Trotsky, part of the "revolutionary trio" with Stalin and Lenin, would come to head the Red Army
- Arthur Balfour was the British Foreign Secretary
- Remember, this work refers to **North Russia**, not Siberia (though intervention occurred there too)



Territory controlled by the Communist Government in 1919.

- Wilson wanted intervention, but feared Soviet reaction and/or reprisal
  - Possible nationalistic uprising in response
- "When Wilson agreed to send American soldiers to Archangel, then, he sought not only to conciliate his Allies, but also to help the Russian people liberate their country from an allegedly alien and tyrannical regime."



## ESCALATION



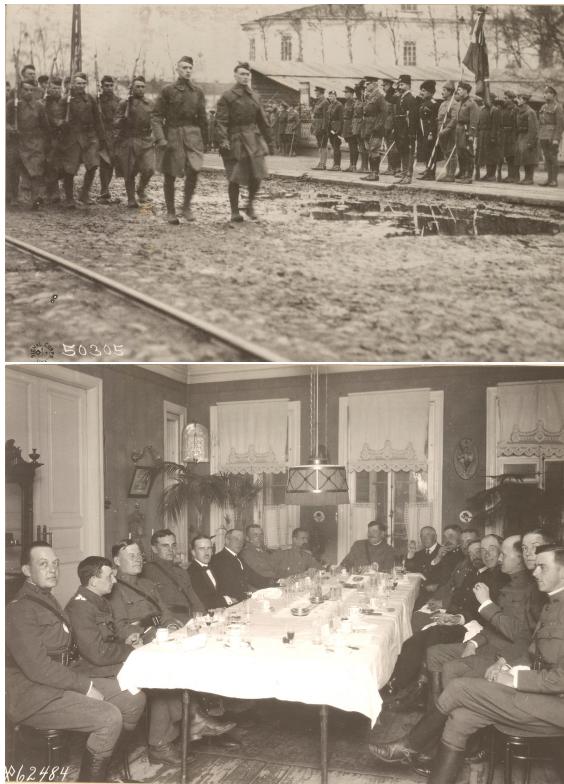
- On May 31, Balfour urged Americans that it was of great importance, "to retain Murmansk, if we desire to retain any possibility at all of entering Russia"
- On June 1, Wilson reiterated that he "was entirely willing to send troops to Murmansk," but he took no action until later

- On June 3, Joint Note 31 was approved by the Supreme War Council, stated:
  - Allied intervention in north Russia was justified because of German threat
  - Also because "the majority of Russian parties" had requested it



- Allied supplies piled up in the Soviet port cities
- July 1918, Wilson releases *aide-memoire*

- 339th Infantry Regiment was to be dispatched
- "to guard military stores which may subsequently be needed by Russian forces . . ."



- In reality, "Wilson did want to avoid making the anti-Bolshevik thrust of the military expedition obvious and explicit, but it was implicit from the beginning."
- On September 4, 1918, American troops landed in Arkhangelsk, as promised
- Murmansk and Arkhangelsk became "an indispensable corollary of Allied intervention in Siberia."
- Wilson supported efforts, as long as there was "sympathy of the Russian people"
- American Ambassador David Francis, a staunch anti-Bolshevik, made clear (and supported) that American troops were not just sitting in Arkhangelsk

- French and British overly-aggressive towards Bolsheviks, more than the U.S. was willing to promote
- The fact that Allied troops stayed for nearly a year past the end of first World War demonstrates that combating Germans was never the prime goal



## CONCLUSION

- "The Government of the United States has never recognized the Bolshevik authorities and does not consider that its efforts to safeguard supplies at Archangel or to help the Czechs in Siberia have created a state of war with the Bolsheviks."
- This most accurately portrays American attitudes towards Bolsheviks

- Despite its less aggressive stance, America still wanted to prevent Bolsheviks from maintaining power
- American troops in Southward expeditions were thanks to Francis' extreme anti-Bolshevism
- Although initially to combat Germans, a main goal of the intervention was clearly to combat Bolshevism