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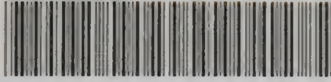

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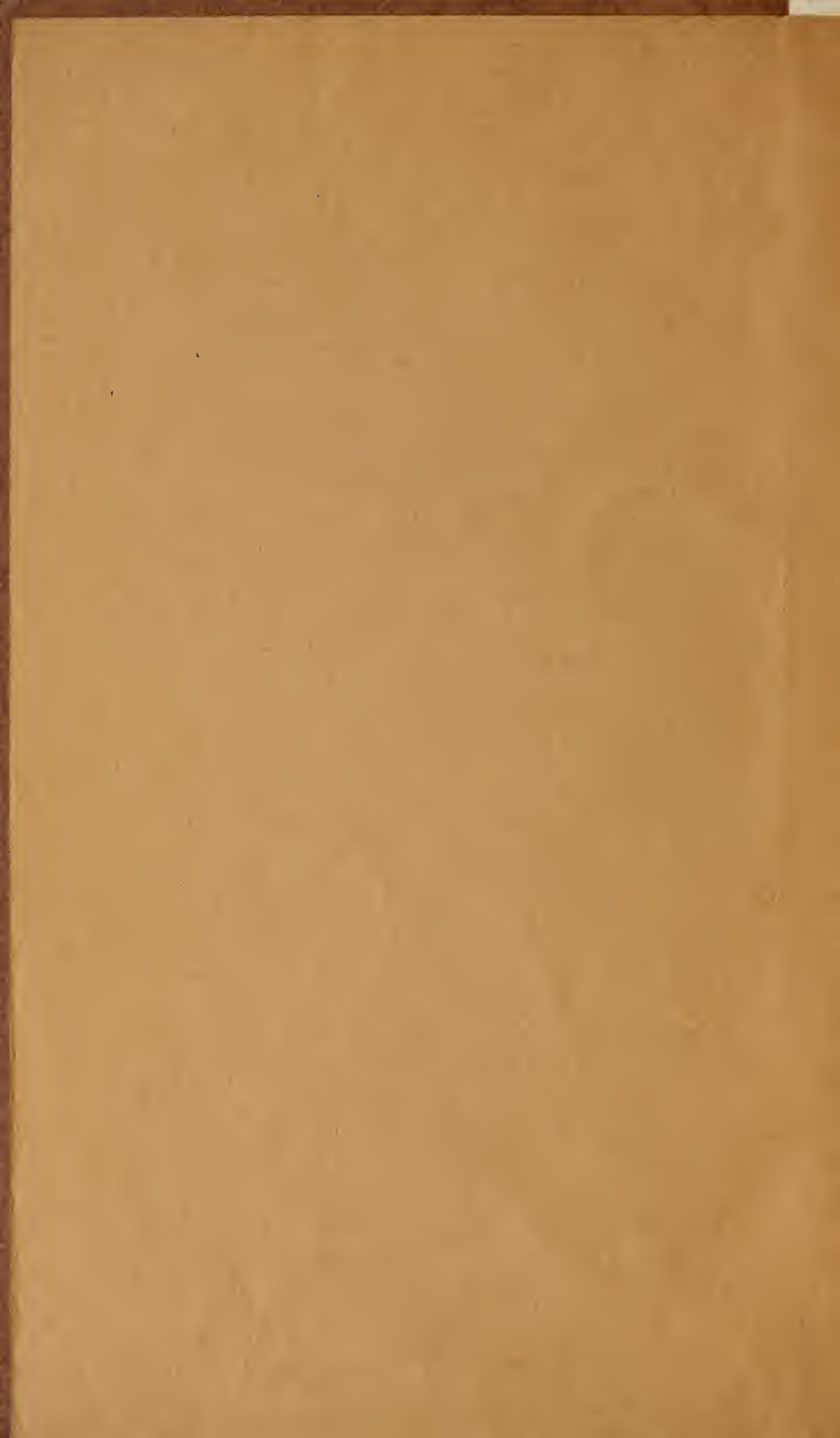

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By LEONID ANDREIEV.

"Like a wireless operator on a sinking steamer that through the night and the darkness sends the last calls: 'Quickly! To our aid! We are sinking! Save our Souls!'—so also I, moved by my faith in human clemency, throw into the dark space my prayer of perishing human beings . . . Quickly! Come quickly!"

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RUSSIA'S CALL TO HUMANITY

"Save Our Souls"

An Appeal to the Allies

by

Leonid Andreiev

Introduction by Prof. P. N. Miliukov

(Late Foreign Minister of the Provisional Government).

Cover by FRANK BRANGWYN, R.A.

Edited by the Russian Liberation Committee and the Union of the Russian Commonwealth.

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Introduction

By Prof. P. N. Miliukov.

It is not necessary to introduce Leonid Andreiev to the British public. Leonid Andreiev is no stranger.* But a few introductory remarks, intended to help the reader to a better understanding of the remarkable document before him, may not be out of place.

Leonid Andreiev is one of the two prominent men of letters (the other is Gorki) representing a generation which can no more be called young, but is by half a century younger than that of our renowned novelists Tolstoy, Turgeniev and Dostoyevsky. This generation was born and has grown up in a Russia liberated from serfdom (1861), and amidst a struggle for political freedom. Leonid Andreiev (born 1871) and Maxim Gorki (born 1869) are highly representative of two

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* Leonid Andreiev's works are nearly all translated into English. His first tales have appeared in two editions.

"Silence and other Stories," translated by W. K. Lowe (Rector of Brisley, Norfolk). London, Fr. Griffiths. 1910. and "The Little Angel and other Stories." Hodder and Stoughton. London, and New York, Taranti, 1915 (the same translation).

"The Red Laugh," translated by Alexandra Linden, London, Fisher Unwin, 1905.

"The Seven who were Hanged" (a protest against capital punishment), translated by Herman Bernstein. New York, 1909, J. S. Ogilvie Publishing Company.

"The Sorrows of Belgium" (in Russian: "King, Law and Liberty"), a play in six scenes, translated by Herman Bernstein. New York. The Macmillan Company, 1915, and "The Confessions of a Little Man during Great Days," translated by R. S. Townsend, London, Duckworth & Company, 1917 (both characterising his attitude towards the World's War).

Plays ("The Black Maskers," "The Life of Man," "The Sabine Women"), translated by Clarence L. Meader and Fred. Newton Scott, with introductory essay by V. V. Brusyanin. L. Duckworth & Company, 1915. Another edition of "The Life of Man," translated by C. J. Hogarth, was published by L. G. Allen and Unwin, 1915.

"Anathema," a tragedy in seven scenes, translated by Herman Bernstein, New York. The Macmillan Company, 1910.

"Judas Iscariot," translated by W. H. Lowe. London. Fr. Griffiths, 1910.

"The Crushed Flower and other Stories," L. Duckworth, 1917.

"The Dear Departed," a frivolous performance in one act, translated by Julius West, London. Hendersons.

different currents among the Russian intellectuals of this generation. Their personal characteristics emphasise and make clear the contrast which, under the conditions of the present World War, has evolved into open controversy, and finished with both of them taking sides in the great struggle now going on for Russia's future.

Maxim Gorki, born in a tradesman's family, does not quite belong to the lowest social strata, whose spokesman he considers himself to be. For a time, indeed, he was a real tramp; though not, of course, of the type described and advertised by Mr. Stephen Graham. His education was meagre and chiefly based on a desultory course of reading. He displays a good deal of common sense, and he excels in realistic description which he knows how to combine with romantic exaggeration. But he has not shown himself capable of abstract thought, and so far as general ideas are concerned, he has modestly followed the lead of those who were regarded by his generation as the great luminaries of a future humanity.

It is quite different with Leonid Andreiev. With the fine face of an artist and a highly refined personality, thin-skinned and over-sensitive, Andreiev belongs by birth to the middle class. He graduated at the University of Moscow, and is a lawyer by profession, although he has never practised. In no sense of the word a politician and, as may be seen from this appeal, not in the least a diplomatist. Leonid Andreiev has a keen sense of his duties as a citizen. Every great event or aspect of Russia's struggle for freedom was always calculated to elicit a thrilling response from the depths of his soul. Russian men of letters have never been looked on by public opinion as merely professional writers of fiction. They have rather been expected to lead the rising generations in the capacity of "Teachers of Life." This, though in a lesser degree than before, is still the case with Andreiev's and Gorki's generation. In a period of *fin de siècle* individualism, both of them were still expected to follow the general trend of the former Russian intellectual tradition. Gorki did so: Andreiev failed. His vanity—if he has any—is not so

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much to follow acknowledged authorities as to state and to solve world problems in his own way.

Both Gorki and Andreiev reached the summit of their literary renown at one bound by publishing short sketches which showed their talent at its best. In Gorki's case this was much easier, because he claimed to be the Columbus of a new social world, that of his fellow-tramps, who were then supposed to number the best specimens of Russian democracy in their ranks. To be sure, he has had predecessors in our "populists" of the "sixties," like Levitov, Nicholas Uspensky and others. But it is well known that a new truth is often an old one, well forgotten. In Gorki's glorification of the tramp, however, there was something really new. He looks with scorn on the Russian peasantry, the idols of the "populists," as being too passive and too Philistine. Instead of them he extols the dregs of the working class, who embody for him both Marx's proletarians and Nietzsche's supermen, born for absolute freedom and ready to fight for it.

Andreiev's claim to attention from his contemporaries is quite different, and more complicated. He purposely chooses his topics, not from an unknown world, but from every-day life. It is here that he seeks for the unknown, while trying to discover a deeper meaning in everyday reality, a meaning unnoticed by the ordinary observer. Everything that happens is for Andreiev a problem, psychological and philosophical; or rather, he looks on the most trifling occurrence as a manifestation of one single problem, which torments his soul; the problem of human aloofness, solitude in the midst of the most conventional phenomena of every-day sociability. Here are, for instance, four partners playing bridge in their club, "in winter and summer, in spring and in autumn." They think they know each other quite well, but they never learn—nor wish to learn—anything about each other's inner life, about, so to say, the *human* side of them. One day, one of the four dies unexpectedly, during a game. His place will be taken by another. . . . It dawns upon his partners that the dying man *will never know* how good were the cards he had been dealt at the moment of his apoplectic

seizure. . . . This is the least tragic among Leonid Andreiev's tales, but his problem is there. The dominating feature of his writings is a great fear of solitude and an eager yearning for human solidarity—moral, not economic. Like Diogenes of old, Andreiev is always seeking for a "man," for linking and cementing factors in the human being. He generally misses them, but he is never tired of asking for them again and again. This is his last refuge. One can see him recur to it also in this Appeal to the Allies—far as its realistic aim is from Leonid Andreiev's customary symbolism.

*   *   *   *   *   *

Let us now turn to another point which may help to a better understanding of the Appeal—the attitude of both Andreiev and of Gorki toward the World's War. It is during this war particularly that the great divergence of views between the two eminent novelists has manifested itself. They took opposite sides, thus representing two currents of public opinion in Russia, which quite correspond to the same manifestations of public thought in all the warring countries.

Maxim Gorki has become—or rather has remained what he was formerly—a "defeatist." The dread of victory and the desire for defeat in war is not a new attitude among a certain group of Russian Socialists and Intellectuals. We can trace it back not only to the Russo-Japanese, but even to the Crimean War. Russian "defeatism" is not produced by the anti-patriotic or the anti-militarist propaganda of later times; it is rather a result of a century long struggle against autocracy. Our Intellectuals have but too often confounded the *form* of State Governments, which they were bent on destroying, with the State itself. Thus a strange form of patriotism has evolved in Russia, which under better conditions is bound to be replaced by a more normal manifestation of a man's love for his country. Mr. Lenin has as yet found enough of this traditional "defeatism" to form a basis for his Bolshevist aspirations. This is how he describes the

Bolshevist attitude toward the war at its very beginning (October, 1914). " In the actual state of affairs it is impossible, from the point of view of the International proletariat, to say which would be the lesser evil for Socialism—an Austro-German defeat or a Franco-Russo-English defeat. But for us, Russian Social-Democrats, there can be no doubt that the . . . . lesser evil would be a defeat of the Tsarist Monarchy. . . . . We cannot ignore the fact that the issue of the military operations one way or another will facilitate or hamper our work of liberation in Russia. And we say, Yes. We hope for the defeat of Russia, because it will facilitate the internal victory of Russia."

This extremist view has called forth indignant protests even from prominent leaders of Russian Socialism and Anarchism such as George Plekhanov and Peter Kropotkin, Bourtsev, Alexinsky and others. Says Kropotkin : " No one who does not deliberately close his eyes can fail to understand why a man who has the progress of humanity at heart, and who does not allow his ideas to be obscured by interest, habit or sophistry, could possibly hesitate. We cannot but desire the final defeat of Germany. We cannot even remain neutral : under the present circumstances neutrality means complicity." Russia—even Socialistic Russia, even the working class, was not with Lenin, but with Kropotkin. A German Socialist organ publishes the following authoritative statement from Russia, written in October, 1914 : " A great majority of Russian citizens, and among them many Social-Democrats, are convinced that Germany is waging an aggressive war while Russia is defending herself from a German invasion. . . . The war is becoming more and more popular in Russia. . . . The present situation bears no resemblance to that which existed ten years ago (during the Russo-Japanese War). The war was then a dynastic war, while to-day we are witnessing a people's war. . . ." And the Organising Committee of the Russian Socialist Democratic party publishes an official communication from Russia, according to which " there is no desire that Russia should be defeated to be observed among the working classes."

It is Gorki's newspaper, "The New Life," which is largely responsible for the change of this initial state of opinion. In each day's leading article "The New Life" persistently attacked "The Anglo-French Coalition" while trying to prove that "we are all guilty of this crime" of war, and that an attempt to explain it as a struggle for freedom and culture can only please the "Cabinet Autocracy" in England, which "is turning so-called parliamentary government into the worst of tyrannies." If we are to believe certain documents published on "The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy," the zeal of "The New Life" in attacking the Allies was rewarded in August, 1917, from the fund of the German Social-Democracy with a gift of 150,000 crowns, as "falling in entirely with the aims of the party."

Quite an opposite course has been taken by Leonid Andreiev. He, too, is a pacifist, and his "Red Laugh," published during the Russo-Japanese War, testifies to his strongly anti-war sentiments. But since the beginning of this war Leonid Andreiev has become decidedly pro-Ally and pro-war, in the sense denounced and derided by Gorki in Russia—and by Bernard Shaw in this country—that is, holding the war to be a struggle for freedom and culture. When in Andreiev's appeal one reads this passage: "Was it worth while to intervene for Belgian neutrality, to defend Serbia, to weep over Louvain and the 'Lusitania'?" and so on, one must keep in mind, that Leonid Andreiev really found it "worth while" and "wept" over it, with all loyal Russia, *i.e.*, with an overwhelming majority. In his "Confessions of a Little Man during Great Days" he presents us with a specimen of this majority—a man in the street, first indifferent and sceptical toward the war, then surprised to find himself morally touched by events, and, finally, ready to recognise their "greatness" and to share the responsibility for them as a "cell" of a great human organism. In order especially to emphasise the part of Belgium in the war for "liberation" Leonid Andreiev has written a play, "The Sorrows of Belgium," whose Russian title is borrowed from "La Brabançonne," "King, Law and

Liberty." That is why in his present appeal the reader has not to do with an opponent—not to say with an enemy—but with a friend, sincere and straightforward. By his antecedents, cited above, as well as by his position as an exponent of democratic opinion, Leonid Andreiev is fully entitled to speak, not only on his own behalf, but also in the name of all loyal Russia, faithful to the Allies.

* * * * * *

Why then does the voice of this friend sound so bitter, so disappointed, and as if all but driven to despair? Why does Leonid Andreiev feel obliged to tell his reader the "bitter truth," that "he must gather all his strength" to preserve his faith, his former unwavering and unclouded belief in the Allies? Here I must point out again that what Leonid Andreiev feels and utters is felt by the vast majority of Russian public opinion. His thrilling address is meant to be an appeal for help. But it is also a warning and a testimony to the changing state of mind in Russia toward the Allies.

We come here to the third point in these introductory remarks. What has Russia (I always mean: *loyal* Russia) expected from her Allies? What has she received instead?

It is much easier for me to touch on this delicate question after the important debate on Russia in the House of Commons on April 9, 1919. Should Leonid Andreiev read the report of this debate, I am sure he will be greatly relieved and satisfied. The House has formally and conclusively repudiated any solidarity with the Bolsheviks. And the chief reason which induced Leonid Andreiev to raise his desperate call "not to the Governments of the Entente, but to the people of Europe," was that terrible blunder of the Prinkipo proposal, that put loyal Russia on the same moral level with Russia's "murderers and hangmen."

The reader will hear from Leonid Andreiev himself the optimistic views of starving Petrograd immediately after the armistice of November 11, 1918, as to the coming of Allied troops to Russia's rescue. I can only

state that this was also the view of the whole of non-Bolshevist Russia. Owing to the absence of information public opinion in Russia has been kept entirely in the dark as to the state of mind in Allied countries. The psychology of the troops returning home to rest, as well as the active propaganda against armed intervention and a " second war," have remained unnoticed. Neither have we known anything about the half-hearted and wavering policy of the Allied Governments in the face of this attitude of public opinion. We had not the slightest idea that the very existence of a loyal Russia, engaged in war against the Bolshevist ally of Germany, could be a matter for doubt, and that the legal recognition of this loyal and allied Russia could meet with difficulties, owing to the strange idea, that recognition of an allied government may mean " interference in the internal affairs " of Russia. That is why the news " from the Eiffel Tower " about Prinkipo came to Russia like a bolt from the blue. At the first moment nobody would believe it, not even the Bolsheviks. What hurt pro-Ally feelings in Russia particularly was not the refusal to send armed forces to Russia. That might be understood and agreed to as a temporary psychological impossibility. But the identification of traitors to the allied cause with such as remained faithful to the alliance, of German agents with loyal Russia still waging war against them—not for herself alone, but for the common cause of the Allies —the identification of " torturers and their victims " —that was more than a loyal Russian could bear—if even he did not know of Mr. Lloyd George's comparison of two fighting " factions " in Russia with some " Indian tribes quarrelling on the North-Western frontier of India." The whole ideology of the allied war was thus thrown to the winds. The idea of " non-intervention " could not possibly fit into the mind of the Russian ally, because he saw its ambiguity only too clearly. Not to intervene on the side of loyal Russia simply meant intervention on the opposite, the Bolshevist side. The disheartening effect of this theoretical " non-intervention " has been felt but too keenly in the ranks of the anti-Bolshevist armies. This

is why the Prinkipo proposal was equivalent, not only to moral, but even to material assistance to the enemy. Taken in connection with the non-recognition of the anti-Bolshevist governments and the exclusion of the Russian delegates from the Peace Conference, it was felt, indeed, as a "betrayal."

The Prinkipo proposal was made at the end of January. But even now, at the end of April, when these lines are written, the force of Leonid Andreiev's appeal remains unchanged. It is true, on April 9 the House of Commons repudiated the Bolsheviks, and on April 16 Mr. Lloyd George stated before the House that the question of recognition of the Bolshevik government "has never been proposed, never discussed." But America's standpoint still remains obscure, while the answer of the "Four" in Paris to Nansen's proposal to feed Bolshevist Russia is, practically, a mitigated variation of the Prinkipo proposal. Does not, indeed, the condition laid down by the "Four"—viz., the cessation of hostilities—reveal a persistent disregard of the nature of Bolshevism and, on the other hand, is it not equivalent to the "truce" of the Prinkipo proposal, intended for both fighting sides without distinction? Mr. Lloyd George's cautious expressions in his last speech of April 16 convey the same impression. According to him, there exist only *de facto* governments in different parts of Russia, which do not cover the whole country, and even the help given to some of these governments is excused on the pretext that they fight only "for their own protection and freedom in a land where Bolshevism is antipathetic to the feelings of the population." Well, we Russians claim the recognition of a *de jure*, not a *de facto* government for the *whole* of Russia; we think, and indeed we know, that Bolshevism in general is "anti-pathetic" to the population *all over* Russia—much more so under the reign of Bolshevist chaos and anarchy—and we insist on the fact, that Kolchak and Denikin do not fight "for their own protection," but for the liberation of the whole of Russia and for the restoration of its unity. As long as all this remains unrecognised, Leonid Andreiev's appeal will not

be untimely. On the contrary, it is particularly timely and important in these days, when in the mind of the Russian people fresh blows are being dealt to the prestige of the Allies by their forces being driven from Odessa and from Sebastopol by the Bolsheviks. The lack of knowledge of Russia is particularly shown by disproportionate attention paid to insignificant skirmishes in such remote and isolated corners of Russia, as Murmansk and Archangel, as compared with great engagements in the best and richest provinces of Russia, which are dismissed in embarrassed silence. Shall I point out once more that the extreme disappointment reflected in Leonid Andreiev's Appeal will not grow less, nay, rather will it greatly increase so long as the absence of any policy whatever towards Russia and the continued postponement of the only reasonable solution bring about new disasters both for Russia and for the Allied cause?

* * * * * *

What will be the result of further negligence of the Russian problem? A view of this subject, which is becoming popular in this country, has found expression in the debate of April 9. Mr. C. Edwards said: "Leave Russia in a state of anarchy, formally and diplomatically recognise that state of anarchy—and Germany will organise Russia, and through Russia, China, and instead of your having the combination, as we had in this war, of the Central Powers of Germany and Austria and Turkey, you are to have a vast population, infinitely greater than that which we had to face, dominated from the North Sea by Germany right away to the Pacific Ocean and down through China, and I warn the Government, that that is a real danger which some of us contemplate with awe." . . . . . I shall let this argument speak for itself. Leonid Andreiev, as I have mentioned, is not a politician, nor is he a diplomatist. His appeal *is* a warning, but not because he meant it to be such. It is a warning because it is a "human document" reflecting very faithfully the process that is going on now in the Russian mind.

Neither does Andreiev wish to close with a threat. On the contrary, he contrives to remain hopeful as regards the final issue. But the object of his hope is now different from the former. No more does he address the governments after their message from the height of the Eiffel Tower (the Prinkipo proposal). He does not even address the peoples—as national units pursuing each their policy. He seeks for his last refuge—as he always does—in an appeal to " men," to human beings, independently of their being French, or British, or American citizens. His point of view is now exclusively human. He shows all the human suffering caused by the Bolshevist misrule, wrongly considered as a "revolution." And he points out that there are happenings and doings which, after all, cannot be treated and ignored as being the " internal affairs " of a country. It is with satisfaction that I can say that on this subject, at least, *i.e.*, on the moral and political value of Bolshevism, the opinion in this country is much more unanimous now than it was two or three months ago. It practically coincides with that of Leonid Andreiev. Andreiev himself declines to make any detailed description of the state of things in Bolshevist Russia: he takes the knowledge of it for granted. Whoever wants facts may now find them officially stated by the British Government in a White Paper.* But I sincerely hope that even those who are unwilling to take sides in a political dispute and who profess inability to discriminate between truth and error in the numerous reports on the misdeeds of the Bolsheviks, may be touched by Andreiev's direct address to their moral sense.

In addition to what Leonid Andreiev has to say on Russia's moral claims for help, there is one more claim which I may be permitted to recall to the reader's memory, not in my own words, but in those spoken by General Page Croft, M.P., during the memorable debate of April 9th. " May we not," he said to the House, " when there is any talk whatever of discussing this question with the Bolshe-

* A Collection of Reports on Bolshevism in Russia " (Russia, N = '1, 1919).

vists, take our memories back to what Russia has done for us? When we were hard pressed in the early weeks of the war, the whole strength of Russia was thrown into East Prussia, and saved Paris and the Channel ports with ill-equipped and unarmed forces, that went with a heroism which has been rarely known in military history. The United States mourn their dead, and France, and Belgium, and Serbia, and Italy, and other countries, mourn their dead, and we in this country made great sacrifices, but may I not remind the House, that if you put all the losses of all the Allies together they do not equal what Russia lost on behalf of the Allies. When I say Russia, I mean the real Russia which is being starved to death now by these people."

This is *the* Russia on behalf of which we ask for active sympathy on the part of British public opinion.

S. O. S.

By

LEONID ANDREIEV.

The attitude which the Allied Governments have assumed with regard to tormented Russia is either *betrayal* or *madness*.

Either they *know* the nature of the Bolsheviks, whom they have invited to the Prinkipos Islands for making peace with a wounded, dying Russia, torn asunder by their own hands—in which case, it is simple betrayal, differing from other examples of the kind by its universal proportions. That element of unexpectedness, which so sharply amazed all believers in the justice and clemency of the Allies, is common to all such affairs: all betrayals are unexpected, and if the divine Jesus knows well, whither and wherefore departs Judas, nevertheless all his disciples continue to remain in happy ignorance to the very moment of the classical kiss. I am not prepared, however, to enter into the psychology of betrayal: its nature is well known to us all; as for the setting, in place of the gentle kiss, you have the wireless and the Eiffel Tower—it naturally changes and progresses with the time, without essentially creating any new values. Nor is there need to pause on the *aims* of betrayal, they have always been the same since the days of Judas: Golgotha for one, silver pieces for another. Sometimes, again, there is a rope . . . but that, of course, concerns the pathology of betrayal, and not its normal and sound psychology.

Or else, the case is such: the Allies *do not know* the nature of the Bolsheviks, whom they have invited for a friendly talk—and in that case, it is *madness*. Because now, after one and a half years of domination by the Bolsheviks in Russia, and their activities in Germany and other countries, only a *madman* is incapable of knowing what force of evil and destruc-

tion is represented by these savages of Europe, against whose culture, laws and morals they have risen. One must be wholly ignorant of the difference between truth and falsehood, the possible and the impossible, not to understand the simple and clear conduct, actions and appetites of Bolshevism. One must be without eyes as the blind, or having eyes see naught with them not to distinguish on the face of this huge Russia, now turned to barren ash, the fire, murder, destruction, the graveyard, the prisons, the madhouses, to which hunger and horror have reduced the whole city of Petrograd, aye, and many others like it. One must be wholly without ears, or, having ears, hear naught with them, not to hear the sobs and groans, the lament of women, the whimper of children, the hoarse outcry of the strangled, the unbroken rattle of the executioners' rifles, that for the last year and a half have been the ceaseless song of Russia. One must be wholly ignorant of the difference between truth and falsehood, the possible and the impossible, just as madmen are ignorant of it, not to feel the Bolshevist braggadocio and their eternal lies, now dull and dead, like the bellowing of a drunkard, like Lenin's decrees, now high-sounding and pompous like the speeches of that blood-bespattered jester, Trotsky, now unpretentiously simple and ingenuous, like the falsehood with which one fools little children, animals and . . . . . peoples. In particular the hearing of the Allied Governments must be affected by a special and fatal infirmity not to be able to hear not only the wailings of Russia—for all the world is wailing—but also the voice, the intelligent and clear reports on the substance of Bolshevism, which were given to them by M. Noulens. M. Scavenius and many other men worthy of confidence.

Furthermore: one must be wholly without memory, as those deprived of their wits, to forget Lenin's sealed railway car, to forget how Russian Bolshevism came forth from the womb of the Imperial German Bank and the criminal soul of William, to forget the peace

of Brest-Litovsk that was compassed by these same German agents, as the last possibility of triumph over the Entente. One must forget too Prussia and Galicia, drenched with Russian blood; forget Kornilov and Kaledin, victims fallen for duty and loyalty to their Allies, and Admiral Schastny, and Dukhonin, and Yaroslavl destroyed, and those lads of the military cadet corps and students who fell without faltering in their faith, in the name of Russia and in yours, our dear Allies; and those many thousands of Russian officers, who, for the same reason, are being hounded, killed and persecuted like dogs, and whom you—unwittingly, of course—have now so mercilessly humiliated by your tenderness towards murderers and hangmen. To fill the measure of forgetfulness there is need to forget also that Wilhelm, Wilhelm II., the German Emperor, was preparing to lunch in Paris, and that only by a happy chance Mr. Wilson is lunching there, having crossed two oceans : the Atlantic—and the ocean of Russian blood, shed in defence of the Allied cause. Further, one must be wholly without sense of virtue and even of simple order, wholly unable to discern between cleanliness and dirt, as are those bereft of sense, of using filth in one's food, of washing oneself with slops instead of water—in order to swallow with a pleasant smile, as if it were a sugared pineapple, all those humiliations, mockeries, scornful derisions and candid rebuffs, with which were rewarded the representatives of all the Allied nations in the Bolshevist Petrograd. I do not speak of the arrest of the Roumanian Ambassador, M. Diamandi, which at the time had aroused the protest even of the Abyssinians : M. Diamandi did not represent a sufficiently "great power" that he should be taken for mad for having modestly and with dignity remained silent. I do not speak of the Swiss Minister and other minor powers whose innocent neutrality had suffered at the impudent hands of the Bolshevik. I dare not speak of Mr. Wilson, who, at the proper time, in answer to his sympathetic wireless message to the

young Soviet Government, had received an altogether savage and fervent " slap in the face " from Zinovieff: for a Christian and humanitarian this is but an occasion for offering the other cheek, a proceeding now indeed before our eyes. But—the assault and murder in the British Embassy and the subsequent proclamation putting British citizens outside the law?

And finally: having eyes and ears, having judgment and will, one must be either savage like the Bolsheviks themselves or suffer from some moral infirmity to remain unmoved at their inhuman conduct and call it by any other name than crime, murder, lies and robbery. One must be without human feeling, bestial or insanely immoral, to call " internal affairs " such incidents as a powerful scoundrel violating a woman, or a cruel mother torturing a child—and not interfere on the pretext that the said actions by a certain group of people are called " Socialism " or " Communism." There are words which are sacred, and great is their fascination for the living human soul, but when these wicked buffoons call their ignorant, savage Chinamen, hired for murder, " the advance guard of the Chinese revolutionary democracy "—one must have not a living but a dead soul to fall into so miserable and impudent a trap. Here, under the impudent tinsel of current terms, the essence of the matter is being concealed: which is, the hiring of savage yellow-faced murderers for the extermination of Europeans—a thing hitherto unheard of in the chronicles of the worst European tyranny. . . . And it is terrible to think that already for a year past crazed Europe has looked open-eyed upon these exotic wild beasts, who are being fed with our bodies, and is yet unable to imagine *what* is before her: " the advance guard of democracy," or the advance guard of devils, let loose from hell for the destruction of the unhappy earth. It is they who have been called to the Prinkipo Island.

In short, to fail to understand the Bolshevik, one must be a human being deprived of seeing and hearing, memory and consciousness, reason and will, a human

being suffering with dirty and dull moral insanity. No one, however, would be willing to admit the thought that the heads of the greatest contemporary Governments have been simply patients from a madhouse. Their names, well known to the whole world, their energetic and fully sensible activity in the course of the war, finally, the respect borne them until now even by their enemies, make such a thought not merely absurd and inadmissible, but even offensive. Of course, they are not madmen.

But if this is *not* madness, then what?

However clear the unavoidable inference, I have as yet some hesitation in making it. Life does not always conform to a stern and straight-ruled logic. The bases of human actions are so complex and diverse—in particular, the art of politics, which, like black magic, is so dark and subtle a matter that even here, apart from the two suggested explanations, betrayal or madness, can exist even other cogent motives, which become lost in a labyrinth of loud words, in the sumptuousness of decorations and in the solemnity of luncheons, top-hat receptions, processions and excursions to ruins. Reassuringly, in all photographs, gaze at me Mr. Wilson's teeth, displaying a broad and joyous smile, and many other such smiling teeth accompany him—but I have not the fullest confidence in the candidness of this reassuring and unconcerned smile. Is Mr. Wilson's soul as clear as his photographic face? Are Mr. Lloyd George's thoughts as calm and certain as the expression of his photographic eyes? Are there not some secret *fears*, some unsolved waverings, some sort of confused indecision, based on some indefinite calculations?

In such case there need be no direct betrayal in order that what has happened should happen, and that the dancing murderer-Bolshevik should journey to the beautiful islands. And—returning to the Gospels, so dear to Mr. Wilson—is it not better to replace the classical and fearful image of Judas by another image, not less classical, but infinitely more simple, more wide-

spread and humanly common, namely, that of Pilate washing his hands?

Pilate *knew* that Jesus was a just man. Even his wife forewarned him of this. Nor was he mad, or mean, but he was—Pilate. And, saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just person," as a token of this he washed his hands and sent the just man for judgment to Caiaphas. Caiaphas sent him to Annas, Annas back to Caiaphas. . . . Does not the sending of Russia to the Prinkipo Islands remind one of this wandering among honest judges—with a rope around one's neck? Thou, too, Russia, wander on, until thou come to the cross! Not guilty of thy blood is either Mr. Wilson or Mr. Lloyd George—has not the whole world seen that they have washed their hands? All have seen, and many obligingly have assisted them with the towel.

However: was it worth while to shout so loudly in the beginning in order to end with the Pilate-like falsetto? Was it worth while to intervene for Belgian neutrality, to defend Serbia, to raise millions upon millions of men, to shed a sea of blood, to threaten Germany with the Last Judgment for her inhumanity, to weep over Louvain and the "Lusitania," to make vows and to call to heaven, for five years to beat one's breast before the god of humanity—and to end before the wash-basin? Bewitched by speeches, declarations and oaths, as the most radiant holiday, as the resurrection of all the dead, the world awaited the victory of the Entente; it was also awaited by the dead, whose lives went to the purchase of the costly triumph. Men had believed that the victory of these gentlemen who talked so well of good and evil would usher in Righteousness itself upon the earth; that the peace achieved by them would be a true *peace*, and not a new blood, fire and torment, the destruction of the defenceless, the limit of human suffering.

And when across the bloody earth sounded the bell of victory, how many pale faces lit up with a smile of hope and happiness; how dark and distorted became the

evil faces of the murderers, terrified before the face of the risen Law. Those were incredibly beautiful, fantastic days, in which the gloomy, tormented Petrograd smiled, and believed in the *Englishman* as in God; those were strange and happy dreams, reveries of martyr-like madness, when at every sound of a shot men thought of an English gun and ran to the Neva to have a look, to see the English fleet, which "had arrived in the night." And the murderers trembled; it was but enough to show merely a scarecrow of an Englishman to make all this Caindom flee in panic. But . . . what came of it all?

The living and the dead have been duped. With absurd stubbornness you pursue the old, impotent Wilhelm, in order to judge him for the sins of his people; friendlily you stretch out a hand to the robust young murderers and thieves, deformed monsters, who *continue* to shed the blood of the innocent. Yes, it flows senselessly and horribly, and in this senselessness there is terror and crime, *worse* than in the five-year war. And the tenderly-treated murderer has taken a new lease of life, and mocks at you, and is no longer afraid even of the living Englishman, considering him no more than a scarecrow.

"The war is ended. Not a single murder more. Lay down your arms." That is the stern and clement order which men had expected from the Entente and its strength, crowned with victory. Instead, there is the low hissing of expiring humaneness, with which Mr. Wilson has sprinkled the glowing coals. . . and blood, blood, blood. As before shots ring out, some are taking and some are giving up towns, someone is being beaten and hacked to pieces, something is being laid waste and destroyed. With the force of a forest fire, blown by a hurricane, the bloody and senseless mutiny spreads, creeps along under the earth, blazes up behind one's back and on the sides, throws sparks into straw—and there is not enough resistance left in enfeebled Europe, her nerves shattered by five years of privation, and not having yet crossed the boundary of

psychical agitation created by the war, and which is now turning all the European masses into groups of unbalanced people, into an impressionable and helpless object for the most savage suggestion. The indecision and inner duality of the leaders of "world policy," hindering them from placing themselves quickly and decisively on one side or another, draws them more and more into the murderous embrace of Mutiny, which has already strangled the Revolution in Russia, is strangling it in Germany. If not to-day, then to-morrow all Europe—and after Europe America—will be turned into an arena of murder and pillage, a war against all. To-day Berlin is without electricity, to-morrow London will be without coal. More weeks will pass—who knows?—it is possible that all communications will stop, that steamships loaded with bread will pause in their harbours, and bony hunger shall reign over Europe, sweeping away the last living remains of the innocent and the guilty.

In such a manner does Fate take vengeance for the violation of vows, such as have been made by the Entente before the god of Humanity. Yes, they have been violated before the world in that fatal moment when, from its heights, the Eiffel Tower began to send out the invitation both to the murderers and the victims; and this was confirmed by those honest Russian leaders, who, with scorn and horror, rejected the hypocritical, cowardly and pernicious invitation. Duped are the living and the dead, and only one thing one must implore of cruel Fate: that she grant time for reflection—if it is not too late—that she withhold if but for an instant her avenging hand. . . and that she refrain from accomplishing the gloomy forebodings of such as have already seen the ruin of their native land.

Not to the Governments of the Entente, who have already said their painful word, do I turn with my crying prayer: "Save Our Souls" (S.O.S). No, not to them, but to You, *people* of Europe, in whose nobility I unalterably believe, as I have always believed.

S. O. S.

Like a wireless operator on a sinking steamer that through the night and the darkness sends the last calls, " Quickly, to our aid. We are sinking. Save Our Souls," so also I, moved by my faith in human clemency, throw into the dark space my prayer of perishing human beings. If you but knew how dark the night is around us, there are no words to describe this darkness.

Whom do I call? I do not know. But does the wireless operator know *whom* he calls? It is possible that for a thousand miles the sea is deserted and that there is no living soul to hear his prayer. The night is dark. It is possible that someone in the distance will hear the prayer, and say to himself: " Why should I go so far? I might perish myself,"—and then continues his nocturnal, invisible path. But he believes, and he calls persistently, to the very last moment, as long as there is a glimmer of light, and the powerless radio has not yet become silent for ever.

In what does he believe?

He believes in *man*, even as I. He believes in the law of human love and life: it *must not be* that one man should not help another when he is perishing. It *cannot be* that one man, without struggle or aid, shall deliver up another to the sea and to death. *It cannot be* that no one should come to the aid of him who calls. Someone *must* come. I do not know his name, but I discern clearly his human features, his soul, akin to mine. Through the cold and the gloom I almost feel the warm contact of his energetic and friendly hand, tense with the will to assist and with human sympathy. I perceive this *will* to assist, which makes his muscles tense, his vision keen, and gives light and decision to his quick and firm human mind. I see him, I know him, I await him—that is *man*.

Not in order that he might assist the *Russian people* do I call to him. That is too great a thing: the *Russian people*, that it might be saved: God alone has power over its life and death. In these sad days,

when the contempt, the humiliation and the mockery of fools have fallen to the lot of sick and prostrate Russia, I for one bear with great pride the name of Russian, and believe firmly in Russia's glorious future. I believe as firmly in your future, noble France, and in yours, Germany, our conquered enemy, and in yours, wise old Europe, the mother of the world, mother of us all. Such a colossus as the Russian people cannot perish. Whether the Governments of the Entente shall come to the aid of its ally Russia, or leave her to extricate herself from the foul quagmire, Russia at the determined hour will arise from her deathbed, and go forth radiantly, and by her right take up her place among the great nations of the earth. That which is so terrible for us, small mortal people, living for an instant, is but as a single heart-beat for the great and immortal nation. A hundred thousand more or less who will have perished, several years more or less of suffering—what does that mean for Russia, with her great and inscrutable destiny?

No, it is not assistance for the Russian people that I implore you, O man. But here are these thousands "more or less" who have but one life, which is but as an instant, and who are perishing every hour in unbearable suffering, or who live, but in a way which is worse than death. It is of no importance that they are called "Russians," but it is of importance that these *human beings*, whose sufferings have begun so long ago and continue endlessly, continue without a gleam of light, as in a real hell, from which there is no way out, and over which malignant, terrible forces rule unchallenged. There is still time to shorten their sufferings, there is still time to remove the menace of death from their heads, and it is for the saving of their souls that I send forth my human prayer.

My friend, I will not begin to tell you how painful and terrible it is for us in Russia now, or in our martyred Petrograd. I could not tell you if I wanted to. All that I would try to say would be pale and insignificant beside actuality. In order to be able to

tell you, one need have words, and words now, like money, have become counterfeit, and are no longer worth the value they proclaim: whole mountains of verbal falsehood have accumulated in the world, and under this mass the true word appears feeble and withered, and lost among a thousand monstrous shadows. How may one open one's lips for prayer when drunken Satan himself officiates at the altar? Suppose I speak a word: terror—murder—blood . . . what will it mean to the ear, which in the course of five years has hardly heard any other words? Suppose I should attempt to describe the horrors of dying Petrograd—will it not sound somewhat old, already told at some time, and, at the worst, will it not seem like a sorry invention of a novelist, a pathetic exaggeration of an advocate who is exerting himself for his client?

No, I will not attempt to tell you either of the quantity or quality of our sufferings: enough words have already been said by others, and there are no new words in the human speech. But one peculiarity of these sufferings I will permit myself to mention, and that is: the feeling of defencelessness on the part of self, and the feeling of *impunity* on the part of the murderer. It is not so terrible a thing to die or to undergo sufferings, verging on death, when you feel behind you the hand of the Law, which, in one way or another, sooner or later, will not allow the shedding of your blood to go by unpunished, will not consider you merely as a bottle of cider, which a careless drunkard, passing by, may spill on the pavement. It is not a terrible thing to die, while you still believe in the murderer's conscience, in which you suppose, sooner or later, he will find his punishment. It is not a terrible thing to die, but unbearingly painful to suffer, when this happens on the open market-place, in broad daylight, before the indifferent eyes of men, and of Heaven itself, and to know as you die that there is no conscience in the murderer, that he is well-fed, happy and rich, that under the cover of false

words, far from suffering punishment, he will *earn* some one's applause, some one's respect and profound admiration. It is a terrible thing when little children are hungry and dying, the murderers are eating to satiety and Trotsky is gulping down his throat the last bottle of milk. It is a terrible thing to know that for the dead there are not enough graves in Petrograd, while for this gentry the roads are open not only to the Prinkipo Islands, but to the whole world, that with their stolen wealth they have access to all the best climates, all the best places of the venal earth. It is unbearable, while dying, to think that on some one's inhuman scales you weigh no more than a midge, and that your precious life is cast out of the world, like spittle.

I do not know to what extent my faith in *man* can find a response in the martyred Petrograd: *there* they barely believe not only in man, but even in God. And that means that, having lost all faith in human and divine justice, the unpunished trampling down of all the higher qualities of the human soul makes the suffering greater and incomparably more intense than the physical torments in the Bolshevist torture chambers. It is because of this that all of us are almost mad, it is because of this that even the more steadfast of us are separated merely by a fine line from despair and suicide. It is hard to preserve life—it is almost happiness to be released from life.

Who knows—perhaps even this, my appeal to you is also madness, by which I have been seized no less than the others: perhaps *you* do not exist at all and I am clutching with my hands only at the phantom of man . . . . No, I do believe in you, but will tell you the bitter truth: all my strength I must gather for this faith, for this misplaced lamentation, the whole futility of which appears so clear to my mind at moments. But no, I still believe in you—act then, man, in such a way that my faith might also become the faith of those unfortunates, who at this very moment are struggling with despair in the inscrutable darkness of

Petrograd, and are already lifting a hand, in order to kill themselves and their children. A human soul is perishing.

My friend, rise and stretch out a hand to us. Every individual Frenchman—I turn to you and call to you. What if your leaders are weak or in error—repair their error, and with your strength increase and reinforce their strength. Even as an infant I learned to love and respect you, Frenchman, and to seek in the history of your life models of chivalry and great-spirited nobility. It is of you that I have learned of liberty, equality and fraternity, and I have lived with them all my life, and wish to die with them. I have wept with you when the German hordes trampled upon your beautiful France, and I know that you will not laugh now at my present tears.

And you, every individual Englishman—I turn to you—save our souls. It was you, who, in your tongue, have created this call, which has become the law on all the seas and compels all the ships to turn their prows towards the perishing ship—you will not allow her to call in vain. When Germany sang out, full-throated, her hatred of you, there was already in her voice the tremor of fear and the consciousness of inevitable disaster: she knew that you are that man whose word is akin to law and that your promise is as good as performance. It is enough to say but one word, man, in order to recognise the Englishman. Rise then, man, and stretch out a hand: human beings are perishing here, women and children.

And you, every individual American—I call to you. You are young and rich, you are broad in spirit and energetic, you desire that the torch of your Freedom shall throw its light on distant Europe also—come then and see, in what agony we are, in what inhuman servitude our body and spirit are struggling. If you would but see, I assure you, you would be terrified and you would curse those deceivers and liars who have represented this most evil tyranny to you as a break on the part of the whole Russian people for liberty.

And you, every individual Italian, and you, Japanese, Swede, Hindu, and whoever else it might be: there are noble men among all nations, and I call to every man—every one individually. For the time has come when not for a piece of land, not for mastery and money, but for *man*, for his victory over the wild beast, the men of the whole earth must struggle. Please understand, that it is not *Revolution*, that which is happening in Russia, that which has already begun in Germany and going farther—it is Chaos and Darkness, evoked by the war from its dark cellars and armed by the same war for the destruction of the world.

Let your indecisive Governments give arms and money—you, men, give yourselves, your strength, courage and nobility. Let him who is tired rest, let the faint-hearted one retire to his warm hole, let him sleep who can sleep in such a terrible night, but you, who are strong and are not tired, in whom beats a courageous heart—you go to help the people who are perishing in Russia.

Organise yourselves.

Only a strongly organised, intelligent force is capable of struggling with the boundless Chaos, with the formless, spreading, all-permeating Mutiny. Fire is not to be quenched with fire, and every armed, but not firmly organised, unintelligent crowd, going forth to fight against the mutiny, would itself fall victim to the mutiny and only intensify the flames. Strongly question yourselves, go only with the clear consciousness of your high purpose, otherwise you yourselves will perish on the way. Not drunkards must be sent to guard wine cellars, not the blind are to be entrusted with the watch of light-house signals.

Organise yourselves.

Form battalions and armies. I believe that in this you will have the assistance of your Governments, whose indecision would vanish before your noble will. Small, insufficient and solitary forces, such as are fighting the Bolsheviks, only cause the lengthening of the struggle and the needless shedding of human blood.

Bare Reason has no power over them: that means Socrates against the machine gun. They recognise only force, and they are capable of submitting only to force. Every weakness, if but the weakness of an infant or a woman, only strengthens them; blood feeds their passions and gaiety. But against an organised and firm force they will fall quietly—without firing a shot, without that opposition which murder and blood inevitably arouse in them. They will simply cease to exist, they will fade away, as darkness before light—who has ever killed darkness? There shall be no need of killing it—and this great happiness you will achieve by *force*. Organise yourselves.

My last call is to you, journalist, whosoever you may be, an Englishman, an American, or a Frenchman: support my prayer for perishing human beings. I know: hundreds of millions of money are being spent in buying the Press, thousands of Presses are fabricating and throwing out lies, thousands of liars are shouting, clamouring, muddying the water, peopling the world with monstrous phantoms and masks, among which the living human face becomes lost. The air itself has been bought and is full of lies: this false wireless, which, with its devilish circles, is entangling every newspaper office, this news of the night, which importunately knocks on the door, creeps into one's ears, and muddles one's conscience. But I know another thing: that just as there are human beings among the bipeds, so there are also human beings among journalists, those, to whom long since has been attributed the name of the Knights of the Holy Ghost, those who write not with ink, but with their nerves and their blood—it is to them that I turn . . . to each one individually, each one individually. Help! You know in what danger is *man*—help!

But quickly. Quickly.

What else shall I say to you, my friend? Quickly—come quickly.

Leonid Andreiev.

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