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PREFACE

The quantity and special interest of the papers relating to Russia in the revolutionary period have made it appear convenient and proper to collect them in a special series of volumes, as has been done with the papers relating to the World War. Those for the years 1917–18 have been grouped in three volumes, each separately indexed, according to the following topical scheme.

Volume I, "Political Affairs and Diplomatic Relations," deals with the transformations of the central government, its relations with foreign governments, and the attitude of the United States and other governments toward the successive régimes and their policies. Documents concerning primarily the discussion of war aims and general peace terms, however, are included in the supplements relating to the World War, as indicated by cross references.

Volume II, "Disintegration and Foreign Intervention," deals with the various regional movements of opposition to the Soviet régime and of national separatism, the military action of the Allied and American governments in different parts of Russia, and their relations with local organizations. Affairs of northern Manchuria, although outside Russian territory, are treated in connection with those of eastern Siberia, from which they are inseparable. On the other hand, Poland, being cut off from all immediate connection with Russia by the Austro-German occupation, is left to be dealt with in the supplements relating to the World War.

Volume III, "Economic Relations," treats principally of financial affairs, commercial relations, and American assistance in the operation of Russian railways, involving necessarily the Chinese Eastern Railway.

Within each topical section the papers are arranged, with few exceptions for evident special reasons, according to the dates under which they were sent; dates of receipt of incoming papers are also given whenever indicated on the original texts. An arrangement placing incoming documents chronologically in the order of their receipt, as followed in the supplements relating to the World War, would have resulted in an unintelligible confusion of events, on account of the varying and often prolonged periods required for the transmission of despatches and even of telegrams. The latter were at times relayed by other diplomatic or consular offices than the one of origin—in some cases through two or three stages—before

reaching Washington. As far as practicable, the headings have been formulated to show the original source and date of each telegram so transmitted, the forwarding offices being indicated in footnotes.

All single dates, not designated old style, are according to the western calendar. Wherever dates in the documents not so designated were according to the old Russian calendar alone, the new-style date has been supplied in addition.

Diversities in translation, or choice, of the Russian terms of the period, which naturally occurred in documents written or translated by different persons, have for the most part been allowed to stand as they appear in the original papers in the files. The Russian term, *Vremennoe Pravitelstvo*, for example, used to designate the régime which succeeded the Imperial Government, is translated indifferently as "Provisional Government" and "Temporary Government." Similarly, *Uchreditelnoe Sobranie* is rendered variously as "Constituent Assembly," "Constitutional Assembly," or "Constitutional Convention." The word *Soviet* is sometimes translated as "Council" and at other times is simply used in its transliterated form; in fact, the single word "Soviet" is often used to mean "Council of Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies" or to designate in general the régime established after November 7, 1917. Other principal variants are as follows:

Bolshevik—Bolshevist—Maximalist
Commissar—Commissaire—Commissioner—Commissary
Commissariat—Commissary
Federated—Federal—Federative
Menshevik—Minimalist
People's—National
Preliminary Parliament—Pre-Parliament—Provisional Council of the Republic—Democratic Council
Socialist-Revolutionist—Social Revolutionist—Social Revolutionary
Supreme government of the northern region—Sovereign government of the northern region

To assist identification, the spelling of Russian proper names has been harmonized, generally according to the system of transliteration now employed in the Department of State. For the names of persons of special prominence, however, preference has been given to forms commonly current, and in certain cases autograph signatures in Latin characters have determined the spelling.

The defectiveness of communications which led to the delays in receipt of documents referred to above also resulted in an unusual amount of garbling of telegrams. Since many passages would be unintelligible if printed as originally decoded, corrections have been made within the limits imposed by care to avoid possible distortions

of the original meaning, and, as far as possible, on the basis of comparison with other published and unpublished documents.

Brackets, [ ], occurring in the text enclose editorial insertions. These are of two main types: (1) words or phrases supplied to fill in omissions or replace obviously garbled passages in telegrams; and (2) suggested corrections following words or phrases which appear to be incorrect. When there is not sufficient evidence to indicate what has been omitted or garbled, or when the words which might be suggested would so seriously affect the sense of the document that supplying them would involve more than an editorial responsibility, notice is taken of defects in the text by the insertion, within brackets, of "omission," "garbled groups," or "*sic*." Insignificant words are corrected or inserted without distinguishing marks.

Parentheses, ( ), occurring in the text are in the documents themselves. Besides their ordinary use for punctuation, these marks were also employed, in the deciphering and decoding of telegrams, to enclose words or phrases suggested by the decoders as possibly the intended readings of garbled groups which yielded unintelligible or no results. When so employed they have been allowed to stand, unless comparison with other documents showed the suggested reading to have been obviously either correct or incorrect. In the latter case the text within parentheses has sometimes been replaced by an editorial insertion within brackets.

Translations as found in the files have been revised and corrected if proved faulty by comparison with texts in the original language or other versions available, but care has been taken to avoid altering in any significant respect important texts that were acted upon or used as sources of information in their existing form.

The general principles governing the compilation and editing of these papers are stated in the preface to *Foreign Relations*, 1914, Supplement, pp. iii–iv.