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COSSACKS' STRUGGLE
FOR
FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE

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APPEAL TO THE WORLD OF FREE NATIONS

Now that the human race is divided in two camps: the world of the free nations and the world of bondage and concentration camps—which exclude each other and are unable to co-exist without coming to a struggle—we are faced with two possibilities only of lasting peace: the peace of freedom—or the peace of Soviet slavery.

To ensure stability to either of them the enemy must be brought—if not to annihilation—then at least to the state of a negligible nonentity.

Ours is not a time of local conflicts, unconcerned with the surrounding parts of this globe. The Universal Great Struggle for the future of this world's nations has started. The outcome of this struggle will decide—and the decision will be of long binding, as no compromise is possible.

Nor was our Cossack Cause, our struggle against Russian bolshevism in the years 1917-1920, a private affair of ours with no consequences for the others. "The others" did not understand it at the time, and this lack of understanding helped our and their mortal enemy to land them in the present situation.

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The time has come for every nation to decide which camp to join. Those who believe they may stay aside from the future struggle are fundamentally mistaken.

Another indisputable truth: the actual immense controversy between the two camps is not to be solved by means of "dialectics".

Those Europeans who still believe—or wish to believe—the actual restless state of affairs to be transitory, are also fundamentally mistaken. Moscow's tasks are of a fixed character; they grant no peace for others, no standstill, no genuine truce. Progress towards the outlined aim is continuous, methodic, undeviating. . .

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Among the nations subjugated by Soviet Russia, conquered but uncomplying, fighting even now for their national liberation, the Cossacks stand in the fore-rank.

They were the first to take up fighting for their freedom against Russian bolshevism, and the first to experience the fiercest impetus of the Red Army's attack. The red occupants continue to inflict to their country the most bloody and cruel blows.

We feel that the price we have paid in our struggle for freedom is high enough to give us the right to address the world at this crucial period, to speak our mind now that the world's fate is at stake.

First of all we wish to be heard.

* * *

The Cossacks tried to speak to other nations during the war of 1917-1920, but they were not listened to.

After the defeat of our armed forces we turned to Europe (1920-1921) and renewed our endeavours at talks with those ruling the world as well as with those who shaped the public and the political opinion by means of the press. We sought help in our struggle and warned Western Europe against the threatening danger—but this time too our efforts proved useless, the West believing itself to be "completely secure" from "the sickness of the backward or the conquered nations" (expressions, used by statesmen who were busy at that time making sunshine in Europe, to define Russian communism).

And behold: in 30 years' time the whole world is in much the same situation the Cossacks were in the years 1917-1918...

In our own interest in the first place, and for the sake of our cause and our struggle, we do not wish you—the remnant of a world once free—to experience the fate of those subjugated by Soviet Russia, of the Cossacks and the so-called Satellite States. There is but one way to avoid it, to ensure to humanity a life free from the constant fear of a Muscovite attack:

Utmost swiftness should be used to block all roads against the progress of bolshevist imperialism. Its power must be shattered leaving no hope for its regeneration in whatever new shape.

Until this is achieved humanity cannot hope for a peaceful life filled with constructive activities.

Until this is achieved humanity will tremble and cower under the threat of unavoidable surrender to a triumphant Russo-Asiatic bolshevism.

* * *

Who is responsible for the world's alarming situation, for the mortal danger we are all faced with?

Let us be frank about it. The responsibility lies in the first place with the former rulers of Europe and America who over-

looked the rising danger at a time when it could easily be overcome—whereas now the free nations have to put at stake even their existence itself.

There was a time when they could have helped the peoples opposing bolshevist aggression by means of comparatively small loans (mainly in armaments) and of moral support. Had that help been given, it would have saved our independence and contributed towards forming a bulwark against Russian imperialism, wiping out its gloomy threat and all-pervading influence which has by now grown to be a world-wide evil.

Now, all of you: the nations who did not choose to submit to Russian rule and to acknowledge the leadership of Moscow—are fated for a mortal struggle. Whether you wish it or not, we are your natural allies. From the innermost of our hearts we wish you to be victorious. But one cannot help reflecting how immense a price you will have to pay for your victory—compared with what it would have been 30 years ago. . .

The indifference and inertia of all the nations during our desperate struggle of 35 years ago protected the infancy of bolshevism then born in Russia. The short-sighted policy of the European and American statesmen was most propitious for its development and growth (so much so that they sometimes seemed to be purposely collaborating in the growth and strengthening of the communist empire).

Even during the 2nd World War the allied policy was more pro-Soviet than necessary thus giving to its "allied-enemy" the chance to emerge out of the war much stronger than it was good for the United States.

The Cossacks who know their enemy thoroughly have been well aware that the 2nd World War was for the Kremlin a stepping-stone to the "last and decisive battle" against the hateful "capitalist world".

Most unfortunately the West did not choose to see that fact. This time also our attempts to warn and to explain were ignored, and, still worse, we, Cossack refugees, were handed over to the bolsheviks. . .

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Six—seven years elapsed—and behold the change! Within this short time the eyes of many politicians and rulers have opened. A considerable part of the world press has gained consciousness of the facts and come to understand the truth. Associations and Committees have sprung, seeking for ways and means to fight the looming danger. Not one of them, as yet, has taken in the problem with all its aspects; still the fact remains that the free world has

become aware of the danger it is threatened with, and has started to prepare its defence.

Is there still time enough to make up for the wasted opportunities? Will the enemy let you complete your preparations? We wish you to be in time. We are deeply interested in your victory in the future fight.

* * *

We do not intend to act as your preceptors. Still—it is obvious that in order to conquer the foe one should know not only the figures of his armaments but also be acquainted with his soul, his mentality, his ways and tactics.

(You are sure to agree that Moscow has very cleverly made use of all the blunders of her "allies" in the past war.)

We are acquainted with our common enemy's character much better than the western nations can be. And though our material strength is meaningless compared with yours—our part in the future struggle should by no means be insignificant.

The next problem is of still greater importance.

The 2nd World War was to a great extent a war of ideologies; the 3rd World War will be a purely ideological warfare between two fundamentally opposed ideologies.

Moscow professes an ideal and a programme—from her point of view universal—for the future of the human race which she intends to force upon all the nations together with her lavish promises for a better, an ideal future.

From our point of view the hope is false, and the idea and programme are not applicable to all those nations which desire to keep their freedom and independence. But a great number of people take the bolsheviks at their word, and build on their programme their own hope for a better future.

This is but natural. Hope is an essential stimulant not for individuals only, but for whole nations.

Communo-bolshevism is a great evil. The antidote must be as powerful.

Great—even if false—ideas, universal—even if unapplicable—programmes must be opposed by as great and as universal ideas and programmes, exciting different hopes.

The enemy states his aims, his way to reach them. Negation, criticism, contradiction are not sufficient in the present situation: the opposed side must have a definite programme. An ideological warfare cannot be won without a positive programme for the future. It must be fought (starting from to-day) with arms at least equal to those of the enemy along the whole front.

An ideal—against an ideal.

*A programme—against a programme.
Hope—against another hope.
A counter-attack in reply to an attack.
And a vital condition: no delay!*

Modern wars—as we saw after the last war—do not end on the battlefield. Consequently, preparing for war one must simultaneously prepare for the peace which ought to follow, with a special view to avoid a relapse into a "cold war", as that would lead into the 4th World War. . .

The free nations of the world are often being told that the communist and the capitalist states can exist side by side.

This theory has been concocted for the period of preparations, and is meant to hold good until the bolsheviks are ready to strike.

Whoever is acquainted with the ultimate ends of Russian bolshevism cannot but be certain that the struggle between the two worlds is unavoidable.

But even for the period of co-existence the balance of moral ideals and the balance of forces are indispensable.

* * *

What is the universal idea-programme to be proclaimed against the idea-programme of Kremlin and its realistic policy?

The first item is: freedom for all the nations now under Soviet-Russian "rule" (i.e. occupation) or else "influence (i.e. the so-called Satellite countries).

To the enthusiasm of convinced communists and to the speculative manœuvring of the Kremlin imperialism—the nationalist enthusiasm of the nations striving to regain their freedom and independence should be opposed. The principle of self-determination proclaimed by President Woodrow Wilson, the principles of the Atlantic Charter, must be brought to life and applied to the now subjugated nations—and among those to the Cossack nation.

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During our fight with the red bolsheviks in 1917-1920 the "Russian white forces" were definitely opposed to the nationalist tendencies of all the nations previously under the Russian rule, particularly to the Cossack movement. This attitude led to our common defeat.

During the long years of life in emigration which followed, the Russian refugees firmly continued the policy of their former "white generals" giving respective bad advice to the Western powers, and thus indirectly helping the bolsheviks.

Those who studied the first years of the Russian revolution and the war of 1917-1920 were bound to notice that the fighting was done with few exceptions not by the Russian nation: the "borderers", peoples dwelling on the border of the former Tzarist empire, attempted defence against the attacks of the Great-Russian "centre". Russia herself ("Great Russia") did not fight bolshevism, she gave her support to the work of Lenin-Trocki-Stalin. A negligible part only of her immense forces joined the camp of active antibolsheviks.

The first Russian emigration of 1917-1919 consisted mainly of refugees, i.e. representatives of the privileged classes who, not accepting Lenin's government, hastened to leave their country so as to avoid active fighting.

This aspect of the Russian emigration has been but slightly changed by the afflux of emigrants after the 2nd World War.

The 2nd World War with its variety of social and national elements created immense difficulties for those nations which did not wish to fight in defence of their Muscovite gaolers.

We should make it clear here that we are not against the Russians—we claim equal rights with the Russians to national freedom and our state's independence.

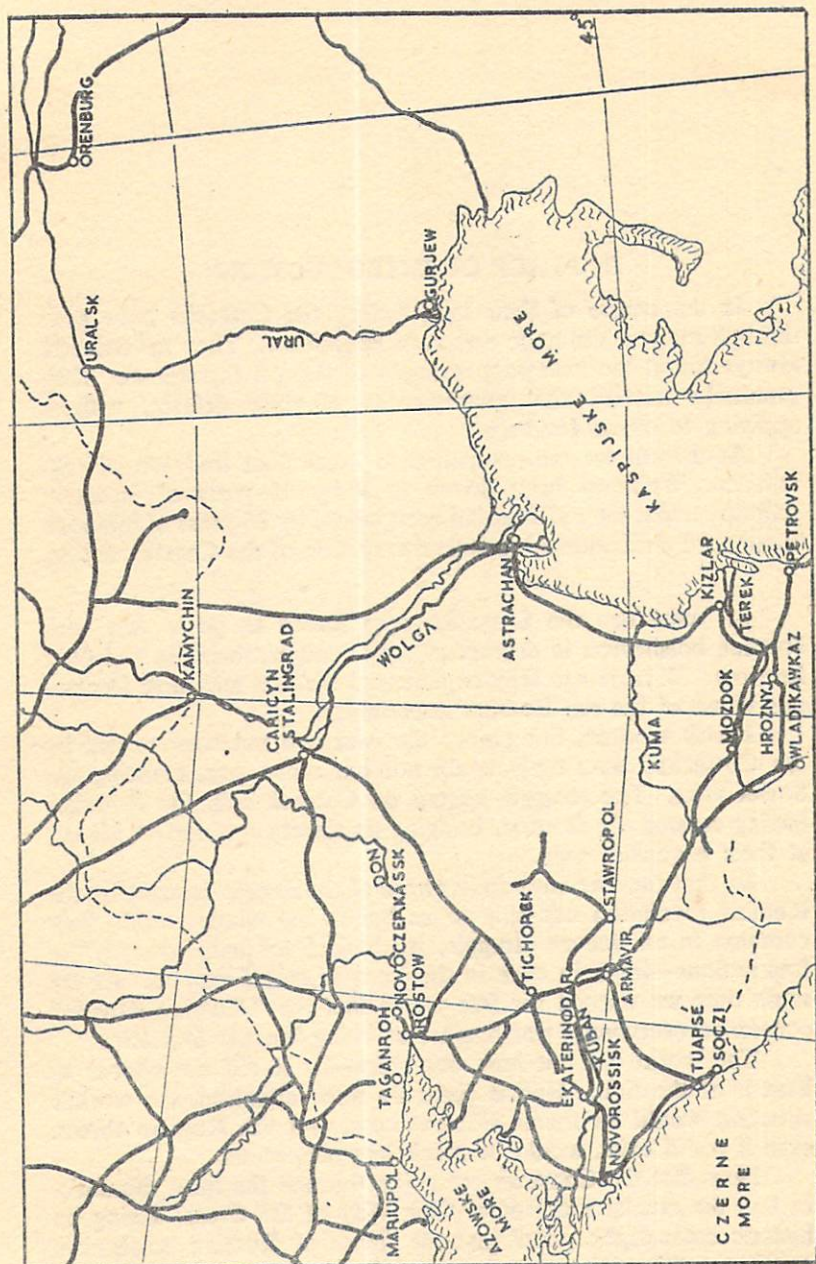
We do not oppose the Russians' participation in the common front against the bolsheviks if they will fight for their Russia; but we deny them the right to represent us and to speak in our name: we wish to speak for ourselves.

We desire you, the free nations of the world, to look at us with your own eyes so that you may understand us and our striving.

We desire you to reckon with all the nations of the present Soviet Union—Russians, Cossacks, Ukrainians and all the others—in the same manner and on the same terms.

Equality of rights should be the keynote.

I. BILYJ.



"Cossackia" — Cossack's Land

IN PLACE OF INTRODUCTION

In the course of their long history the Cossacks have gone through many a dramatic and hard experience. They nevertheless always found the necessary strength to defend themselves. They eventually carried the consequences of their defeats, without applying to others for help.

At present we are compelled to break that tradition of self-reliance. We have been driven to it by 35 years of incessant suffering under the red Russian occupation, by 35 years of inhuman terror, of a deliberate systematic destruction of the Cossack nation.

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35 years ago the Cossacks were forced to go to war with Russian bolshevism in defence of their country, their life and their freedom. 35 years ago they experienced the first and most impetuous blows of the red Russian imperialism.

I wish to stress this point: that war had not been started by the Cossacks; we simply could not but make war, resisting the Soviet yoke. The struggle started on Cossack soil, the Russians having crossed the frontier, bringing us slavery and their "ideas" at their bayonets' ends.

By that time we were fully aware of the danger brought by the Russian revolution not only to us but to the whole world. Succumbing in an uneven struggle, we looked for help towards the free nations—for help even in the form of moral support. At the same time we warned the free world that the "Russian danger" concerned everybody, war against us being but the first step.

The world did not hear our voice—or it did not choose to hear it at the time. Had it given us some attention, the world's situation would be much different now, and the Russian threat, even if it did exist, would be much less portentous.

Now that the Cossacks are going through the most dramatic, in fact the crucial moment of their Way of the Cross, edging on historic catastrophe; now that the threat of Russian bolshevism overhangs this globe as a heavy nightmare, we make one more attempt to address you,

We direct our appeal in the first place to the great American nation whom fate has placed at the head of the world's free nations after their common decision to stand up in defence of their freedom and independence in the way of the red Russian imperialism. They are all conscious by now that the Soviets strive to seize the rule of the world and to change this globe into a great Russian concentration camp.

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The Americans have heard this and that about the Cossacks, but we have grounds to suppose they do not know much about us. Up to now the Cossacks have told the world hardly anything about themselves, and the Russians told mostly lies—to serve their own purposes. Deprived of the possibility to speak freely on their own behalf in tsarist Russia, the Cossacks are equally bound at present, under the bolshevist rule. . .

In the world at large the achievements of Cossacks have often been attributed to others. To mention but two facts that may be of interest to Americans: the "Strait of Behring" between Asia and America should in fact bear the name of the Cossack Dezhnev who discovered it before Behring did. The Cossacks were also the first to discover and explore Alaska, now America's property.

* * *

The present Cossack mass emigration is not the first in history. The size of this work does not allow for an account of our emigrations from tsarist Russia. I shall nevertheless say a few words about one Cossack emigrant whom some Americans may still remember.

Let us recall an episode from the Civil War of 1860-65, when the Missionaries Ridge was seized during the battle of Chiromago.

On 25th November, 1861, the c.i.c. of the Northern Army, General Grant, stood on a hill with some officers of his staff, watching the development of the great battle. Some units of the 14th corps were attacking the Missionaries Ridge.

The c.i.c. of the Southern Army considered his position inaccessible. General Grant also believed the enemy's position could not be seized; accordingly he ordered his forces to occupy one of the ridges and to stop there. To his surprise the leading units of the 14th corps did not stop at the place pointed out to them—instead, they launched a decisive attack.

Turning to General Thomas, the c.i.c. asked him angrily: "Who ordered the troops to proceed uphill?" General Thomas could not tell.

General Grant then addressed sharply General Gordon Granger: "Did you order an attack on the mountains?" "No, I did not," answered General Granger. "They attack without orders."

The battle ended in a victory. The chief hero was Colonel Ivan Turchaninov, commander of the 19th regiment of Illinois Volunteers, 3rd Brigade, 4th Division, 14th Corps.

President Lincoln promoted Colonel Turchaninov to general, and made him commander of the 3rd Brigade.

During the war the Americans called Turchaninov "a fearless, gallant, heroic Cossack." The soldiers of his regiment presented him with a gorgeous sabre. The "Chicago Tribune" of 7th July, 1862, wrote: "No officer in the Northern Army equals him in reason, sense and experience, no other man is so brave and gallant."

Who was this hero?

Ivan V. Turchaninov was a Don-Cossack, a brilliant, highly educated officer.

In 1835, Tsar Nicholas I made severe cuts in the Cossack autonomy which had been preserved as the remnants of their past independence. The Tsar's move, reducing their rights almost to nil, produced among the Cossacks a considerable depression and a general atmosphere of dissatisfaction. Among others, Ivan Turchaninov, then a colonel aged 36, could not fit himself in with the new conditions, and, leaving his country, he went first to England, and then—in 1858—to America.

The Cossack emigrants from their country ruled by bolsheviks take the liberty of reminding you the part played in your country by our compatriot, a refugee from tsarist Russia. On addressing Washington's great nation we think we may summon the name of the Cossack colonel and American general Turchaninov as our introduction.

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No peaceful solution of the Cossack problem is possible, as under Soviet occupation the choice is limited to slavery or annihilation.

We cannot accept slavery—nor do we wish to be annihilated. This is why we turn for help—for moral help first of all—to the free nations.

We have spent our strength in an uneven struggle when we stood alone against the bolsheviks. We now desire to stand along with all the nations who have decided—in case of inevitable necessity—to defend with armed force their freedom and their right to live independently and according to their own free choice.

* * *

THE COSSACKS' COUNTRY

The Territory: its Geographical and Economic Description

Cossackia's territory covers approx. 900 thousand square klm., lying on the 45th north parallel.

It is a compact, continuous territorial whole, adjoining three seas: the Black, the Azof and the Caspian Sea.

In the south it approaches the Caucasian mountains; in the north-east it leans on the southern extremity of the Ural mountains.

In the east Cossackia borders with Turkestan, in the west with the Ukraine. It touches Russia in the north only.

Thus, from the geographical point of view, Cossackia is a natural bridge between Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Middle Asia (Turkestan), and it may become a transit bridge between the basin of the Mediterranean Sea and Siberia (if the gigantic railway-track from Novorossyisk and Chelyabinsk is accomplished).

The great rivers: the Ural, the Volga in her nether flow, the Don, the Kuban, the Terek, the Kuma and the Manich, complete the advantages of a long sea-shore (c-ca 1350 klm.), and open great possibilities for the development of transport. Agriculture and trade which depend on transport would lay the basis for the prosperity of Cossackia.

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Cossackia is situated in the zone of centrifugal culture. The country's spaciousness increases the importance of all economic processes happening there, and supplies vast opportunities of contact with the world's economy.

The greater part of Cossack territory lies in the so-called "steppe-zone".

The slopes of the Northern Caucasus with valuable minerals, numerous sources of water energy, mineral waters and forests, complete the general picture of Cossackia's territory.

The seas open the gateways into the great world for her. The Black Sea (through its main port Novorossyisk) connects her with the Mediterranean which is a gate to the rest of the world. The Caspian Sea leads her to Persia (Iran), Turkestan and the East in general.

Thus Cossackia lies in a zone of inland seas. Beside other advantages this geographical position offers to the country all the profits connected with an extensive mass transit.

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The climate of Cossackia varies according to the position of her different parts. The climatic conditions of Uralsk and Sochi, for instance, are two extremes. This variety of climate concurs in

developing various branches of economy, which in turn leads to a lively internal exchange of goods.

The variety of climatic conditions produces a variegated vegetation.

The attributes of Cossackia's soil are another important factor in her economy. The country disposes of the richest mould in the world—the basis of agriculture—and also, thanks to the structure of the earth's crust within her boundaries, she is rich in minerals.

Nearly all the economic life of Cossackia is based on the exploitation of the vegetable riches. The surface under agricultural cultivation covers over 15 million hectares, and can easily be brought to 20 million hectares. The digging of minerals is as yet backward.

The combination of the four elements of nature: steppes, forests, mountains and seas, offers an opportunity for a many-sided national economy.

Cossackia is rich in corn, in iron ore (and steel), in coal and oil. Possessing those four elements most vital for the world's progress, she lacks one more—cotton.

Two reasons forbid us to discuss at length the figures which would be characteristic of the economic prospects of Cossackia. The first is the narrow limits of this work; the second is the way in which the Soviet government has divided Cossack land in new administrative areas and tied it with neighbouring countries, so as to interlace, entangle and mix the Cossack economy with that of all Soviet Russia. (The Russian bolsheviks are not content with the physical extermination of the Cossacks—they strive by all means to deprive the country of her national traits and to endow her with "a Russian character".) Under the circumstances a painstaking investigation would be necessary in order to trace in the running Soviet statistics figures relative to Cossackia's national economy, and to establish their reality.

We shall therefore limit ourselves to a short survey of the characteristic qualities of Cossackia's economy in the recent past.

Starting with agriculture—in 1913 the wheat crops from the Cosacks' Land were but slightly smaller than the wheat crops of Canada, and amounted to approximately 1/4 of the same in the United States of America. In the world scale Cossackia's place as to wheat crops was the seventh, including Russia in her frontiers of 1914.

The crops of oats in Cossackia were at that time higher than in all the other countries except the United States of America and Germany. They surpassed those of Canada $2\frac{1}{2}$ times.

Alone the Kuban supplied 40% of sunflower oil production in tsarist Russia owing to its enormous plantations.

In general, the produce of corn on Cossack territory in the years 1911-1915 amounted to 14-14% of the yearly crops in the whole of Russia ; and there was a time when "one rain in Kuban" changed the position in the corn market of Chicago.

The rivers and sea-coasts of Cossackia abound in fish. For example: in 1917 the catch of fish amounted in that country to 65% exactly of the catch of fish in European Russia, and in the world scale Cossackia had the 6th place, succeeding to England, Russia, the United States, Japan and Canada.

As to the number of cattle, Cossackia was in the 8th place, surpassing Italy, Spain, Denmark, Belgium and Holland.

For minerals we shall note but oil and coal. For the output of oil (at Grozny and Maykop) Cossackia holds the 5th place in the world, after the United States, Asserbeidjan (Baku), Mexico and the Middle East (Iran, Iraq and the Arabian countries). Coal-beds are disposed along the Don occupying approx. 6000 sq. klms.

The Cossack coal area has been incorporated into the Don Basin, "Donbas", of which it constitutes the third part, containing high-quality anthracite, second to that of China, Indo-China and the United States only.

The abundance of coal in Cossackia prompted the development of metallurgy (heavy industry) to an amount equalling 1/7th of the heavy industry of the whole Russian Empire in the recent past.

POPULATION

The population of Cossackia amounts to approx. 11,800,000, comprising the following nationalities:

Cossacks	...	...	5,730,000
Highlanders	...	...	200,000
Kalmucks	...	...	150,000
Ukrainians	...	...	2,650,000
Tartars	...	...	200,000
Germans	...	...	150,000
Russians	...	...	1,250,000
Other nationalities	...	...	600,000

COSSACKIA'S WAR POTENTIAL

In order to stress the military potential of the Cossacks and to characterize them from that point of view we shall quote some data out of the work "On Russia's Military Effort during the World War of 1914-1917", written for the Carnegie Institute by General N. N. Golovin (former professor at the Imperial Russian Military Academy of the General Staff).

During the first World War (1914-1917) four million Cossacks sent to the front:

166 mounted regiments,
6 divisions,
68 mounted batteries,
30 Cossack battalions,
170 squadrons,

which totalled 310,000 soldiers.

Besides the above numbers, Gen. Golovin gives in his book the qualifying characteristics of the Cossacks, comparing them with the Russians. Taking the general figure of losses to be 100, he makes the following comparison:

		<i>Killed and wounded</i>		<i>War prisoners</i>
Russian units: Infantry	...	65%	...	35%
Grenadiers	...	78%	...	22%
Cavalry	...	79%	...	21%
Rifleman units	...	82%	...	18%
Guards	...	91%	...	9%
Cossack units:	...	94%	...	6%

Those figures speak for themselves; from the point of view of military qualities the Cossacks held the first place in the Russian Empire.

AN OUTLINE OF HISTORY

The past of the Cossacks goes back to the first ages of the Christian era.

The first written historical evidence on Cossacks known to them is of Byzantine Origin, and refers to the 9th century of our era.

Our ancestors accepted the Christian faith from the saints Cyril and Methodius.

For over one thousand years of their history the Cossacks occupied the same territories on which they now live. Their nation was reared between the rivers: Don, Kuban, Terek, Manich, the Lower Volga, Yaik (Ural). Only the Cossacks from beyond the Dnieper rapids had to withdraw from the Dnieper to the Kuban.

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I do not deem it necessary to invite the readers of this work to study the fragments of the Cossacks' early history, which are only now being discovered and investigated by our historians.

I shall mention the proved and uncontroversial facts only.

In 1223 the Cossack ancestors took part in the battle on the river Kalka between the Mongolian Tartars and the South-Russian

princes. The Cossacks supported the Mongolians. Having won the battle, the Mongolians gave to the allied Cossacks some amount of independence in the Golden Horde, and included their units into the Mongolian army. They also gave them religious freedom, as during the first century of their occupation of Eastern Europe the Tartars observed religious tolerance. Thus the Cossacks kept their religious organisation with an archdiocese at Sar or Sarai, otherwise the Don Archdiocese.

When later on the Tartars adopted the Islam, they became intolerant, and their relations with the Cossacks deteriorated markedly.

In the battle between the Tartars and the Prince of Moscow Dimitri in 1380, owing to this growing dissention, the Cossacks stood on the Prince's side. The Tartars lost this battle—but they took their revenge, ruining the Cossacks' land with fire and sword.

Soon afterwards two Tartarian princes—Tohtamish and Tamerlan—marched across the Cossack country, thus completing its ruin.

Many Cossacks "emigrated" to the north, close to the upper course of the Don and its northern affluents, and farther to the wooded parts of the Principality of Riazan. For the next hundred years the Cossack country remained in a state of devastation and depopulation; then it recovered slowly, its wounds healing and the refugees returning from the north.

Towards the end of the XVth century the Cossacks became acutely aware of the presence of Turks on the northern shores of the Black Sea.

In 1517 a Moscow prince conquered the Principality of Riazan and subjugated it to Moscow. Thereupon the Cossacks from Riazan withdrew to the Don area.

Cossackia regained her strength to such an extent that the Cossacks started war with the Turks in defence of their free access to the Black Sea. The fight for Azoff makes a famous page of Cossack history of that time.

The end of C.XV and C.XVI witnessed the full development of the Cossacks' national independence and the beginning of their expansion to the east. Independent Cossack republics were formed on the Don, the Terek, the Volga, the Yaik, and at the same time the Cossacks started their progress towards Siberia.

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The Cossack republics—or states—were independent. Within the boundaries of their territory they had a government based on democratic principles. The social and political life of these states developed from the Cossack historical traditions of liberty, equality

their conqueror (e.g. Great Novgorod, Pskov, Viatka and others). The procedure, oddly enough, went in Russia under the name of "the collecting of Russian land". The method applied consisted in the extermination of a part of the population—those in the first place who could be suspected of organizing an opposition—and in the plundering of all that could be taken to Moscow (a means of enriching the state). Thus the "collecting of Russian land" meant destruction, mass executions, and the material ruin of those spared. No wonder that a part of the remaining population preferred to emigrate from their subjugated land. Many of the emigrants came to Cossackia. After the conquest of the republic of Great Novgorod by prince Ivan 3rd of Moscow in 1471 a great many of Novgorod's citizens sought asylum with the Don Cossacks. The refugees were always accepted, and the Cossacks refused to hand them out to Moscow, even at the risk of an open conflict.

* * *

Notwithstanding the Russian legend on their origin the Cossacks did not consider themselves to be Russians in the racial, biological meaning of the word. They were the Russian tsar's subjects, just as the Georgians and Ukrainians, united through their subjection to the tsar in the Russian Empire. And they had a categorical formula defining their origin: "The Cossacks originate from Cossacks."

* * *

The Cossacks' ancestors were Slavs.

Cossack territory lies on "the great road" from Asia to Europe, trodden by a multitude of nations going from east to west. Whether coming to Europe through "the broad gates" between the southern fringe of the Ural mountains and the Caspian Sea, or through "the narrow gates" between the Caspian Sea and the southern slopes of the Caucasus mountains, the first nation which the Asiatic peoples met on the threshold of Europe were the Cossacks.

It is known from history that such migrations were very numerous. Some peoples moved quickly westwards, others wandered at a slow pace, still others settled on Cossack territory or in its vicinity. Their passage, and the resulting relations with various non-Slav races could not but influence the purity of Cossack blood.

The Cossacks' Slav ancestors were most influenced by their relations with the Turkmen peoples.

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II. Never did the Cossacks regard themselves as Russians; moreover they were conscious of their link with the Russian Tsar—but not with Russia. This explains the fact that upon the tsar's

abdication in 1917 they considered themselves liberated from whatever obligations towards the Russian state. Without consulting the Temporary Government of Russia the Cossacks started to organize their independent national life.

After the fall of the Temporary Government, when the bolsheviks, headed by Lenin and Trotzki, took over the power, the Cossacks declared their rupture with Russia and organized their government in constitutional forms, with atamans and parliaments.

Prior to this development, the Temporary Government of Russia, headed by A. Kerenski, mobilized two Russian military areas to fight the Cossacks and "bring them to obedience". The rev.-socialist Chernov, member of the Temporary Government and minister of agriculture, proclaimed over the whole Russian state: "the Cossacks will have to throng together so as to give room on their land to Russian peasants."

After that declaration neither Kerenski nor Chernov could expect sympathy or popularity among the Cossacks.

Lenin's government, succeeding to that of Kerenski, hastened the mobilisation proclaimed by the latter, and reinforced it with the Russian forces which stood on the Caucasus front against Turkey. Thus the attack of the Russian red armies against the Cossacks started from the north and the south simultaneously.

This time too the Russians were the aggressors: the war began on Cossack territory. The Cossacks fought in reply to aggression, defending their life and their country, and their right to independence. The war, started in 1917, lasted for nearly 3 years. The whole masculine population of the Don, the Kuban and the Terek Cossack states, numbering about 400,000 men, took weapons against the reds.

The Cossacks' peculiar allies in this fight were the "White Russians". Although they constituted but 1/10 of the Cossack armed forces, they were in command of the whole, and they lost their own and the Cossack cause.

Having the same enemy, they pursued different objects; while the White Russians fought for Russia's power, the Cossacks fought for Cossack independence, defending their country from the red conquest as well as from the intrusion of the "Whites".

For both red and white Russians this was a civil war, whilst for the Cossacks it was a war for independence.

The Cossacks gave in this war proofs of splendid heroism and a spirit of sacrifice—alas, fate, men and the numbers of their foes were against them.

The unfavourable circumstances were the following: (1) The lack of arms and munitions. Strange as it may seem, the tsarist

government distrusted the Cossacks to such a degree that no military plants nor warehouses existed on Cossack soil. The Cossacks therefore disposed of such arms only as they gained on their foes. (2) Among the Cossacks—mostly among their officers—there were partisans of the White Russians. They introduced chaos in the national politics of the Cossacks, and confused the aims of the struggle. (3) The Cossacks sought help with the Western Powers: they hoped for moral help and weapons—but their hope was frustrated.

The governments of the West European States refused to talk with the Cossacks. But they listened to the White Russians and purveyed with arms, thus guaranteeing for them the lead in this fight and approving the short-sighted policy of the White Russian generals Wrangel and Denikin who egoistically aimed at the restoration of Russia's power. The Whites were defeated, and the Cossack cause was lost. The Western Powers lost all the arms and funds they had given to the White Russian generals.

The war ended in 1920. Part of the Cossack forces capitulated, part chose emigration.

The losses of the Cossacks in this too uneven struggle were enormous in human lives and in material property. Their country has been occupied by the conquerors who apply there a régime of cruel revenge—a mass extermination of the population.

Those Cossacks who emigrated settled down chiefly in central Europe: in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Germany, Chekoslovakia and France. A small group went to North America and even to Australia.

III. What were the political and national aims of the Cossack people in their struggle with the red Russians, and their dispute (sometimes developing into an open fight) with the white Russians?

In the tsarist Russian empire the Cossacks were grouped in 12 Cossack Armies, corresponding to autonomous provinces. Six of those (the Don Army, Kuban Army, Terek Army, Astrakan Army, Ural Army and Orenburg Army) were settled on Cossack territory. The other six were dispersed over Siberia, up to the Amur and Ussuri in the Far East.

In 1917 each of those armies took the form of an independent republic, with an Ataman-President, a government and a parliament. Considering their future relations with Russia, in 1917 the Cossacks and all the other nations of the former Russian Empire wished for a federal republic, based on equality of rights for all members.

This programme found neither understanding nor sympathy from the Russians. No federalists were to be found among the Russian people, its politicians nor party members.

The non-Russian nations who had been part of the Russian Empire found after the revolution of 1917 that the Russians' attitude to federalism was not only negative but even openly hostile. They experienced from the Russians an active opposition to their national aims. Their national feelings being constantly challenged by the uncompromising Russian chauvinism, those nations could not but swerve to the idea of separatism and independent national states. This applies wholly to the Cossacks.

From the very outburst of the 1917 revolution the Cossacks showed a vehement striving to unity, a desire to organize their national life and to be prepared to meet the forthcoming events in Russia, the substance of which they foresaw clearly, standing united in one Cossack front.

During the years 1917-1918-1919 three attempts were made by the Cossacks to unite into one national and political whole. But while they strove to find a form and a way to unification that would enable them to fight the Russian evil, the Russians, white and red alike, made every effort to impeach their attempts. Three times they succeeded in this negative work. The undaunted Cossacks made a fourth attempt which resulted in a historical declaration.

On 5th January, 1920, in the town Ekaterinodar (now called Krasnodar) the Cossacks' High National Congress was convened, "The High Assembly of the Don, Kuban and Terek".

On 10th January this body accepted a law in the form of a declaration which proclaimed the unification of the Cossack Armies and the forming of an Independent Federal Cossack Republic.

Owing to military defeats this decision could not be made real. But it lives in the Cossacks' national consciousness as an imperative law, waiting to be enacted and realized.

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THE COSSACK NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN EXILE

In their first war with the bolsheviks (1917-1920) the Cossacks were defeated, owing partly to circumstances and partly to their own mistakes. This did not in the least weaken their will to drive the red occupants out of their country and to fight the Russian imperialism which violates their freedom and independence.

In 1927 a group of Cossack patriots gathered in Prague (in Tchecoslovakia), headed by I. Bilyi, and submitted to the Cossack refugees a programme of the Cossack national movement for liberation. They proposed to prepare the political and ideological basis for the future struggle for liberty and a free state.

It was agreed to accept as the starting point of the programme the declaration of the High Assembly of the Don, Kuban and Terek, issued in Ekaterinodar on 10th January, 1920, which proclaimed the union of all Cossacks and the forming of the Cossack Federal Republic.

This initiative met with warm approval among the Cossack emigration, as it obviously expressed its general feelings.

The movement started a fortnightly publication: "Free Cossacks", which was published regularly for 12 years, first in Prague and then in Paris.

In 1935 the Cossack national emigration elected—according to the Cossack tradition—her Ataman in the person of I. Bilyi, thus placing him formally at the head of the Cossack national movement for liberation.

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The Cossacks were too exhausted after the disastrous war of 1917-1920 to attempt another duel with their enemy: they had to wait for a propitious occasion. This seemed at first to have come with the outburst of the 2nd World War of 1939. But it soon became evident that the international situation was too complicated to create a favourable background for the Cossack struggle.

In spite of that, the Soviet régime in the Cossacks' land having become unbearingly cruel, the Cossacks seized the arms at the time of the advance of German troops in 1942 and arose on the side of the Germans against their persecutors. It was an unorganized and elementary uprising, an unconditioned fighting for the sake of liberation from the hateful occupants. It would have taken place in any case, had there come in place of the Germans any other army, or indeed even the devil in person.

But this time too the Cossacks' impetus, lacking in organization and political leadership, suffered defeat.

In the first place the Cossacks' hopes and exaltation were damped by the Germans whose policy concerning the national problem in the "Soviet Union" was dim and inconsequent.

The end of the 2nd World War brought the strongly exaggerated pro-soviet policy of the victors, the handing out to the bolsheviks of tens of thousands of Cossacks (officers mostly), destined obviously for a cruel death in tortures. That was another awful disaster for the Cossack nation.

Nevertheless more than 30,000 Cossacks succeeded in escaping the fate prepared for them in Yalta by way of adopting strange names and nationalities. By far the greater part of this new Cossack emigration found themselves directly after the war on German and Austrian soil, mainly in the American and British zones of occupation.

In 1948 the Cossacks, having obtained the agreement of the U.S.A. Military Government, convened in Munich the National Cossack High Assembly.

The Assembly confirmed once more the declaration of the "High Assembly of the Don, Kuban and Terek" dated 10th January, 1920, concerned with the struggle for liberation and the creating of the Cossack Federal Republic. It also approved and accepted the national programme of liberation, formulated by the Cossack emigration in 1927-1939. In this way the Cossacks confirmed again the continuity and constancy of their national endeavours for liberation, and emphasized those characteristics of their movement by re-electing I. Bilyi to the post of political head of the Cossack national emigration: that of the Cossacks' Ataman-in Chief. (I. Bilyi was member of the High Assembly of the Don, Kuban and Terek in 1920 and one of the authors of the mentioned declaration of 10th January, 1920.)

IV. It would be a mistake to consider the Cossacks' efforts at liberation from the Soviet yoke as a proof of their desire to become self-centred. Even now they employ all means within their scope of action to create a general allied front to fight for the freedom of all the nations now oppressed by Soviet Russia. It is their wish to see those nations develop their strength to its highest degree, and it is their belief that military co-operation in the struggle for freedom will guarantee future peaceful co-operation in the post-war life of those nations.

The Cossacks have repeatedly declared that their programme for the future contains friendly allied relations not only with their direct neighbours but with all the nations which are at present under the Russian rule or influence. No nation is excluded beforehand out of this future "block".

V. At present most Cossacks who organize their life in emigration have left Germany and Austria for other countries. They are in their majority grouped in England, Canada, North America, South America (chiefly Brazil and Argentina), Australia. In Europe they are in Germany, Austria, France and Belgium.

Though settled in various countries, the Cossacks cultivate their national feelings and customs, and they cherish the innermost hope of returning one day to their fatherland.

Scattered as they are all over the world in their individual effort to live through the lean years, they are on the alert for the first favourable moment when they will draw together into a large family to organize their forces and to march to a new struggle for the liberation of their suffering brethren and their fatherland. They will march under their own colours, in their own name, for the realization of their national ideals, for the resurrection of the Cossack Republic.

They will march shoulder to shoulder with all the nations who will fight in the same manner against the same common foe, each of them for his own independent national name and life, all of them befriended on the basis of liberty and equality.

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The Cossack national liberation movement in exile publishes at present the periodical "Kazak", edited in Paris.

