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## The 1905 bloody Sunday massacre: American reactions

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THE 1905 BLOODY SUNDAY MASSACRE:  
AMERICAN REACTIONS

A Paper  
Presented to the  
Department of History  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment for a  
Masters of Arts Degree in History

by  
Judy M. Westrate  
June 6, 1973

7/52/109

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Perhaps the most influential person who affected the completion of this paper is my husband David. To him, I give grateful thanks for the encouragement and persistence he gave me the entire time I was working on the topic. I also offer my thanks to Dr. Paul Beck for giving me the patience required for a long-distance student. Finally I make special thanks to the librarians at the Downers Grove Public Library who ordered books for me from long distances.

## INTRODUCTION

On January 22, 1905 in St. Petersburg, Russia a crowd of workmen gathered at the Nevsky Prospect, in the Palace Square, and on the other avenues of St. Petersburg. This crowd, led by Father George Gapon, was on a mission to talk to the Czar -- their "Little Father" -- because their factory employers had refused to take any action respecting their grievances. They were greatly agitated because four workmen had been dismissed at the great Putiloff factory and because their requests for an eight hour day, higher pay, better sanitary conditions, and the right to elect arbitration committees, had been refused. They had struck; but their employers did not take action. Father Gapon, the founder of the Assembly of Russian Factory Workers of St. Petersburg, had convinced them that they might plead their case before the All-Highest, the Czar. They had a petition addressed to their sovereign; they were asking for protection from being treated like slaves. They had reached a point where "death was to be preferred to a continuation of (their) intolerable sufferings." These workmen, their wives and children bore no arms -- only this plea to their ruler. What did they receive in return? Bullets, swords, and death. Ironically, the Czar was not even in the Winter Palace. A shot fired accidentally from one of the saluting guns near him while he was blessing the waters of the Neva on January 19th, was interpreted by the Czar as an attempt on his life. Consequently,

he had fled St. Petersburg. In the Czar's absence, Grand Duke Vladimir took it upon himself to order the strikers shot down. Hundreds or thousands of persons were reportedly killed.

Why did this riot take place? There were complicated reasons. How did the United States and Americans react to this massacre? They reacted in different ways. The purpose of this paper is to give a brief account of what stimulated the demonstration, explain the role of Father Gapon, discuss the lack of official reaction on the part of the United States government, and finally, analyze the reaction of the American public to this "Bloody Sunday" as seen through selected newspaper and periodical accounts of the time.



## CHAPTER I

### CLIMATE OF THE STRIKE

When discussing the "Bloody Sunday" of 1905 in St. Petersburg, Russia, it is necessary to look into the factors which helped to create a climate in which such an outrage could occur.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, more legal power was concentrated in the hands of the ruler of Russia than in those of any other person on earth. The ruling Czar was Nicholas II; coming to power in 1894, he had unlimited sovereignty over some 135 million subjects living in an area that included over a seventh of the earth's surface.<sup>1</sup> Historians consider Nicholas II to be one of Russia's worst rulers. Though staunchly autocratic, he had little ability or inclination to rule. His reign saw great expansion of industry which led to growth of organized opposition to the government, both among moderate liberals and radical revolutionaries. During his reign, there was also a great increase in peasant and worker unrest.

Liberal opposition groups began to develop in the late nineteenth century. Heading this movement were the zemstov organizations which consisted mainly of professional men such as

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<sup>1</sup>Sidney Harcave, First Blood: The Russian Revolution of 1905 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 69. (Hereinafter referred to as First Blood.)

doctors and teachers. The revolutionary movement, held in check by Alexander III, began to grow in the 1890's. The workers' unrest and dissatisfaction began to increase under the harsh conditions of an intensified industrial program of the late 1890's and early 1900's. Peasant unrest also continued to grow during this time.

The appeal of Marxism began to make headway in Russia in the 1890's, especially among university students, as Russia became more industrialized. Various kinds of Marxism arose during this period. The Legal Marxism group followed the lead of the German Marxist-Revisionist, Bernstein. He asserted that the violent revolutionary upheaval forecast by Marx would not occur, and that Marxists should concentrate their efforts on encouraging reforms rather than revolution. The Economism group was similar to the Legal Marxists but was more practically oriented. They advocated working in terms of better work conditions, higher wages and worker benefits.

The theories of the Legal Marxists and the program of the Economists were denounced by the politically-minded Marxists led by the founder of the Russian Marxism, Plekhanov, and by Lenin, the future Bolshevik leader. These political Marxists believed their task was to work for revolution, and scorned reform as helpful to the government. A Congress was held at Minsk in 1898 but the participants were arrested. A second Congress was held in 1903. At this Congress the Marxists established the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. During the second Congress in 1903 the

Social Democrats split into two factions--the Bolsheviks (the majority) and the Mensheviks (the minority). These factions came to be created by the split in the vote on the issue of Party organization. Lenin's group outnumbered the group led by Martov and thus Lenin named his group the Bolsheviks. At times, the Mensheviks outnumbered the Bolsheviks--despite the names.

The Mensheviks differed from the Bolsheviks in a number of ways. They felt all sympathizers should be admitted to their party whereas the Bolsheviks said that only a tightly-knit group of professional revolutionaries could belong. In contrast to a Menshevik view that discussion and leadership of the party should be shared, the Bolsheviks believed that party leadership must be by the elite few whose authority must be absolute and unquestioned. On the one hand Mensheviks envisioned a bourgeois revolution followed by a long bourgeois democracy and then a socialist revolution. On the other hand, the Bolsheviks saw a bourgeois revolution followed by a dictatorship of the peasants and proletariat. Finally, the Mensheviks shunned the peasantry and allied with the middle classes and liberal bourgeoisie to overthrow the autocracy. But the Bolsheviks scorned the liberal and middle-class groups to ally itself solely with the peasantry.

The Socialist Revolutionaries also formed a party in the 1900's. Like the Bolsheviks, they believed the key to revolution lay in the peasantry. They renewed political terror and carried out a number of assassinations of public officials in the early 1900's.

In addition to the rise of political awareness, the 1890's

and 1900's saw serious strikes in the cities which arose out of the total lack of personal freedom in Russia. Sidney Harcave discusses this lack of freedom in his book First Blood:

Extensive authority was delegated to the governors-general, governors, and prefects, each of whom was appointed by the tsar and required to report to the minister of interior. . . . These officials exercised arbitrary power when the tsar, using the authority decreed by the Law on Exceptional Measures, of 1881, placed a city, province, or district under "reinforced protection," which gave its administrator limited emergency power to deal with any condition or situation that he considered a threat to law and order; or under "extraordinary protection," which extended the administrator's emergency power to include the right on his own authority to banish persons from the area, to close newspapers and factories, to arrest and fine individuals, and prohibit any kind of private gathering. By the beginning of 1904, more than half of Russia, including most of her major cities, was under some form of "protection". . . .

Nowhere in Europe were the police as numerous, as venal, or as powerful as those of Russia. Most unrestricted in their authority were the political police. . . .<sup>1</sup>

In addition to dissatisfaction over the total absence of political or personal freedom, and growing concern over poor working conditions, the embarrassment over the war with Japan in the 1900's added to the turmoil of unrest growing in Russia. The initial reverses in the Japanese War produced deep mortification in Russia. The Russian conduct of the war was more humiliating than the Japanese victories. The systematic misrepresentations of the official telegrams only exaggerated the effect of the private news; the Viceroy Alexeyeff was deeply mistrusted. The few good officers showed by comparison the

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<sup>1</sup>Harcave, First Blood, p. 15.

incompetence of the other officers of all ranks. Embezzlement was common, even goods sent to the Red Cross were sold in Moscow. The Petropovlovsk was sunk outside Port Arthur and the disastrous battle of Liaoyang followed close upon it. Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, was hated and was assassinated on July 28, 1904.

After Plehve's death came the appointment of Svyatopolk-Mirsky. At first he was well-received, and a time of relief resulted. Liberators and Zemstov organizations were busy. Too busy, evidently, for a crack-down ensued and repression reigned once again. Meanwhile the reverses in the war continued. Raising recruits and sending off reservists sometimes led to serious disorders. To combat such disorders, meetings were forbidden and officials who took part in them were subjected to special punishment. The Zemstva were not to discuss questions outside their competence; the Press was ordered to write articles intended to calm the populace. Other newspapers suffered from censorship. On January 19, at a religious ceremony in St. Petersburg, an accidental shot from a saluting battery threatened danger to the life of the Emperor, who fled the capital, not to return for more than a year.<sup>1</sup> It was at this point that the workmen actively entered into the protest movement.

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<sup>1</sup>Michael T. Florinsky, Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1961), pp. 346-350. Most of the information in this chapter was gained from this source.

## CHAPTER II

### BLOODY SUNDAY

The revolutionary movement in Russia, held in check during the reign of Alexander III, revived and grew in the 1890's. Liberal opposition grew until serious strikes occurred in the early 1900's. The Russo-Japanese war aroused general hostility toward the regime of Nicholas II and the workingmen of Russia were restless and discontented; the industrial expansion of Russia had created harsh conditions for the working population. Into this atmosphere of unrest and discontent in St. Petersburg walked Father Gapon--a handsome, bearded man, with a rich voice that spell-bound the people. He appealed to the workingman because he stood close to them; he was born a peasant in 1870 and was deeply interested in the conditions of labor, sympathetically affected by the injustices he saw, and sincerely dedicated to their correction. As such he was accepted by the St. Petersburg workers. Because he seemed interested in the people and not revolutionary, Gapon was encouraged by the government to form the Assembly of Russian Factory Workers of St. Petersburg. He opened the union in April of 1904.

Its aims, inter alia, were to affirm 'national consciousness' amongst the workers, develop 'sensible views' regarding their rights and foster amongst the members of the Assembly 'activity facilitating the legal improvements

of the workers' conditions of work and living."<sup>1</sup>

The groups of the society could set up their own tea rooms and stores; they could set up mutual-aid funds, go to concerts and lectures; and even have legally approved chances for discussing their needs and legitimate grievances. These sanctioned assemblages gave the workers opportunity to communicate with different labor groups and the spirit to cry out against injustices. Thus, the growth of the union backfired on the officials as the union ". . . developed into a 'cross between a trade union, a mutual aid society and even an underground revolutionary organization;'. . . ." <sup>2</sup> By the end of 1904 the Assembly had a membership divided into eleven sections with cells in most of the larger factories, including a particularly strong contingent at the Putilov works:

. . . the strength of the Assembly and of its sympathizers exceeded by far that of the political parties. In St. Petersburg at this time, for example, the local Menshevik and Bolshevik committees could muster no more than three hundred members each. This disparity accounts no doubt for the interest that Liberals, Social-Democrats and Socialist-Revolutionaries all took in Gapon's Assembly.<sup>3</sup>

The growth of the society was relatively slow initially, but as the workers became more and more disenchanted and dis-

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<sup>1</sup>Lionel Kochan, Russia in Revolution 1890-1918 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson. 1966), pp. 74-75. (Hereafter referred to as Kochan, Russia in Rev.)

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

gruntled they increasingly joined the Assembly to have the opportunity to air their concerns and complaints. They began to feel that those who ruled Russia were inefficient and corrupt; consequently, there were many strikes and mass demonstrations from 1900-1905 and after. Their main objectives were economic, but local Social-Democratic committees were very active in putting forth political demands.

The workers were not only disgusted and dissatisfied with their employers and their working conditions, they were also disenchanted with the Russo-Japanese war. The news from the front seemed to reinforce the antigovernment propaganda published by the socialists. "The shock of Russia's ignominious defeat in the Japanese war accelerated the pace of the reform and the revolutionary movements which had been gathering strength for a decade, culminating in the violent outbreak known as the revolution of 1905."<sup>1</sup>

This climate of discontent was destined to worsen and eventually build into an outburst. Gapon foresaw that Russian society was undergoing many stresses. He predicted that a crisis would occur if the bureaucracy did not begin to listen to the grievances of the common man. The crisis foreseen by Gapon came at the end of 1904. The agitation among the professional men was beginning to communicate itself to the masses. The initial spark was the dismissal of four Putilov workmen named

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Florinsky, End of the Russian Empire (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), p. 1148. (Hereinafter referred to as Florinsky, End Russian Empire)



Federov, Sergunin, Subbotin, and Ukalov at the end of December. These men were all members of the Assembly with many years of employment in the Putilov factory. Gapon assumed that their membership was the reason for their dismissal. In order to save credibility for the Assembly, Gapon tried to intercede for the dismissed men with the Putilov management, the local factory inspector and the governor-general of St. Petersburg.<sup>1</sup> On behalf of the union and the dismissed men, Gapon demanded two things: reinstatement of the four workers; and removal of foreman Tetyankin whom the workers blamed for their dismissal.

The plant manager Smirnov insisted that there were no grounds for grievances. He maintained that only Sergunin had been dismissed for faulty work and that Subbotin had left of his own accord. Ukalov was to have been dismissed for unauthorized absence but as he had promised to reform, he was still employed; Federov was also still employed. In any case, Smirnov refused to cooperate with Gapon because he stated that the Assembly of St. Petersburg Factory Workers was not authorized to negotiate with him. Rejecting Smirnov's statement, Gapon organized a strike movement at the Putilov works in order to create additional pressure on the management.

He had the faithful following, the ability to contrive and execute, and the self-confidence necessary for the role. Assuredly it was he who prompted the initial move of the Putilovites which led directly to the Assembly's taking on the implicit character of a labor union and to

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<sup>1</sup>George A. Gapon, The Story of My Life (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1905), pp. 142-143. (Hereinafter referred to as Gapon, Story of.)

its transformation into a quasi-revolutionary body.<sup>1</sup>

By January 3, 1905 all the thirteen thousand Putilov workers were on strike. Soon the only occupants of the factory were the two agents of the secret police. Though some historians claim that Gapon was a secret government agent, the fact is that he eschewed his duty as a priest and as an agent of the government when he did not stop the strike. Also, he took leadership of the strike and turned a limited, plant-wide strike with no economic demands into one that not only made economic demands but also provided the impetus for a general strike.

Gapon and the strikers broadened the demands of the workers to include: 1. an eight hour day; 2. increased daily wage from 60 Kopecks to 100 Kopecks for men; 3. increased wage from 40 Kopecks to 75 Kopecks for women; 4. improved sanitary facilities; 5. provision for free medical aid; 6. immediate convocation of a constituent assembly; 7. establishment of personal liberties; 8. an end to the war with Japan; and 9. amnesty for political exiles. As the strike lengthened, the strikers' demands became more extensive: "Let all be free and equal. And to this end let the election of the members to the Constituent Assembly take place in conditions of universal, secret and equal suffrage."<sup>2</sup>

The workers made further political and economic demands: 1. universal and compulsory education; 2. freedom of the press; 3. separation of church and state; 4. replacement of indirect

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<sup>1</sup> Marcave, First Blood, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Kochan, Rev. in Russia, p. 76.

taxation with progressive income tax; 5. equality before the law; 6. transfer of land to the people; and 7. abolition of factory inspectors to end oppression. Pushed to a point of desperation, the strikers felt: "There are only two paths for us; either freedom and happiness, or the grave. Let our life be a sacrifice to agonizing Russia. We will not grudge this sacrifice, we gladly give it."<sup>1</sup>

The strike steadily increased and spread. By the middle of the week of January 3rd some 25,000 workers all over St. Petersburg were on strike--all making practically the same demands as the Putilov workers..

At first the strike aroused little outside concern. The Minister of Interior, Svyatopolk-Mirsky, was seemingly unconcerned. The Minister of Finance, Kakovtsev, who controlled the factory inspection system and received reports of the workers' doings, apparently saw no reason for alarm, but he did report the strike to the Czar. The minister pointed out the illegality of the strike. He did not express any anticipation of serious difficulties in righting matters. Thus informed, the Czar did not react very forcefully:

"A clear, frosty day," the tsar wrote in his diary entry for 8 January. "There was much activity and many reports. . . . went for a long walk. Since yesterday all the factories and shops in St. Petersburg have been on strike. Troops have been brought in from surroundings to strengthen the garrison. The workers have conducted themselves calmly hitherto. Their number is estimated at 120,000. At the head of the workers' union some priest--socialist Gapon. Mirsky came in the evening with a report of the

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<sup>1</sup>Kochan, Russia in Rev., p. 78.

measures taken."<sup>1</sup>

Others of the bureaucracy were slow in recognizing the potential threat of the strike movement as it picked up momentum.

Harcave described the situation:

St. Petersburg Prefect Fullon and the police seemed to be guided by the assurance that Gapon's leadership was to be trusted as the surest means of handling the strikers. They had become convinced that he alone could keep the discontented workers of the Assembly from going over to the revolutionaries. And even after the strike began to spread and it became evident that Gapon was set on his maverick course, ignoring his superiors in both church and government and actually promoting the strike movement, General Fullon held to a laissez-faire policy toward him, fearing that opposition or restraint might drive him to release his followers to the revolutionary camp and thus confront the police with a force they would be unable to handle.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, Gapon had been scurrying back and forth among worker groups encouraging and rousing the strikers. He carried with him the petition which set forth their appeals, encouraging the workers to sign it and present it as a direct appeal to the Czar.<sup>3</sup> The strikers were busy themselves encouraging the other workers to join in the fraternity of strikers. The promotional methods of the strikers were very effective. By January 7, the industrial life of St. Petersburg was almost immobilized. All but 25,000 of the city's 175,000 workers were out. These strikers were becoming convinced that they should appeal to their Czar for justice.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 79

<sup>2</sup> Harcave, First Blood, p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix A.

Gapon and his lieutenants were accomplishing the final touches on the plan to have tens of thousands of St. Petersburg workers and their families participate in a march. The workers felt that the march would make their dream come true; that is, their "Little Father" would accept their humble requests in his all-knowing justice. These simple workers did not fully understand the implications of the requests as presented in Gapon's petition. Harcave points out this naivete on the part of the workers:

That most of the strikers had any clear understanding of the petition that they were preparing to present or that they ever consciously aspired to the political changes requested in it is most doubtful. They were discontented, to be sure, and bound by conditions that promoted desperation, as the rapid spread of the strike showed; but, for the most part, they still shared the average Russian worker's unconcern with political aims and were, in fact, generally antipathetic to political discussions. Their signing the document was, for the majority of them, only a manifestation of faith in their revered leader. . . . However, to say that Gapon was taking advantage of his followers' credulity and loyalty by promoting a liberal program disguised in monarchical terms, assuredly acceptable to them, would be unfair. As far as can be judged, he saw no illogic in the scheme he proposed. He apparently believed sincerely that, . . ., he himself, could use his influence to guide the present Romanov.<sup>1</sup>

By January 7, the officials finally became aware that action was no longer avoidable. The Minister of Interior Svyatopolk-Mirsky and chief of St. Petersburg Prefect Fullon ordered troops. They still did not inform the Czar of any serious trouble; nor did they try to deal with the source of the potential trouble or try to check its development. When Gapon

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<sup>1</sup>Harcave, First Blood, p. 82.

informed the government of the impending march of the workers and their families on January 8, he underlined the peaceful nature of the march and asked that the Czar receive him at the Winter Palace so that he could present the workers' petition. Gapon sent a message stating that:

Say to the emperor that I, together with thousands of people of Russia, am irrevocably resolved to proceed to the Winter palace at 1:0'clock p.m. Sunday, January 22, in order that he may show his faith by deeds and not by manifestos. Let him come as the true emperor to his people to receive our petition. Otherwise the moral bound between the emperor and the people may be broken.<sup>1</sup>

Even then, the Czar was not told of the march nor that his presence had been requested. Instead, Gapon's arrest was ordered by Svyatopolk-Mirsky. Prefect Fullon did not carry out the arrest, fearing a greater turmoil if Gapon were apprehended. Instead the officials prepared to meet an illegal march with force:

After the event, it seemed that the tactics they agreed upon were those that would result in the greatest shedding of blood and therefore, presumably, insure the most lasting intimidation. . . . They made no adequate effort to reach the workers' leaders, to demand that the instructions for march be rescinded, or to check in any other way the anticipated action before it should require forcible restraint.<sup>2</sup>

The workers did not expect any violence. It was unthinkable to them that the Czar would use force against his subjects while they were in the act of presenting a humble petition to him.

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<sup>1</sup>Sunday World Herald, Omaha, Nebraska, January 22, 1905, front page.

<sup>2</sup>Harcave, First Blood, p. 85.

The resulting massacre was therefore all the more shocking.<sup>1</sup>  
"No figures give the precise numbers of killed and wounded.  
There may well have been more than a thousand."<sup>2</sup> Though the  
figures vary, the fact remains that this bloody deed was horrible  
in the eyes of the world.

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<sup>1</sup>The massacre is more completely described in Chapter III.

<sup>2</sup>Kochan, Rev. in Russia. p. 78.

## CHAPTER III.

### FATHER GAPON

When Bloody Sunday is considered in any frame of reference, it is necessary to consider what kind of man Father George Gapon was, what role he played in the massacre, and what effect he had on Americans.

Father Gapon was born in 1870 in a small town called Biliki in the province of Poltava in South Russia.<sup>1</sup> Born of peasant parents, Gapon was nevertheless destined for world-wide notoriety. His parents were encouraged to allow their son George to go to school beyond the normal levels expected of boys who worked as shepherds. After completing the local village school, Gapon was sent by his parents to the Poltava Ecclesiastical Seminary.

During his time at the Poltava Seminary, Gapon tutored priests' children and saw ". . . that there was much Parisaism among them. Not only did they not sacrifice their own comfort for the weal of the people, but they were often positive leeches, . . ." <sup>2</sup> Because

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<sup>1</sup>Lionel Kochan, Russia in Revolution 1890-1918 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1966), p. 72. In the January 25, 1905 issue of the Times magazine on page two, an article claims he was born in 1869. Gapon does not give a date in his autobiography. One would tend to put greater credence in Kochan's date.

<sup>2</sup>Father George A. Gapon, The Story of My Life (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1905), p. 19. (Hereinafter referred to as Story of.)



he was disenchanted with the clergy, Gapon ". . . concluded . . . (he) was unfit for the priesthood."<sup>1</sup> This disenchantment caused him to drop out of the Poltava Seminary. This action caused him to be barred from other universities. He thought that he might become a medical doctor to satisfy his personal need to help people. But before he pursued this new ambition, he met a woman who convinced him that he could do more for the masses by being in the priesthood. In his autobiography he explains:

When I objected that my principles did not coincide with the teachings of the Orthodox Church, she replied that that was no sufficient objection; the main thing was to be true, not to the Orthodox Church, but to Christ, who was a model of sacrifice for Humanity. As to the symbols and ritual of the Church, they were symbols and ritual only.

This convinced me; I determined to become a priest, and she agreed to marry me.<sup>2</sup>

Gapon became a priest and served in Poltava for four years, during which time he tried to get into the Ecclesiastical Academy in St. Petersburg. After much perseverance and frustration, he got a scholarship to the Academy, but was immediately disappointed with the caliber of the instruction. Feeling that all of the teachers were pedagogic, he became disgusted with the system:

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<sup>1</sup>Gapon, Story of, p. 20. The Times article referred to on the page before, says that he was expelled because he was a liberal. At any rate, Gapon did drop out of Poltava Ecclesiastical Seminary.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 23. Gapon does not give his wife's name in his autobiography. Since the book was published in 1905, he may have been protecting her family. Throughout the account, Gapon rarely referred to dates. After being married four years, his wife died leaving him with two children -- a boy and a girl. The children went to his wife's parents after her death. No records which were consulted mentioned what happened to them.

The clever and earnest (students) felt unable to stand the strifling (sic) atmosphere in which the Russian Church is placed, and by such continuous sifting, few, except the ignorant, incapable, or depraved, are left for the Church.<sup>1</sup>

However, his determination to become an ordained priest enabled Gapon to complete the program.

After ordination as a priest, Gapon was assigned to the chaplaincy of the St. Petersburg prison. He also worked for the church which was attached to one of two Orphanages of the Blue Cross in the workmen's quarter. In addition, Gapon taught the Bible in the Olga Poor House (which was under the patronage of the Empress). On his regular rounds, Gapon passed a place called Haven Field. It was an area for "unfortunates" who were outcasts from their society, and for the poor people of St. Petersburg. Gapon felt badly about their unhappy existence but he ". . . had no idea of attempting to assist in the reformation of society."<sup>2</sup> However, the more he learned of the life of the poor people, the more he began to think of how to help them. Consequently, he went to the Prefect of St. Petersburg -- General Kleggells, to ask to be allowed to set up a program to help these outcasts. Gapon's idea was to have labor houses for regeneration of the outcasts. Outcasts would have to choose a colony to enter, where they would have to work. Through work would come their regeneration.

Gapon submitted his idea to the Prefect but it was never presented to the Empress, who was the head of the poor houses.

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<sup>1</sup>Gapon, Story of, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

Though Gapon was not able to help the poor in his first attempt at a formalized program, he did begin to change his viewpoints on how to help them. He became familiar with workmen who had political ideas. He did not at that time think that political change was necessary. He told the workmen that by some industrial organization they might reach better results for their own elevation than by entering into conflict with the Government. However, the more he became aware of how the Government turned a deaf ear to the pleas of the common man, the more convinced he became that some steps needed to be taken for or by the workmen. The workmen showed him that some political action could and should be taken.

It was not a case, . . . , of propoganda among the workmen by an educated person, but rather, on the contrary, the workmen who moved me to a perception of how alone their needs could be satisfied. I began to see what a tremendous influence it might be for the amelioration of the conditions of labor in Russia if this large body of workmen could be combined and taught how to protect their own interests.<sup>1</sup>

During the time he was priest for the church in St. Petersburg, Gapon also formed an opinion which was to be very important in a decision he was to make later while working with the organized workmen. In St. Petersburg he met Princess Elizabeth Norishkin, who had been a nursemaid to Czar Nicholas. She gave Gapon an idealized view of the emperor. She convinced Gapon that Nicholas was a good, kind, honest man, although she did say he was unfortunately, very weak-willed and devoid of any strength of character. From this, Gapon conceived the notion that Nicholas

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<sup>1</sup>Gapon, Story of, p. 77.

was an ideal Czar who had not had an opportunity of showing his real worth. He felt the Czar was the only salvation of the Russian people. Beginning to believe that the day would come when the Czar would be able to rise to any situation, Gapon developed the belief that Nicholas would eventually listen to the voices of his people and would help to create a situation which could make them happy. Obviously, this concept of the Czar affected Gapon's decision to appeal to Nicholas during the strike in January of 1905. Tragically, Gapon's ill-conceived concept of the Czar was very far from accurate.

Meanwhile, during the development of a prejudiced notion of the good-heartedness of Nicholas, Gapon was becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the governmental attempts to help the disadvantaged common man. He openly criticized these attempts and found himself in his second encounter with the police. Anitchkoff tried to get him fired. He renounced Gapon as a revolutionist to the Central Department of the Political Police, but he was cleared by a police official named Mikhailoff who told Gapon that he was in sympathy with him and gave a favorable report to the Metropolitan Chief, Antonius. Mikhailoff also took Gapon to see M. Sergius Vasilivitch Zubatoff, the chief of the political section of the Department of Police.

Zubatoff tried to convince Gapon that his one object in life was to help the working man. Saying that he realized Gapon had this as his aim also, Zubatoff asked Gapon to work with the police to set up a workman's society which could be closely guided and watched by the government. Gapon reacted carefully. He told

Zubatoff that he didn't want to get involved. Slowly Gapon realized what Zubatoff wanted ---to organize the factory workers in an association under the supervision and direction of the Secret Police. Gapon began to see the association as a trap constructed by the police in order to separate the working classes from the intellectuals and thus kill the political movement.

Zubatoff tried to convince Gapon that the workingmen should be organized because they had a Czar who as an autocrat could play the part of the balance of power between the working men and the autocracy. Zubatoff insisted that the Czar had been influenced by men in the upper class who were convincing Nicholas to make policies which were to the benefit of these upper class men. He insisted that the workingmen had an obligation to organize themselves so that they could have enough power to exert an influence on the Emperor and help him to be more impartial and make policies more beneficial to the whole nation.

Zubatoff's implication that the Czar was simply misguided had some effect upon Gapon. However, he felt that a constitutional monarchy would be a better answer to setting up a system whereby the interests of all groups of the nation would be considered. Professing to be a constitutionalist, Zubatoff maintained that the change could not come about very soon. He objected to the students and other intellectuals influencing the workmen. He wanted a man like Gapon to help organize the workmen because Gapon would be much more "impartial." Trying to explain his point to Gapon, Zubatoff said:

The intellectual classes are only agitating for their own political purposes; all they want is to get political power for themselves, using the workmen merely as tools, and we must struggle against this selfishness and this duping of simple people.<sup>1</sup>

Gapon was not convinced that the Revolutionists, including intellectuals and students, worked with ulterior motives. However, he did not argue with Zubatoff: "I did not argue any more for fear of betraying my sympathy with the heroic figures of the Russian Revolutionary Movement, of whose deeds I had heard much from my own workmen."<sup>2</sup> He was also not convinced yet that he should work for Zubatoff because he did not trust the man.

In 1903 Gapon decided that the police were trying to divert the people's attention from political ideas and to kill any growth of a true labor movement. At that time he decided that he could not in good conscience join Zubatoff's movement. Deciding to be actively against Zubatoff's plan, Gapon wrote a report which explained that the plan would demoralize people in the labor movement and he advocated instead a free and independent union similar to those which were found in England. After he sent his report to the police Metropolitan Chief Antonius and to Kleggells, Zubatoff redoubled his efforts to get Gapon's cooperation.

Gapon went to more meetings with Zubatoff because he was curious to see what Zubatoff could do for him. He began to think

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<sup>1</sup>Gapon, Story of, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

that perhaps he could use Zubatoff's cooperation to accomplish his own desires for the working man. Gapon felt that the situation was becoming more miserable for the people under increasingly oppressive measures of the Government. Some action needed to be taken to help the people, and gradually Gapon began to think that he could pretend to adhere to Zubatoff's policy while actually working towards his own purpose of setting up a genuine working-class organization.

Although nothing ever came of Gapon's idea, this incident is important in that it explains why Gapon ever cooperated with the police against the people. However, it is the opinion of this writer/researcher that Gapon only "used" the police to suit his own ends -- i.e., helping his fellow man.

At first Gapon felt that he should give up the priesthood to help the workmen. Then he decided that he could have a more effective communication channel to the workmen if he remained a priest in St. Petersburg. As a priest, Gapon had the opportunity of coming into close contact with the workmen. Finally Gapon came to a decision. He developed a plan for influencing the Workmen's Association organized by Zubatoff in such a way as to completely paralyze the efforts of the Political Police, to use it as a buttress of the Autocracy, and to direct it into an altogether different channel. He had no faith left in the genuineness of Zubatoff's intentions, and had therefore, decided to use the prefect for his own purposes.

He determined to organize the workers for mutual help under the protection of the authorities. But, at the same time he

would set up secret societies of hand-picked workmen to educate as "missionaries" to convert the whole organization to a true labour movement. He wanted to groom these men so that they could replace the police appointed officials of the union. Realizing that he could and probably would be criticized for his seeming collaboration with the police, Gapon decided to go ahead and set up the labour association.

Gapon must have felt that he might be condemned for cooperating with the police even if to accomplish his own aims, for in his book Story of My Life he seems compelled to say:

The reader who is calmly considering this story in the light of the peaceful and law-abiding feelings of a citizen of a free land may wonder that I should have consented any longer to associate myself, even in so slight a way, with so dubious a venture as this, now that I began to see its real nature. But, filled as I was with disgust, the more I saw of Zubatoff's movement, the peculiar and desperate character of the position of the mass of my poor countrymen still more painfully oppressed me. The very existence of this movement shows how little Russian conditions can be judged by Western standards. In no other civilized country, I suppose, would it be possible to conceive the heads of police, with the patronage and authority of the most powerful Ministers of the Sovereign, deliberately undertaking to organize a labour movement, and even going so far as to organize strikes, solely with the object of "dishing" the natural leaders of the working classes, and so keeping the industrial movement under their own control.

It was clear to me that my countrymen would never be in better conditions of life until they were organized; and it appeared to me -- and this belief has been confirmed by what has since happened -- that, whoever commenced that organization, it would in the end become a genuine labour movement, because the intelligent members of the working classes who had been enlisted would ultimately get the upper hand. That is why, after much anxious thought, I decided that, distasteful as it might be, I ought to take part in this beginning and to endeavor, using Zubatoff as a tool, gradually to get control of the organization into my own hands. By affecting to help



these servants of the Autocracy I should get complete freedom in my relations with the working men, and I should not be under the perpetual necessity of hiding my movements from police spies.<sup>1</sup>

In 1903, Zubatoff died leaving Gapon in a somewhat uncertain position with the workers' association. However, in August of 1903 five members from a secret committee Gapon had set up earlier asked Gapon to take full control of the association. Agreeing readily, Gapon started to organize the men into the "Gathering of Russian Factory Hands of St. Petersburg." He began to condition the workers to think in terms of how real progress could be made toward the improvement of working conditions for the masses.

On April 11, 1904 the opening ceremony of the St. Petersburg Factory Workers' Society took place. Gapon felt that this occurrence gave him a firm base from which to begin his work. He formed circles to study industrial and political questions. To listen to Gapon it sounds as if he was a modern-day union president:

I had often to go to the managers of the factories and workshops to ask for some improvement in the conditions of labour, to smooth over some undesirable conflict, to find work for unemployed hands, or to get some unfortunate man reinstated.<sup>2</sup>

In May of 1904 Gapon attempted to organize the thirteen thousand workers of the Putiloff Works in St. Petersburg. He sent

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<sup>1</sup>Gapon, Story of, p. 102. This long quotation is included to produce the effect of a voice from the past. This passage seems to create the feeling that Gapon is talking directly to the reader.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 117-118

his trained men among the Putiloff workers to stir up interest in an organization for the workman. At the end of May, fifty of the Putiloff workers asked Gapon to organize a society among them similar to the St. Petersburg Factory Workers' Society. Gapon gave up his chairmanship of the parent organization to become chairman of the Putiloff association. By the end of June, 1904 there were seven hundred members of the new branch. In June, the police once again asserted their supposed control over Gapon and thus over the association. They offered Gapon a large sum of money for his society. Suspecting that the police were attempting to implicate him in a collaboration, Gapon took the money and entered it into accounts as an anonymous gift. He took the money so that the police would not doubt his sincerity.

Word of the new workers' societies spread in St. Petersburg. Requests came to open new branches. By November, 1904 eleven new branches had been opened. By the time of the strike in January there were twenty thousand members in the society.<sup>1</sup> One matter which influenced the workmen to join the society was the war in Manchuria with Japan. At first the workmen, though not showing much interest in the Russian campaign, were sympathetic with its cause. As the war progressed, the workers' attitudes changed because of all the abuses, and corruption in the navy and the army. Reports of defeat of the Russian troops caused the workingmen to oppose the war and added to their distrust of the Czar and his advisors. This feeling of the workmen was indicative of the

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<sup>1</sup> Gapon, Story of, p. 130.

growing dissatisfaction among the workmen toward many prevalent conditions in their society.

Included in this growing workmen dissatisfaction was increasing bitterness toward the way they were treated by the management in the factories. Gapon saw the role of his society as a protector of these workmen; he saw the society's role as one of mediator between management and laborers.<sup>1</sup> At the end of December, 1904, four workmen were dismissed from the Putilov factory. Two of the workers had been working at the Putilov factory for twelve years; the other two had been employed for seven years. The society did not feel that there was any justification for the dismissal and Gapon suspected they were released simply because they belonged to his society of workmen.

At first he thought that the men would be reinstated; but when they were not, he decided that the society would have to take action.

Gapon conceived the idea that the workmen should go directly to the Czar. The workers, with their wives and children, would march to the Winter Palace. There they would plead their cause and present their grievances to the highest authority. Gapon's mistaken conception of a mis-guided but well-meaning Czar was the basis of this decision and he convinced the workmen that if they could reach the "Little Father" over the heads of the policemen, officials, foremen, factory inspectors, governors and

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<sup>1</sup>In his book Sidney Harcave expresses great doubt over Gapon's sincerity. He says: "Of the primary sources, the fullest is Gapon's The Story of My Life. . . ." Harcave, First Blood: The Russian Revolution of 1905 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 69. (Hereinafter referred to as First Blood.)

factory-owners, the Czar would right the wrongs against the workmen.

Gapon, aided by some sympathizers, drew up a petition for presentation to the Czar. This document showed the Russian workers' sense of exclusion from society.<sup>1</sup> It complained that the government had been abused by bureaucracy and was headed into ruin and maintained that Russia needed popular representation to save it from catastrophe.

Meanwhile Gapon gave notice of the demonstration to the minister of the interior, Svyatopolk-Mirsky, and to the Czar. He emphasized its peaceful nature and implored the Czar to receive the petition. Gapon did not know that the Czar was at his winter palace with his family. No response came. Instead Gapon's arrest was ordered. Gapon ignored the warrant, spending the days immediately preceding the projected march, haranguing meetings of the workers. He tried to assure them that the Czar would listen to them. However if he did not, Gapon vowed that in such case, ". . . for us there is no tsar." He warned that if there was no reform from the Czar, the state of Russia was at a point where there would inevitably be a revolution that would last for years and involve great bloodshed.

While spending the last night before the march in the French quarter of the Narvskaya Zastava, Gapon and his followers heard the disturbing preparations of the soldiers organizing for the

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A for a copy of the petition.

march. The sinister sound of the soldiers marching with fixed bayonets and the cossacks passing on horseback contrasted to the muted praying of the people preparing for the march. When Gapon heard the soldiers' preparation, he decided that it would be wise to give the demonstration a religious tone and therefore, ordered that icons be carried in the march and religious chants be sung.

The people were not aware of the dangers which awaited them. Large posters had invited the workmen to join the procession. They had hung for two days with no police interference. People began to believe that the police were not going to interfere in any way and thus they prepared to come out in great numbers.

The day of January 22, 1905 dawned cold and crisp in St. Petersburg, Russia. Father George Gapon led the column from Narva Hall in his priest's robes.<sup>1</sup> Behind him came a crowd of about twenty thousand people, men and women, young and old. They all marched bareheaded, ". . . full of the simple intention of seeing their Sovereign in order, as one of them said, 'to cry out their griefs like children on the breast of their father.'"<sup>2</sup>

The plan was that all groups would form columns and begin to march at different times, depending on the distance of their gathering places. The hope was that all groups would meet in the square in front of the Czar's Winter Palace at two o'clock in the afternoon.

These marchers/protestors were met by over twenty thousand

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix B for a picture of Gapon.

<sup>2</sup>Gapon, Story of, p. 179.

Cossacks commanded by eight major-generals, in addition to the police detailed for the day's operation. The crowd was ordered to clear the way.<sup>1</sup> After the warnings, the Cossacks marched on the crowds, slashing as they did so.<sup>2</sup>

The order was then given for the soldiers to open fire. According to one account, the soldiers gave warning shots, but when this action did not disperse the crowd, the men fired into the crowds.

The scene resulting from the execution of that order was to become etched into the minds of the Russian people as the one, above all others of this tragic Sunday, that represented the brutal injustice under which they lived. It was to be described over and over with embellishments and much bitter vindictiveness.<sup>3</sup>

Gapon fell to the ground to avoid being hit. The rest of the crowd first kneeled and then lay flat. When Gapon got up he was appalled by the scene of the massacre. There are various statements of the number killed; Gapon said that there were between six hundred and nine hundred killed, and at least five thousand wounded. Other accounts claim up to four thousand dead.

After the first of the shooting, Gapon's friends forced him to flee from the debacle. Through a series of exciting events, he made his escape to Germany and eventually to England. From London, Gapon prophesied in his autobiography - the primary source

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<sup>1</sup>Harcave, First Blood, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup>There is disagreement between secondary sources and Gapon's report. Appendix C gives Gapon's account from his book.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 92

dealing with Bloody Sunday -- that the results of this "Bloody Sunday" would be a major revolution:

I may say therefore, with certainty, that the struggle is quickly approaching its inevitable climax; that Nicholas II is preparing for himself the fate which befell a certain English King and a certain French King long ago, and that such members of his dynasty as escape unhurt from the throes of the revolution may, on some day in the not very distant future, find themselves exiled upon some distant shore.<sup>1</sup>

Gapon's prophesy became eerily accurate as history recorded.

At the time of the massacre, the world could not foresee coming events, it could only react with horror and shock to the Bloody Sunday massacre. In the United States Gapon was viewed as a saint and many magazines and newspapers carried accounts describing Gapon and his character. The New York Times of January 23, 1905 asserts on the front page that Gapon was the fearless leader of the march and maintains that Gapon master-minded the strike like a genius. In the February 16, 1905 issue of the magazine Independent, Gapon is described as a ". . . remarkable man" and an ". . . excellent ecclesiastic." He is described as a dedicated priest who devoted his life to helping his fellow man. Gapon is lauded as the prime mover of the creation of the "Union of the Workingmen." It was Gapon who led the people who ". . . did not hesitate to sacrifice themselves in the cause of liberty."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gapon, Story of, p. 255.

<sup>2</sup>Vladimer Bienstock, "Father Gapon," Independent, February 16, 1905, pp. 351-353.

The February 4, 1905 issue of the magazine Outlook compares Gapon to Tolstoy:

Father Gapon, like Tolstoy, has an indestructible faith in the moral force of man. . . . Father Gapon calls men to action, in the name of God certainly, but always to action, even through the force of arms. . . . The political teachings of Father Gapon, which are strong and clear in matters of principle and modest as to practical questions, show us that this man has already reached the threshold of conscious Socialism. . . . <sup>1</sup>

By March of 1905, an author is saying of Gapon that the people of Russia regard Gapon as a ". . . deliverer half-divine." The author feels that these people's faith ". . . is ignorance yearning for a great man, making a God of a simple priest."<sup>2</sup>

According to some authorities, Gapon's total role and complete involvement in the Bloody Sunday affair is still not accepted as clearly explained. In spite of the literature about Gapon, some researchers would say that Gapon did work for the police trying to counteract revolutionary influences among the workmen.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the truth of the matter, it cannot be denied that Gapon played an enormously important role in the Revolution of 1905 in Russia. He was very successful in dealing with the workmen. Though his ambition and self-confidence led him on irregular paths and though his actions sometimes seemed ambiguous, there is

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<sup>1</sup>Catherine Breshovsky, "Who Is Father Gapon?" Outlook February 4, 1905, p. 269.

<sup>2</sup>Poole, "Father Gapon," Outlook, March, 1905, p. 685.

<sup>3</sup>Michael Florinsky, End of the Russian Empire, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), p. 1172.



no reliable evidence to prove him dishonest or disloyal to his ideals. "He was a man deeply interested in the conditions of labor, sympathetically affected by the injustices he saw, and sincerely dedicated to their correction."<sup>1</sup> Gapon obviously played a great part in the drama of January 22, 1905 acted out in St. Petersburg, Russia.

After January 22, 1905, Gapon issued a denunciation of the Czar, the bureaucracy and the army. He published his autobiography which defended his actions as being sincere in his attempt to help improve the conditions of the workmen. He was unfrocked by the church in March, 1905. When he fled from Russia, he joined the Socialist Revolutionary Party. After he had returned to Russia, Gapon was forced once again to flee -- this time to Finland. In March of 1906, Gapon was hanged by order of P. Rutenberg of the Socialist Revolutionary Party because the revolutionaries believed that he had collaborated with the police in 1905. Thus ended the controversial career of the main actor in the first act of the Russian Revolution.

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<sup>1</sup> Harcave, First Blood, p. 66.

## CHAPTER IV

### AMERICAN REACTION

The American reaction to Bloody Sunday differed according to the various sectors of its society. The official United States reaction was slight; it can be assumed that the reason lay in the fact that President Theodore Roosevelt was deeply involved in trying to negotiate a peace agreement between Russia and Japan. Theodore Roosevelt had become President upon the death of William McKinley in 1901. According to Foster Dulles, he had scorn for Russia. President Roosevelt was angry because he felt that the Russian diplomats had lied to him while organizing China against American interests. Secretary of State John Hay distrusted the Russians also. In July, 1903 President Roosevelt wrote to Secretary Hay that: "I have not the slightest objection to the Russians knowing that I feel thoroughly aroused and irritated at their conduct in Manchuria;. . . ." <sup>1</sup>

Roosevelt believed Russia's internal affairs were crucial to her future power. He was well-informed about Russia's internal problems:

. . . the weakness of her government, the distress of her people, the revolutionary forces at work there. Spring Rice wrote . . . long, often indiscreet letters from the British

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<sup>1</sup>Foster Rhea Dulles. The Road to Teheran (Princeton: Yale Press), p. 86.

Embassy in St. Petersburg; and later his own ambassador George Meyer in European Russia and a young State Department official, Williard Straight, in Asiatic Russia kept the President informed. . . . 'There is much about the Russians which I admire,' he (Roosevelt) wrote a year before the revolution of 1905, 'and I believe in the future of the Slavs if they can only take the right turn. But I do not believe in the future of any race while it is under a crushing despotism. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

Roosevelt exerted great influence on the U.S. governmental view of Russia and its affairs with that country. As one historian summarizes:

With Theodore Roosevelt's reelection in November 1904, and the steady decline in health and finally the death of John Hay in July 1905, the President became not only his own secretary of state for foreign affairs, but "his own cabinet," if not in fact the Government of the United States personified. Dennett states that Congress had no part in government, that senators were seldom consulted, and that the Cabinet made few contributions.<sup>2</sup>

In 1898-1899 Roosevelt wrote to Spring Rice that the Russians were a serious problem. ". . . if not for our generation, at least to the generations which will succeed us. I look upon them as a people to whom we can give points, and a beating; a people with a great future as we have; but a people with poisons working in it. . . ."<sup>3</sup> By 1904 Russian interests were challenging United States interests in the Far East. In February of 1904, Roosevelt wrote to Spring Rice that he had ". . . a strong liking

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<sup>1</sup>Howard K. Beale, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power (New York: Collier Books, 1968), p. 232. (Hereinafter referred to as T.R. and Rise of America.)

<sup>2</sup>E.H. Zabriskie, American Russian Rivalry in the Far East, 1895-1914 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1946), p. 110. (Hereinafter referred to as American Rivalry Far East.)

<sup>3</sup>Beale, T.R. and Rise of America, p. 231.

and respect for the Russians, but unless they change in some marked way they contain the chance of menace to the higher life of the world. Our people have become suspicious of Russia and I personally share this view."<sup>1</sup> Though Roosevelt felt antagonism toward Russia, circumstances were driving the United States to support them as the aggressive power of Japan was recognized.

In 1905, Roosevelt became increasingly irritated with Russia because they had sent him a letter of protest, charging China and Japan with neutrality violations. China, the letter claimed, had permitted Japan to use a part of the Liaotung Peninsula as a naval base and had furnished Japan with cast iron. Russia, therefore, claimed that she would be obliged to consider the neutrality of China from the standpoint of her own interests. Roosevelt wrote to Secretary Hay that:

It seems to me that if you present Russia's protest about breach of neutrality to China, we would at the same time make a strong protest against Russia herself violating China's neutrality, as reported in this morning's papers. I think we should seize the opportunity when the wolf invites outside interference against the lamb to call the wolf's attention sharply to his own misdeeds. It may possibly have a healthy affect in restraining him from a course of conduct that will cause us trouble hereafter.<sup>2</sup>

John Hay, however, sent a letter simply expressing the hope that neither belligerent would breach neutrality.

When the letters of Theodore Roosevelt from 1903-1905 are examined, it is found that he does not mention the Bloody Sunday

<sup>1</sup>Beale, T.R. and Rise of America, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup>Etting E. Morison, The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 1102. A letter of January 16, 1905 to John Jay. (Hereinafter referred to as Letters of T.R.)

massacre of January 22, 1905. Rather, he was very busy distrusting the Japanese and the Russians while trying at the same time to settle their dispute. Holding no respect for the Russian Czar, he wrote: "Personally, I greatly admire the Russian people; but I think the Russian government represents all that is worst, most insincere and unscrupulous, and most reactionary. . ."<sup>1</sup>

One reads in his letters that Theodore Roosevelt was concerned about the Russian loss of Port Arthur to the Japanese. Since this military incident took place prior to Bloody Sunday perhaps it took precedence over any domestic unrest in Russia. The naval defeat seems merely to have made Roosevelt aware of the United States need for a more competent navy.

Though Roosevelt does not write directly of the Bloody Sunday, it might be assumed that such unspeakable actions on the part of the Russian autocracy did not pass unnoticed. Writing to George Otto Trevelyan on March 9, 1905, Roosevelt stated:

Meanwhile, when I realize most keenly the difficulties inherent under a free representative government in dealing with foreign questions, it is rather a comfort to feel that Russia, where freedom has been completely sacrificed, where the darkest and most reactionary tyranny reigns, has as yet been unable to do well in the exercise of these functions. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Roosevelt's disgust over Nicholas's tyranny seems to have given him reluctance to settle the Russo/Japanese problem as he says: "I wish the Japanese and Russians could settle it (the war) between themselves, and I should be delighted to have anyone except myself

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<sup>1</sup>Morison, Letters of T.R., p. 1115. A letter of February 6, 1905 to George Von Lengerke Meyer.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 1132. A letter of March 9, 1905 to Goerge Otto Trevelyan.

give them a jog to settle it."<sup>1</sup> Later he expressed to John Jay his growing contempt for Czar Nicholas:

Did you ever know anything more pitiable than the condition of the Russian despotism in this year of disgrace? The Czar is a preposterous [sic] little creature as the absolute autocrat of 150,000,000 people. He has been unable to make war and now he is unable to make peace.<sup>2</sup>

Roosevelt finally seems utterly disgusted with the Russians of whom he wrote to Henry Cabot Lodge:

Of course if the Russians go on as they have gone ever since I have been President. . . they are hopeless creatures with whom to deal. They are utterly insincere and treacherous; they have no conception of truth, no willingness to look facts in the face, no regard for others of any sort or kind, no knowledge of their own strength or weakness, and they are helplessly unable to meet emergencies.<sup>3</sup>

Whether or not the Russians were helpless to meet emergencies, the American government did not react officially to the Bloody Sunday occurrence. In the Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States for 1905, only one mention of the Bloody Sunday is found. The American ambassador Robert S. McCormick wrote to the Secretary of State that the disturbance of the people of St. Petersburg was meant to be peaceful.

The ambassador does not know what warning was given, but an eye-witness told him that an order to fire upon the crowd in the park was given. The crowd was partly composed of women and children, and he said some 60 persons were killed and wounded. At other points in the streets leading to the palace many were cut down by the Cossacks. A large number

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<sup>1</sup>Morison, Letters of T.R., p. 1150. A letter of March 30, 1905 to John Jay.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 1158. A letter of April 2, 1905 to John Jay.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 1125. A letter of June 5, 1905 to Henry Cabot Lodge.

is reported killed and wounded in the manufacturing district, but there is no reliable information as to the actual numbers.<sup>1</sup>

If anything, the report to the Secretary seemed somewhat slanted toward the Russian government's side of the issue:

A reliable eyewitness reported to him (McCormick) that officers appealed to the crowd to disperse, calling attention to the posters displayed everywhere warning the public to keep off the streets and that their lives were in danger if they remained; no notice seems to have been paid to this warning. The crowd shoved the officers about and in some instances attacked them and tore their insignia from their uniforms and inflicted severe wounds with clubs. Quiet now prevails in the center of the city, which is cut off from the manufacturing districts by the troops.<sup>2</sup>

Ambassador McCormick's source seemed to be on the side of the "establishment" as his information reflected the employers' views.

The report continued:

A large amount of socialistic literature was circulated among the workmen, and a petition which was sent to His Majesty by them was not written by a Russian workman, but a German socialist, as a large employer of labor informed him. A deep-seated discontent exists among the working class throughout the large towns, and yesterday's happenings will probably increase the antigovernment feeling and discontent with the present unhappy conditions.<sup>3</sup>

Further developments seemed to convince McCormick that the socialists were involved in the strike:

There can be no doubt that for some time a socialist group has been at work among the operatives in St. Petersburg, as well as other manufacturing towns and cities of Russia. In spite of all precautions taken by the censorship great quantities of

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<sup>1</sup>Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1905 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), p. 762. (Hereinafter referred to as Papers Foreign Relations of U.S. 1905).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

socialistic literature have been sent across the border and widely distributed from St. Petersburg to Odessa in every town of any manufacturing importance. This has been going on for some years and the war and its accompanying conditions have been such as to bring this propaganda to its full fruition.<sup>1</sup>

Research has revealed that McCormick made the only direct mention to the specific day of the Bloody Sunday massacre:

As far as I can hear, the authorities have the situation now in hand and no more serious outbreaks are looked for except in Moscow, where to-day was fixed as a time for demonstrations similar to those in St. Petersburg on Sunday. . . .

It is exceedingly difficult to obtain any information on what is transpiring outside of St. Petersburg, even in its suburbs, and therefore nothing available here upon which to form an intelligent opinion as to how widespread is the feeling of discontent and unrest and how far-reaching its consequences may be.<sup>2</sup>

There does not seem to be any other official United States mention of Bloody Sunday. The next comment about Russia in the Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1905 came on February 17, 1905. This was a mention of the assassination of the Grand Duke Sergius. To this type of incident, the President could react. Secretary Hay instructed McCormick to convey condolences on the Duke's death and the abhorrence of the act felt by the President and the Government of the United States. Perhaps neither the United States Government nor its President could afford to react to the despicable actions of the Russian government on Bloody Sunday. How could the United States Government communicate directly with the Russian people to explain to them any shock or horror it felt about the actions of its nobility? On the other hand, neither

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<sup>1</sup>Papers Foreign Relations of U.S. 1905, p. 763.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



could the government officially chastise the Russian Czar for unforgiveable behavior. Because there was really no avenue of protest open to the Government, there was no official American reaction to the Bloody Sunday massacre.

Though the American public could and did react to the massacre, it reacted less to the Russo/Japanese war than the government had:

The public was only mildly aroused (over the war). . . . Editorial writers and public speakers warned that the Muscovite Peril rather than the Yellow Peril was the real menace to Western Civilization. But for all these bellicose hints, the American people did not feel any vital interests of theirs were at stake in Manchuria. They knew too little about it; it was too far away.<sup>1</sup>

The shock of the massacre of Bloody Sunday, however, did hit the Americans closer to home. "'The Bloody Sunday' produced a tremendous impression at home and abroad."<sup>2</sup>

Selected American newspapers were found to be full of horrified reaction to the massacre. For example, the New York Times magazine of January 23, 1905 asserts:

The sympathy of the middle classes is with the workmen. Comment on the action of the troops and authorities is very bitter, and sarcastic remarks are made that officers are braver against the defenseless public than against the Japanese, and that "ammunition may be scarce in the Far East, but is too plentiful here."<sup>3</sup>

This same issue of the New York Times had front page headlines which

<sup>1</sup>Dulles, The Road to Teheran, p. 86. The same sentiment is expressed in Zabriskie's American Rivalry Far East, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Florinsky, End of the Russian Empire, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), p. 1172. The same sentiment is expressed in Thomas A. Bailey's, America Faces Russia: Russian-American Relations from Early Times to Our Day, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1950), p. 206.

<sup>3</sup>"Day of Terror in Czar's Capital," New York Times, January 23, 1905, p. 1.

blazed with indignation: DAY OF TERROR IN CZAR'S CAPITAL;  
 TROOPS SLAY WOMEN AND CHILDREN WITH MEN; WORKMEN FORCE GUARDS TO  
 FIRE TO STOP THEM; BARRICADE IN THE STREETS. The issue was full  
 of articles about the massacre claiming that: "This has been a  
 day of unspeakable horror in St. Petersburg."<sup>1</sup> A front page  
 article described in great detail the scene of the incident and  
 reported in full as much information as was known about the incident  
 at that time. The article included an eye-witness report of an  
 Associated Press correspondent who was at the scene. He described  
 a military camp atmosphere; he also discussed the presentation of  
 the workmen's plea to the Czar. He described the scene of the  
 march. He explained that at 1:30 p.m. on January 22, 1905, an order  
 had come for the crowd to disperse. When no movement was made,  
 an order was issued to fire. After the smoke raised, the correspondent  
 saw mangled corpses of persons of all ages and both sexes lying  
 on the ground. He described a gory scene: "Great splashes and  
 streams of blood stained the snow."<sup>2</sup> The writer continued to  
 describe the struggle as: "A condition almost bordering on civil  
 war. . . . Russia will have a constitution or Emperor Nicholas  
 will lose his head."<sup>3</sup>

In that same January 23rd issue of the New York Times, the  
 newspaper reported on a speech by Justice William J. Gaynor of

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<sup>1</sup>"Day of Terror in Czar's Capital," New York Times, January 23, 1905  
 p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

the Supreme Court who said that:

. . . the Czar was the tool and victim of a corrupt and avaricious church and aristocracy, and that if the down-trodden people of Russia did not end this rule the combined civilizations of the world would have to interpose. . . . (the movement is) by far the most important event in the foreign politics of our time, and deserves every attention on the part of distant observers.<sup>1</sup>

Another New York Times article which contained comments from Europe described how ". . . the 'Little Father' has become the murderer of the people and it remains with him to save the country from disaster. Even at the eleventh hour he may do so, but only by recognizing that autocracy has gone forever."<sup>2</sup> The New York Times continued to report on the Russian turmoil through the week. It reported the public's eagerness for news of the Russian problem. Furthermore, it speculated on the character of Father Gapon. Not much was known about Gapon, but one writer supported the priest's actions: "I have never heard of Father Gapon, but I know now that he must be God's own man, since he took no weapon and met the Cossacks with nothing but a cross raised aloft."<sup>3</sup> On January 24th, the newspaper was still using headlines such as: TROOPS OVERAWE ST. PETERSBURG; MOSCOW WORKERS TAKE UP STRIKE; THREAT OF MORE BLOOD-SHED IN ANCIENT CAPITAL; and RUSSIAN AUTHORITIES BEWILDERED BY SITUATION.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Day of Terror in Czar's Capital," New York Times, January 23, 1905, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Europe Apprehensive of Russian Revolution." New York Times, January 23, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>"Who Is Father Gapon?" New York Times, January 23, 1905, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Headlines, New York Times, January 24, 1905, p. 1.

In its January 25th issue the New York Times contained five articles on the Russian situation ranging from a description of the massacre, to an article which described Father Gapon's role and his life. By January 26, 27, and 28, the Times was beginning to report how the news of the massacre had spread over Russia and of the action that was being taken as a result of it. It reported that the Czar promised to help the workmen and that some measure of self-government might occur as a result of the wide-spread strike that had been ignited by Bloody Sunday.

Another periodical, a magazine called The Independent, reacted to the Bloody Sunday by writing that: "The recent eruptions in St. Petersburg and other centers of population in Russia and their repression by methods so ruthless and bloody as to shock the conscience of the whole civilized world have focused attention upon the condition of the workers in Russian cities."<sup>1</sup> The Independent writers looked upon this incident as the beginning of a great social and political upheaval:

The slaughter of unarmed men, women and children by order of the Czar, for no other crime than that of peaceably assembling for the purpose of submitting to him a petition, has at last opened the eyes of the world to the fact that the Russian Government is an incorrigible Asiatic despotism. . . . It is universally conceded that without freedom of speech, without a free press, without the right of assembly, without the right of petition, nothing short of a Revolution can rid the Russian people of brute force, typified by autocracy. . . . It was not until a few hundred despairing workmen erected barricades in the streets of St. Petersburg that the newspaper

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<sup>1</sup>"Two Russian Workmen's Stories," The Independent, January 30, 1905, p. 244.

correspondents announced the beginning of the Russian revolution.<sup>1</sup>

The Independent writers expressed the belief that the uprising of Bloody Sunday gave impetus to revolutionary propaganda in Russia as well as casting a fatal blow at the Czar and Czarism.<sup>2</sup> Expressing the sentiment that the strike might have far-reaching effects on Russia, the Independent writers wrote that:

The 22nd of January is a day to be infinitely regretted, both on its own account and for what may follow. . . . the elements that entered on the stage on the 22nd of January last week were . . . serious;. . . . At all events something new has arisen in the deepest depths of the Russian nation--namely, the formation of a class of workmen.<sup>3</sup>

The World's Week magazine reacted to the massacre forcefully. One of its writers maintained that the Russian industrial class has been bled mercilessly by the Russian nobility and bureaucracy causing the peasantry to suffer. He applauded the actions of the St. Petersburg workers. Claiming that the strike was a political one which must have shocked the Czar, the writer speculated:

Great must have been the surprise of His Majesty's Government to find out that Revolutionary Russia is practically the whole Russia. . . all is quiet in St. Petersburg but the massacre will neither be forgotten nor forgiven.<sup>4</sup>

Another periodical called the Atlantic Monthly reported that: "A powerful wave of the people's wrath has risen from un-

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<sup>1</sup>"A Plea for Terrorism," The Independent, February 16, 1905, pp. 349-350.

<sup>2</sup>Anatole Beaulin, "The Situation in Russia," The Independent, February 23, 1905, p. 406.

<sup>3</sup>Alfred Rambaud, "What Is Passing in Russia?" The Independent, March 23, 1905, p. 293.

<sup>4</sup>Vladimir G. Simkhovitch, "Strike in St. Petersburg," World's Week, March, 1905, pp. 5977-5981.

fathomable depths of the people's soul and rolled over all Russia. St. Petersburg found itself before the horrible alternative of slaughter or anarchy."<sup>1</sup> To the American people the slaughter which resulted from the strike on January 22, 1905 was justification for the Russian people to react angrily. The American public condemned the emperor and Russian nobility for allowing such a despicable act to happen. "'All classes condemn the authorities and more particularly the emperor,' reported the United States Consul in Odessa."<sup>2</sup>

One of the American periodicals greatly over-stated the number of dead occurring as a result of the massacre (as compared to later figures on record). In an article of The American Monthly Review of Reviews it was stated that:

An industrial strike of vast proportions developing into political riots which held the Russian capital in a state of seige and resulted in the killing by the military (on January 22) of 2,100 and the wounding of 5,000 of the demonstrators who had gathered before the Winter Palace to present a petition to the Czar, has almost set the entire empire ablaze. . . .<sup>3</sup>

This article, as well as many others, compared the incident to the French Revolution. Another issue of this magazine expressed the idea that Russia was ripe for change. "Russia is on the throes

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Milyoukov, "Present Tendencies of Russian Liberalism," Atlantic Monthly, March 1905, p. 413.

<sup>2</sup>Kochan, Russia in Rev., p. 80.

<sup>3</sup>"Is it a Revolution?" The American Monthly Review of Reviews, February 1905, p. 153.

of a great political and social change."<sup>1</sup>

Newspapers also blazed with reaction to the Bloody Sunday events. The Sunday World Herald of Omaha, Nebraska on January 22, 1905 made the public aware of the planned strike. Headlines read: RUSSIAN RULER MAY BE FACING A REVOLUTION: WORKMEN ARE PREPARING FOR A GREAT DEMONSTRATION AT THE WINTER PALACE THIS AFTERNOON; WARNED TO STAY AWAY, BUT SAY THEY HAVE NO FEARS, AS SOLDIERS SYMPATHIZE WITH THEM. After the massacre, the morning World Herald of Omaha, Nebraska devoted the entire front page of its newspaper to reporting Bloody Sunday. Its headlines read: BLOOD FLOWS IN THE STREET; SUMMARY OF ST. PETERSBURG CRISIS; BOUND TO AVENGE THOSE WHO FELL; and FATHER GAPON LEADS THE HOST. On the 24th the same periodical headlines: ST. PETERSBURG IN A STATE OF SIEGE. It included a political cartoon which cried out against the despotism of the Russian Czar. As the week went by, however, the newspaper turned to more exciting news of the war.<sup>2</sup>

Only one of the magazines and newspapers examined by this writer was at all favorable to the Russian Czar. The Nation defended the Russian government's actions as necessary under the international conditions which Russia faced at that time:

A government at war, with every energy strained to maintain its armaments and its military activity at a distance of a thousand miles, cannot be expected to take chances with the mob at the very seat of authority and depot of munitions.

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<sup>1</sup>E.J. Dillon, "Dawn of a New Era in Russia," The American Monthly Review of Reviews, January 1905, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>Headlines of Omaha World Herald, January 23, 1905, p. 1.

St. Petersburg. . . . , has not yet been declared in a state of siege, but the policing of the city was inevitably military rather than civil the moment the strike reduced the population to idleness and furnished the tinder for a revolutionary conflagration. Would any other government have acted differently in similar circumstances?<sup>1</sup>

Whether this question had any validity or not, it was over-looked in the heat of the emotional times of 1905 and the popular outrage over the Bloody Sunday.

The magazine called Outlook sent a special reporter to St. Petersburg just to report on the aftermath of the massacre. E. J. Poole sailed for Russia on January 28th to report first hand. At first he wrote anonymous articles for fear that he would be deported from Russia; later he identified himself. Poole expressed quite clearly what appeared to be the feelings of many Americans. He talked about the "iron hand" which held the Russian people under an iron rule but expressed the belief that: ". . . a people cannot be killed, though their liberties may be suppressed; nor can the development of a race be permanently arrested. . . ." <sup>2</sup> Poole wrote that:

The autocracy in Russia has shown. . . blindness, and the Czar showed it on Sunday morning of last week when the great opportunity of his life came, and neither he nor apparently anyone around him saw it. On that day the tragedy of the Romanoff dynasty began; for then and there the Czar threw away the enormous capital of affection and trust which had slowly

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<sup>1</sup>"Irrepressible Reform in Russia," Nation, January 26, 1905, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>E. J. Poole, "St. Petersburg is Quiet," Outlook, March 18, 1905. pp. 681-689.



gathered around the throne for many generations--and had become a possession unalienable by its own folly. . . . He has shown himself utterly unable to understand his own people, and when the great critical moment, big with fate, came, he closed the door in its face, met the cry of his people, out of their hearts by a volley of rifle shot. . . . There has been no more dramatic moment in modern history. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Poole continued to send back reports of the continued Russian furor which the Bloody Sunday incident started. He described the gloomy silence in St. Petersburg caused by the martial rule prevalent in the city. People were quiet because there were soldiers everywhere; also thousands more could easily be summoned by telephone. Modern weapons (gatling guns) could be brought into use. The workmen were silent--St. Petersburg was quiet--deadly quiet. Poole talked to some persons to get their reactions. He found that the Russian workmen had lost any small trust they had had in the bureaucrats. Feeling that they were being spied upon and lied about, the people explained that the rulers were totally ridiculous. They exclaimed: "It is pitiable to see rulers so ignorant that after Sunday's struggle they say this was caused by Japanese and English who bribed the workmen to strike against their kind father."<sup>2</sup> As a result of his interviews and observations, Poole concluded that there was evidence to prove to him that the worker's demands were completely legitimate. He believed that the strikers had struck to raise the wages and conditions of the great mass of unskilled laborers and skilled women who were grossly underpaid. He felt

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<sup>1</sup>E. J. Poole, "St. Petersburg is Quiet," Outlook, March 18, 1905, pp. 681-689.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 288.

some people had joined the strike as a protest for self-government. Poole definitely sympathized with the strike and expressed the belief that the Czar had made a grave mistake in the course of action he sanctioned to squelch the strike.

The writers of the Outlook also furthered the idea that Bloody Sunday was the beginning of a revolution in Russia. In describing the massacre they wrote: "In that terrible moment the people saw that there was no 'little father,' only an autocrat; and for the first time was heard in Russia the ominous cry, 'Down with the Czar!'. . . a revolution has begun."<sup>1</sup> One Outlook writer expressed the belief that the turmoil would not soon end:

But that it will be possible eventually to repress this revolution we do not for a moment believe . . . . The martyred workingmen of St. Petersburg have died for liberty, and martyrs do not die in vain. . . . As we look across the sea to that host of ignorant, bewildered, oppressed, superstitious workingmen, led by the priest in his golden vestments, holding aloft the cross, the rattle of musketry and the shrieks and groans of the wounded die away, and we hear only the silent song of their hearts. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The writers of the Outlook felt that a ". . . duel. . . (was) being fought between the Czar and the Russian people, and it can have but one end. . . the Old Russia has passed away as completely as the France of the Old regime has gone."<sup>3</sup> Outlook writers believed that only a written constitution for Russia could save Russia from Revolution. They expressed a negative view of

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<sup>1</sup>E. J. Poole, "A New Russia," Outlook, February 25, 1905, p. 263.

<sup>2</sup>E. J. Poole, "Is it a Revolution?" Outlook, January 28, 1905, p. 217.

<sup>3</sup>Poole, "A New Russia," p. 472.

the Czar, calling him a weak, false, and cruel ruler.<sup>1</sup>

The American public which reviewed the magazine and newspaper articles during and after the Bloody Sunday event was swayed and influenced by the reports they read. It can be seen that the American public, as interpreted by the news media of the time, did react to the Bloody Sunday massacre. "Editorial writers in the United States continued to extend warm sympathy to the Russian people in their struggle for a free government, . . . ."<sup>2</sup>

In Russia the Bloody Sunday revolution is said to have been the impetus for the long time of struggle which eventually resulted in the Russian Revolution of 1917. Immediately following the massacre, tens of thousands of revolutionary pamphlets were widely spread and read. Strikes spread to other major cities. For most of the two years following the incident the Czar was not safe among his people. In 1906, he still did not dare venture out of his imperial yacht and cruised aimlessly off the coast of Russia. "In the immediate sense Gapon's demonstration failed. Yet after Bloody Sunday, Russia was never the same again. The massacre of an unarmed, hymn-singing crowd undermined the standing of an autocracy to an incalculable degree, not only in Russia but also abroad."<sup>3</sup> The Russia of the Middle Ages had turned into a revolutionary Russia. The events of January 1905 furthered revolutionary ideas among the Russians. The demand for revolutionary literature grew and

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<sup>1</sup>"Russia Needs a Constitution," Outlook, February 25, 1905, p: 695.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas A. Bailey, America Faces Russia: Russian American Relations from Early Times to Our Day (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1950), p. 207.

<sup>3</sup>Kochan, Russia in Rev., pp. 80-81.

as social democracy sent down deep roots, the revolutionary movement gripped wider circles. "Bloody Sunday completed what the Japanese war had begun. . . the major sequel to Bloody Sunday (was) the political activization of the masses. The massacre, superimposed on the ferment already provoked by the war, made political concern a mass phenomenon in Russian society."<sup>1</sup>

There were some attempts of reform made as a result of Bloody Sunday. Before the Russo-Japanese war, the question of universal education had been advanced. But it was not until the revolutionary outburst of 1905-1906 that the question was seriously taken up by the Government; then some progress was made toward improvement in education. Also, it was not until after the revolutionary outbursts and agrarian riots of 1905-1906 that the Russian government started any definite policy for the improvement of peasant land tenure and farming.<sup>2</sup> The efforts were not always concerted, however, as is evident by the eventual revolution and disagreements which erupted twelve years after the incident in January 1905.

The revolution of 1905, . . . , had not taken place until the end of the Russo-Japanese War. Then, the danger from outside having passed, all varieties of revolutionaries were free to put forward their own far-reaching and conflicting programs, with the result that the forces of progress dissipated their strength in conflicts among themselves.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Florinsky, End Russian Empire, pp. 12-13.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>3</sup>Christopher Lasch, The American Liberals and the Russian Revolution, (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. 19.

Though there was some disagreement among those advising reform, positive action was taken in answer to the obvious need for change. The actions taken in January 1905 against the people did encourage a rapid growth of the liberal following in Russia. It was this common point of agreement, extending both to the right of the Liberationists and to their left that, at this time, led workers increasingly to support the Liberationist call for a constituent assembly. Divisions continued to exist, but Russians in greater numbers than ever before were working in a common struggle:

'Liberty and representative government' was their unifying slogan, the Marseillaise their marching song. By the end of January, even the doggedly monarchist and conservative Novoe Vremya was impelled to call for a semsky sobor (an elected assembly).<sup>1</sup>

The American public welcomed the thought of a Duma for the Russian people. They were greatly encouraged by the thought that such a step was a forecast for the future improvement of life in Russia:

. . . , I believe, the coming imperial Duma is about to give free scope for the first time in Russian history. . . . But it really is a beginning, . . . . The Duma once in working order, everything else is sure to follow, and it is upon that conviction that I base my forecast that the new era of internal development which has been inaugurated simultaneously with the Peace of Portsmouth will bring forth changes more beneficent and more marvelous than the most sanguine among us venture to anticipate.<sup>2</sup>

Both the American hopefuls and Russian reformers were disappointed in subsequent events in Russia. Power still remained in the hands of the Czar and what he decided depended on his

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<sup>1</sup>Harcave, First Blood, pp. 116-117.

<sup>2</sup>E.J. Poole, "A Duma for Russia," Outlook, September 30, 1905, pp. 267-271.

interpretation of the causes and consequences of Bloody Sunday and his judgment of the relative importance of the various steps to be taken in the readjustment period. He continued to give priority to the reestablishment and preservation of order; he insisted on absolute power:

It might have occurred to some rulers, in a situation of this kind, that the most direct method of restoring order could be determined by giving immediate attention to some of the current demands of his people. But Russian Tsars were no more accustomed to recognizing impertinent demands for reform than to negotiating with strikers. . . . Nicholas himself, less than a month before Bloody Sunday, had instructed his subjects. . . to mind their own affairs.<sup>1</sup>

Nicholas believed that the disorders had been provoked by liberals and decided that he must reassert his control with firmness so that the revolutionaries would be warned off. "His understanding of the revolutionaries was as fuzzy and distorted as was the opposition's understanding of what went on in his mind."<sup>2</sup> He began his regime of firmness the day after Bloody Sunday by demanding that order be restored using any measures necessary. Within a few days there was no question that the steps taken had been effective and the government was in physical control of the city once again.

Though the insurrection was quieted temporarily in St. Petersburg, the turmoil it had started had only begun. Bloody Sunday was only the first scene in the long drama which was to climax with the Russian Revolution of 1917.

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<sup>1</sup> Harcave, *First Blood*. p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## CONCLUSION

The Bloody Sunday Massacre of January 22, 1905 has been shown to be a relatively small labor strike which spread across Russia and became the "Revolution of 1905." The turmoil of this year foreshadowed the coming tempestuous revolution which resulted in the final overthrow of the Russian autocracy.

Close analysis of the events which led up to the labor march and eventual slaughter, demonstrate the historical coincidence of certain men being the "man of the moment"; of one man being in the right place at the propitious time with ideas appropriate to the needs of the moment or movement. Father George Gapon was the "man of the moment" in the historical drama of Bloody Sunday. The Russian police allowed him to start his labor group. The workmen trusted him and followed his guidance. That his lead turned out to be personal disaster for many of them is historical record. However, there can be no doubt that Gapon was instrumental in helping to arouse the Russian laborer of the early 1900's and encourage him to look for ways to express his outrage and futility over his deplorable working conditions. There can also be no doubt that it was Russia's loss that the ruling class of Russia refused to listen to workmen's and peasants' cries of futility and frustration. The Bloody Sunday protest turned into a dramatic focus on the plight of the common man of 1905 in Russia.

The United States government did not officially react to

the Bloody Sunday slaughter. The present writer has given a possible explanation that due to the illness of Secretary of State Hay, President Theodore Roosevelt acted as his own Secretary of State in most instances. At the time of January 22, 1905, Roosevelt was deeply involved in trying to arbitrate a settlement of the Russo-Japanese War. Developments of an international nature evidently caused Roosevelt to be distracted from any internal domestic affairs of Russia at that time. Thus, no direct mention is made of Roosevelt's reaction to the massacre in any of his letters written during the time period of the incident. Since Roosevelt expressed great disdain and distrust of the Russian autocracy, it might be concluded that Roosevelt would have been personally shocked at such wanton "blood-letting" of innocent citizens. However, as President of the United States, there was no way in which Roosevelt could express any reaction he might have felt. Similarly, there was no media through which the United States government could officially react to Bloody Sunday. Since it was an internal affair, no other government had any right to criticize the ruling class for the way in which it handled its domestic problems. Rather, since the United States, embodied in the person of President Roosevelt, was attempting to settle the Russo-Japanese War, there was great cause and need for much discretion to be taken in regard to any criticism made against either country. Therefore, the incident is recorded in United States documents, but no official action was taken.

Journalists of the United States did react to the shocking Bloody Sunday massacre. The reaction of the newsmen reflected



the reaction of the American public which must have been swayed by the reporters' reactions and whose opinions of the slaughter could have been influenced by the journalistic conclusions which were made. The initial reporting of the incident was typical of any news reporting of such an emotion-packed incident. It described the blood and gore and cruelty of the massacre. Naturally the American public reacted with disbelief, horror, and great sympathy toward the workers' plight. The common man of the United States identified with the underpaid, overworked, and reportedly mal-treated laborer of Russia. Outraged American families abhorred the thought of defenseless women and children being shot down with little warning.

Most Americans saw the Bloody Sunday aftermath as a signal for a revolution which would inevitably result from the breaking of faith such as the Russian ruling class demonstrated during the strike and after the Duma was created as a result of the strike. Independent-minded Americans could understand the laborers' protests and empathize with them. The United States citizen of 1905 could not forgive a government which would so totally ignore or squelch such a protest by using bullets and sabres as its silencers. Such a despotic government deserved to be overthrown by a popular revolution.

It has been shown that the American public did react to the Bloody Sunday massacre--not through any official channels or government pronouncements. They reacted with disbelieving horror as voiced through the magazines and newspapers of the time. The

American people of 1905 reacted as any people of any time would react to the mass murder of innocent citizens who were appealing to a beloved leader; they reacted with an outraged cry against such a dispicable deed.

## APPENDIX A

PETITION OF WORKERS AND  
RESIDENTS OF SAINT PETERSBURG  
FOR SUBMISSION TO NICHOLAS II  
ON JANUARY 9, 1905

We, workers and residents of the city of St. Petersburg, of various ranks and stations, our wives, children, and helpless old parents, have come to Thee, Sire, to seek justice and protection. We have become beggars; we are oppressed and burdened by labor beyond our strength; we are humiliated; we are regarded, not as human beings, but as slaves who must endure their bitter fate in silence. We have endured it, and we are being pushed further and further into the depths of poverty, injustice, and ignorance; we are being so stifled by despotism and arbitrary rule that we cannot breathe. Sire, we have no more strength! Our endurance is at an end. We have reached that awful moment when death is preferable to the continuation of intolerable suffering.

Therefore we stopped work and told our employers that we would not resume work until they complied with our demands. We asked for little. We desire only that which is indispensable to life, without which there is nothing but slavish labor and endless agony. Our first request was that our employers discuss our needs with us, but this they refused to do; they denied that we have a right to speak about our needs, on the grounds that the law does not recognize such a right. They also treated as illegal our other requests: to reduce the working day to eight hours, to establish wage rates in consultation with us and with our consent, to investigate our grievances against lower administrative personnel of the factories, to increase the daily wages for unskilled working men and women to one ruble, to abolish overtime, to administer medical aid carefully and politely, to construct workshops in which it would be possible to work without danger of death from miserable drafts, rain, and snow.

All this seemed illegal to our employers; each of our requests was treated as if it were a crime, and our desire to improve our situation was considered an act of insolence and insult.

Sire, there are many thousands of us here; we have the appearance of human beings but, in fact, neither we nor the rest of the Russian people enjoy a single human right--not even the right to speak, think, assemble, discuss our needs, or take steps to improve our situation.

We have been enslaved, with the help and cooperation of Thy officials. Any one of us who dares to speak up in defense of the interests of the working class and the people is jailed or exiled; it is as if it were a crime to have a good heart or a sympathetic soul. Even to feel for one who is beaten, deprived of his rights, or tortured is a grave crime. The entire people--workers and peasants--are at the mercy of the bureaucratic administration, which consists of men who rob the government and the people, men who not only ignore, but also scorn, the interests of the people. Government by bureaucracy has devastated the country, has involved it in a horrible war, and is leading it further and further into ruin. We, the workers and the people, have no voice at all in determining how the huge sums extracted from us are spent; we are denied the means of participating in the levying of taxes or deciding how they are to be spent. The people have no opportunity of expressing their desires and demands. The workers are denied the opportunity to form unions for the defense of their interests.

Sire! Is this in accordance with God's laws, by the grace of which Thou reignest? And is it not possible for us to live under such laws? Is it better to die--for all of us, the toiling people of all Russia, to die, allowing the capitalists (the exploiters of the working class) and the bureaucrats (who rob the government and plunder the Russian people) to live and enjoy themselves? This is the choice we face, Sire, and this is why we have come to the walls of Thy palace. Here we seek our last chance of salvation. Do not deny Thy people help; lead them out of the depths of injustice, poverty and ignorance; give them the chance to direct their own fate and rid themselves of the unbearable bureaucratic yoke. Tear down the wall between Thyself and Thy people and let them rule together with Thee. Hast Thou not been placed on the throne for the happiness of the people, and has not this happiness been denied to us by the bureaucrats, leaving us only unhappiness and humiliation? Examine our requests dispassionately and carefully; they are not evil in design, but are meant to help both us and Thee. We do not speak from insolence, but from a realization of the need to find a way out of the unbearable situation in which we find ourselves. Russia is too great, its needs too varied and profuse, to be governed by the bureaucrats alone. Popular representation is essential. The people must help themselves and govern themselves. It is only they who know their true needs. Do not refuse their help; accept it; and immediately order the summoning of representatives of the Russian land from all classes and all strata, including representatives of the workers. Capitalists, workers, bureaucrats, priests, doctors, and teachers--let them all, whoever they may be, choose their own representatives. Let all have a free and equal vote; and toward this end, order the election of a constituent assembly on the basis of universal, secret, and equal suffrage.

This is our chief request; in it and on it all else is based; this is the chief and only means of healing our painful wounds; without it, our wounds will fester and bring us to our death.

But one measure alone cannot heal our wounds. Additional ones are indispensable. Directly and frankly as to a father, Sire, we tell Thee, in the name of all of the laboring class of Russia, what they are.

Indispensable are:

I. measures to eliminate the ignorance and disabilities of the Russian people

- 1) the immediate release and return of all those who have suffered for their political and religious convictions, for strikes, and for peasant disorders
- 2) the immediate declaration of freedom and inviolability of person, freedom of speech and the press, freedom of assembly, and freedom of conscience with respect to religion
- 3) universal and compulsory popular (primary) education at the expense of the state
- 4) responsibility of the ministers to the people and the guarantee of legality in administration
- 5) equality of all, without exception, before the law
- 6) separation of church and state

II. measures to eliminate the poverty of the people

- 1) abolition of indirect taxes and their replacement by direct, progressive income taxes
- 2) abolition of redemption dues, (establishment of) cheap credit, and gradual transfer of land to the people
- 3) placement of orders for the Navy in Russia, not abroad
- 4) termination of the war in accord with popular demand

III. measures to eliminate the tyranny of capital over labor

- 1) abolition of the system of factory inspectors
- 2) establishment in the factories and mills of permanent committees elected by the workers, which, together with the administration, will examine all claims of individual workers; no worker to be discharged except by decision of this committee.
- 3) freedom to establish consumers' and producers' (cooperatives) and trade unions--as of now
- 4) the eight-hour working day and regulation of overtime
- 5) freedom of labor to struggle against capital--as of now
- 6) wage regulation--as of now
- 7) participation of working class representatives in the preparation of a bill for government insurance of workers--as of now.

These, Sire, are our chief needs, concerning which we have come to Thee. The liberation of our motherland from slavery and poverty is possible only through the satisfaction of these needs; only thus can she flourish; only thus will it be possible for workers to organize in protection of their interests against high-handed exploitation by the capitalists and the plundering and oppressive governmental bureaucrats. Order these measures and take Thine oath to carry them out. Thou wilt thus make Russia

both happy and famous, and Thy name will be engraved in our hearts and in those of our posterity forever. And if Thou dost not so order and dost not respond to our pleas, we will die here in this square before Thy palace. We have nowhere else to go and no purpose in going. We have only two roads: one leading to freedom and happiness, the other to the grave. . . . Let our lives be a sacrifice for suffering Russia. We offer this sacrifice, not grudgingly, but gladly.<sup>1</sup>

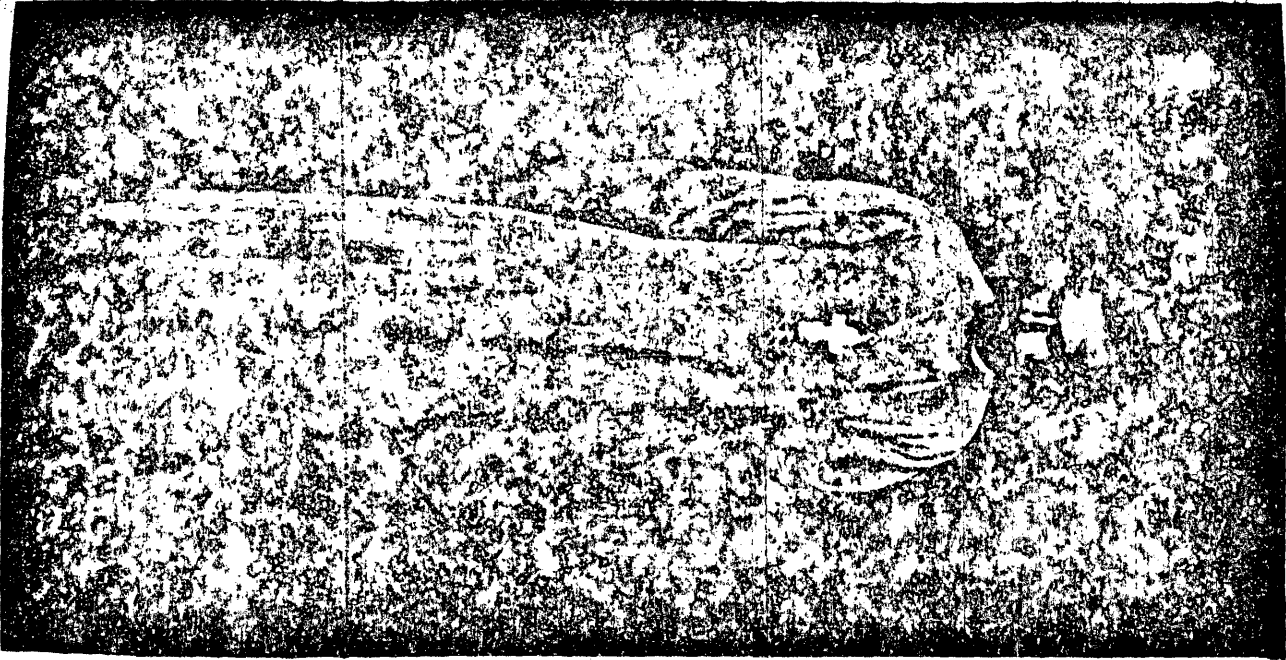
George Gapon, priest

Ivan Vasimov, worker

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<sup>1</sup>Harcave, First Blood, p. 285-289.

APPENDIX B



FATHER GAPON IN PRIEST'S ROBES.



GEORGEY GAPON, WITH AUTOGRAPH.

[To face p. 72.]

## APPENDIX C

GAPON'S DESCRIPTION OF THE  
BLOODY SUNDAY MASSACRE

"Shall we go straight toward the gate, or by a roundabout route to avoid the soldiers?" I was asked. I shouted huskily, "No; straight through them. Courage! Death or Freedom!" and the crowd shouted in return, "Hurrah!" We then started forward, singing in one mighty, solemn voice the Tsar's hymn, "God Save thy People." But when we came to the line, "Save Nicholas Alexandrovitch," some of the men who belonged to the Socialist party were wicked enough to substitute the words, "Save George Appolonovitch," while others simply repeated the words, "Death or Freedom!" The procession moved in a compact mass. In front of me were my two body-guards and a young fellow with dark eyes from whose face his hard labouring life had not yet wiped away the light of youthful gaiety. On the flanks of the crowd ran the children. Some of the women insisted on walking in the first rows, in order, as they said, to protect me with their bodies, and force had to be used to remove them. I may mention also as a significant fact that at the start the police not only did not interfere with the procession, but moved with us with bared heads in recognition of the religious emblems. Two local police-officers marched bareheaded in front of us, preventing any hindrance to our advance, and forcing a few carriages that we met to turn aside in our favour. In this way we approached the Narva Gate, the crowd becoming denser as we progressed, the singing more impressive, and the whole scene more dramatic.

At last we reached within two hundred paces of where the troops stood. Files of infantry barred the road, and in front of them a company of cavalry was drawn up, with their swords shining in the sun. Would they dare to touch us? For a moment we trembled, and then started forward again.

Suddenly the company of Cossacks galloped rapidly towards us with drawn swords. So, then, it was to be a massacre after all! There was no time for consideration, for making plans, or giving orders. "A cry of alarm arose as the Cossacks came down upon us. Our front ranks broke before them, opening to right and left, and down this lane the soldiers drove their horses, striking on both sides. "I saw the swords lifted and falling, the men, women, and children dropping to the earth like logs of wood, while moans, curses, and shouts filled the air." It was impossible to reason in the fever of this crisis. At my order the front rows formed again in the wake of the Cossacks, who penetrated farther and farther,



and at last emerged from the end of the procession.

Again we started forward, with solemn resolution and rising rage in our hearts. The Cossacks turned their horses, and began to cut their way through the crowd from the rear. They passed through the whole column and galloped back towards the Narva Gate, where--the infantry having opened their ranks and let them through--they again formed line. We were still advancing, though the bayonets raised in threatening rows seemed to point symbolically to our fate. A spasm of pity filled my heart, but I felt no fear. Before we started, my dear friend, the workman K\_\_\_\_\_, had said to me, "We are going to give your life as a sacrifice." So be it!

We were not more than thirty yards from the soldiers, being separated from them only by the bridge over the Tarakanovsky Canal, which here marks the border of the city, when suddenly, without any warning and without a moment's delay, was heard the dry crack of many rifle-shots. I was informed later on that a bugle was blown, but we could not hear it above the singing, and even if we had heard it we should not have known what it meant.

Vassilieff, with whom I was walking hand in hand, suddenly left hold of my arm and sank upon the snow. One of the workmen who carried the banners fell also. Immediately one of the two police-officers to whom I had referred shouted out, "What are you doing? How dare you fire upon the portrait of the Tsar?" This, of course, had no effect, and both he and the other officer were shot down--as I learned afterwards, one was killed and the other dangerously wounded.

"I turned rapidly to the crowd and shouted to them to lie down, and I also stretched myself out upon the ground. As we lay thus another volley was fired, and another, and yet another, till it seemed as though the shooting was continuous. The crowd first kneeled and then lay flat down, hiding their heads from the rain of bullets, while the rear rows of the procession began to run away. The smoke of the fire lay before us like a thin cloud, and I felt it stiflingly in my throat." An old man named Lavrentieff, who was carrying the Tsar's portrait, had been one of the first victims. Another old man caught the portrait as it fell from his hands and carried it till he, too, was killed by the next volley. With his last gasp the old man said, "I may die, but I will see the Tsar." One of the banner-carriers had his arm broken by a bullet. "A little boy of ten years, who was carrying a church lantern, fell pierced by a bullet, but still held the lantern tightly and tried to rise again, when another shot struck him down." Both the smiths who had guarded me were killed, as well as all those who were carrying the icons and banners; and all these emblems now lay scattered on the snow. The soldiers were actually shooting into the courtyards of the adjoining houses, where the crowd tried to find refuge, and, as I learned afterwards, bullets even struck persons inside, through the windows.

At last the firing ceased. I stood up with a few others who remained uninjured and looked down at the bodies that lay prostrate around me. I cried to them, "Stand up!" But they lay still. I could not at first understand. Why did they lie there? I

looked again, and saw that their arms were stretched out lifelessly, and I saw the scarlet stain of blood upon the snow. Then I understood. It was horrible. And my Vassilieff lay dead at my feet.

Horror crept into my heart. The thought flashed through my mind, "And this is the work of our Little Father, the Tsar."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gapon, Story of, pp. 180-184.

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