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**Correspondence of the Military
Intelligence Division Relating to
General, Political, Economic, and
Military Conditions in Russia
and the Soviet Union
1918-1941**



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Records of the Ward Department

General and Special Staffs

Record Group 165

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE MILITARY
INTELLIGENCE DIVISION RELATING TO
GENERAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND
MILITARY CONDITIONS IN RUSSIA
AND THE SOVIET UNION
1918-1941

On the 23 rolls of this microfilm publication are reproduced record cards and correspondence of the Military Intelligence Division (MID) that relate to conditions in Russia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from 1918 to 1941. The documents reproduced are largely reports from the U.S. military attache and his assistants in Russia and the U.S.S.R., reports from military observers attached to the American Expeditionary Forces in North Russia and Siberia, and American military attaches and observers assigned to neighboring countries. The MID correspondence from which the six files reproduced on this microfilm publication were extracted is part of Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, Record Group (RG) 165.

Background

The Military Intelligence Division originated in 1885, when Adj. Gen. Richard C. Drum directed Maj. William J. Volkmar of the Military Reservation Division to organize a Division of Military Information. Drum's action was in response to an increasing need for the systematic collection and dissemination of information relating to foreign and U.S. military services. The Military Information Division, as it became known, functioned as an adjunct of the Military Reservation Division until 1889. The congressional appropriation act of September 22, 1888 (25 Stat. 481), provided for "the pay of a clerk attendant on the collection and classification of military information from abroad." It also specified that officers detailed to obtain military information would be entitled to allowances for mileage and transportation, and to commutation of quarters. As a result of this act, the first U.S. military attaches were detailed during 1889 to U.S. diplomatic posts at London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg. In addition, the act laid the necessary financial groundwork for the Adjutant General's confidential order of April 12, 1889, which established the Military Information Division as "a separate division under the personal supervision of the Adjutant General."

An act of February 14, 1903 (32 Stat. 830), reorganized the War Department hierarchy by creating a War Department General Staff headed by a Chief of Staff. Six months later, Secretary of War Elihu Root's order of August 8 directed the transfer of the Military Information Division and its records to the Office of the Chief of Staff, effective August 15, 1903. Under the new

organization, what had been the Military Information Division became the Second Division (of three divisions) of the General Staff. War Department General Order 128, dated August 12, 1908, provided for the reorganization of the General Staff into sections and thereunder into such committees as necessary for the transaction of business. As a result of this order, the Second Division (military information) was merged with the Third Division (military planning and education) to form the Second Section. A reorganization of September 26, 1910, abolished the Second Section and transferred its responsibilities, including military information, to the new War College Division.

The entry of the United States into World War I on April 6, 1917, greatly increased the work of the War College Division. To deal with the growing intelligence workload, the Chief of Staff, in a memorandum dated April 28, 1917, directed that a separate military intelligence section be established within the War College Division. Most records relating to foreign intelligence created or accumulated by the Military Intelligence Section were filed in the central correspondence of the War College Division. A reorganization of the General Staff, under authority of War Department General Order 14, dated February 9, 1918, abolished the War College Division. All intelligence functions passed to the Military Intelligence Branch of the newly created Executive Division. This branch began keeping its own records, separate from those of other branches or divisions of the General Staff. Subsequently, some files were withdrawn from the War College Division records (now inherited by the War Plans Division) and incorporated into the separate series of Military Intelligence Branch records. A second major wartime reorganization of the War Department General Staff occurred under authority of General Order 80, dated August 26, 1918, which established a separate Military Intelligence Division (MID). The order also provided that the MID was to be headed by an officer designated as director of military intelligence who would function as an assistant to the Chief of Staff. The MID continued keeping the separate series of records maintained by the former Military Intelligence Branch.

As a result of War Department General Order 41, dated August 16, 1921, the MID was given the additional designation of G-2 and was constituted as one of the five General Staff divisions, each under the immediate control of an Assistant Chief of Staff. This organizational structure remained largely unchanged through World War II.

The major function of the MID and its predecessors was the collection of military information about foreign countries. Military attaches and observers assigned to those countries were the principal means by which the MID collected such information. The main duties of a military attache were to observe and report

on the organization, training, equipment, doctrine, and operations of foreign military forces. In addition, the attache reported on political, economic, and social conditions in the country to which he was assigned, especially as they influenced military affairs. To carry out this work, most attaches had a small staff, including assistant military attaches who prepared their own reports, to assist them.

When the United States first dispatched military attaches to foreign posts in 1889, Lt. Henry T. Allen was assigned to St. Petersburg, Russia. From that date until 1919 the United States normally had an attache assigned to St. Petersburg. Beginning in August 1917 the War Department also assigned one or more assistant attaches. In 1919, following the rupture of diplomatic relations with the Bolshevik government, the United States withdrew its diplomatic representatives, including the military attache and his assistants. There was no military attache in Russia until the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in 1934. From 1919 to 1934 the attaches and other American sources in adjacent countries, particularly those at Riga, Latvia, and Helsinki, Finland, provided coverage of events inside the U.S.S.R.

Records Description

The documents reproduced on this microfilm publication, largely military attache reports but also including documents created by other U.S. Government agencies and foreign governments, are from the records of the Military Intelligence Division and date from 1918 to 1941. Some extant reports on conditions in Russia for the period 1903 to 1917, from military attaches and other sources, are in the correspondence of the War College Division, also part of RG 165, but are not filmed on this publication. In addition, although this publication reproduces the six principal MID files relating exclusively to Russia and the U.S.S.R. for the period 1918 to 1941 (general conditions, political conditions, economic conditions, army, navy, and aeronautics), it does not reproduce all MID files relevant to Russia and the U.S.S.R.

The Military Intelligence Division filed correspondence in accordance with the "record card system," utilized widely in the late 19th and early 20th century by the War Department. On each incoming and outgoing communication and on each enclosure, a record clerk placed in the upper-right corner of the first page a file designation consisting of a master number representing the main subject of the communication. Following the master number, the record clerk sometimes entered an alphabetical or numerical suffix representing a subfile under the subject of the master number, and an additional number representing the transaction under the subfile (e.g., MID 2657-D-1, or 2657-D-1054/6, or 2090-391/16). In other instances, when no

subfile was involved, the clerk simply added a numerical suffix to the master number to indicate the next sequential transaction (e.g., 2070-69).

After the clerk had assigned a file designation to the communication, he summarized its contents on a record card and placed the same file designation on the record card. Record cards were subsequently annotated to show the routing and ultimate destination or disposition of a communication. The clerk then prepared name, subject, and geographic index cards as finding aids to the communication and the record card. The index cards were filed alphabetically. The communications and the record cards were filed numerically by their assigned file designations. In addition, the MID kept chronological lists ("Dispatch Lists") of all communications received from an attache at a particular post.

In its filing scheme the MID used letters to designate particular countries; originally D represented Russia, and later the Soviet Union. Therefore, under the master number for economic conditions (2655), the designation 2655-D relates to economic conditions in Russia and the Soviet Union. Individual documents under that designation were numbered generally in chronological order. However, within this and the other file designations other sets of numbers are sometimes used as subfiles for more specific subject categories. For instance, reports on industrial mobilization in the U.S.S.R., 1924-40, are filed under 2655-D-476, with individual documents on the subject numbered 1 to 101. Thus a typical file number containing all these elements would be 2655-D-476/5.

There are gaps in the individual document number sequences following the master numbers. The gaps are attributable to two principal reasons. First, during the late 1920's the War Department destroyed a large number of individual documents as "useless papers," an action authorized by an act of Congress dated February 16, 1889 (25 Stat. 672). There is a list, filmed at the beginning of each master number, enumerating document numbers that were destroyed. Synopses of these documents can be found in this microfilm publication on the first three rolls (record cards). Secondly, on August 7, 1941, the MID abandoned its numeric filing scheme and adopted the War Department decimal file system. At that time, many documents were transferred from the old MID file to the G-2 decimal file. For most communications transferred to the G-2 decimal file, a card was prepared by G-2 and was inserted in the numeric file where the communication had been. Each card cites the decimal file designation under which the communication will be found. Correspondence in the G-2 decimal file is now among Records of the Army Staff, RG 319, and has not been reproduced in this microfilm publication.

The contents of the records filed under the six master numbers reproduced in this microfilm publication are described below. The master numbers pertaining to the more general subjects have been filmed first (general, political, and economic conditions), followed by those relating to more specific topics (army, navy, and aeronautics). Within each master number most documents have been filmed in file designation order. Some of the reports, however, include large oversize enclosures, particularly maps. Such oversized documents have not been filmed in sequence, but at the end of the roll containing the appropriate file designations; cross-references have been inserted to indicate where such documents originally appeared and their new location at the end of the roll.

The record cards for the six master numbers of MID correspondence relating to Russia and the Soviet Union appear on rolls 1 and 2 of this microfilm publication. The record cards are filmed in the same sequence as the six master numbers. They provide a synopsis of each document, including those destroyed in 1929 by the War Department, and serve as a finding aid to the extant documents filmed in this publication.

Contents

"General Conditions, Russia" (MID 2070)--Records pertaining to contemporary political, economic, social, and military events and trends, compiled from press, foreign military, and intelligence sources. Many are periodic surveys of current events prepared by the military attache or the Department of State. Documents in this file series rarely cover a subject in a comprehensive manner or over an extended period of time. Exceptions to this include reports on the Russian situation during 1918 and 1919 in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution (MID 2070-12); the diaries of military attaches, Brig. Gen. William V. Judson and Col. James A. Ruggles (MID 2070-43); translations of "Secret Diplomatic Correspondence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs" of the Kerensky regime (MID 2070-432); records on the American relief effort in Odessa in 1921 (MID 2070-2136); and "Comments on Current Events," 1939-41 (MID 2070-2319).

Other documents include a history of this Russian Revolution by the military attache in Petrograd (MID 2070-12/2), the Russo-German peace treaty ending Russia's involvement in World War I (MID 2070-69), an evaluation of Cossack leader General

Semenoff and his forces (MID 2070-397), an account of the origins of the American involvement in the Allied intervention in Siberia and northern Russia (MID 2070-1460), a description of Bolshevik repression and terrorism against Russian churches (2070-1477), and a report covering withdrawals of forces from Siberia by the United States and Japan. Of special interest are reports on conditions in a forced labor camp by a former resident (MID 2070-2292) and a frank and caustic evaluation done in 1941 on the character of the Russian peoples (MID 2070-2324/1).

"Political Conditions, Russia" (MID 2657-D)--Records documenting current events, politics, and foreign relations in Russia and the U.S.S.R., supplementing information found in MID 2070 ("General Conditions, Russia"). Subjects covered comprehensively include Siberian events in 1920 (MID 2657-D-99); the 1921 revolt at Kronstadt (MID 2657-D-381); relief efforts, including the American role, for the famine of 1921 and 1922 (MID 2657-D-538); plans for the constitution and constituent assembly of the short-lived Far East Republic (MID 2657-D-388); Russian and Rumanian war preparations over the Bessarabian dispute (MID 2657-D-848); U.S. Senate hearings on the recognition of Russia, 1924-31 (2657-D-849); Soviet propaganda methods (MID 2657-D-884); the activities of Leon Trotsky from 1925-39 (MID 2657-D-891); and some Soviet military activities from 1938 to 1941, including the war against Finland (MID 2657-D-1054).

Specific items of interest regarding the domestic situation include reports on the arrest in 1920 of former Imperial Army General Judenitch (MID 2657-D-79), Bolshevik atrocities in Northern Russia (MID 2657-D-94), the role of Jews in the Communist Party (MID 2657-D-200), an assassination plot against Stalin (MID 2657-D-994/21), the assassination of prominent party leader Sergei Kirov (MID 2657-D-1025/3), and the growth of Russian nationalism in the 1930's (MID 2657-D-1052).

Among the reports concerning foreign relations are accounts of relations with China (MID 2657-D-935) and Great Britain (MID 2657-D-941); Soviet plans to attack British oil fields in the event of war (MID 2657-D-962); a Russian-Polish "entente" for defense against Nazi Germany in 1933 (MID 2657-D-1015); Soviet activities in Spain (MID 2657-D-1050); and the Soviet-German nonaggression pact (MID 2657-D-1054/7). There is also a request by then Senator Harry S. Truman for background information on the Soviet-Finnish conflict to make an address on that topic (MID 2657-D-1060).

"Economic Conditions, Russia" (MID 2655-D)--Reports compiled from newspaper and periodical articles, official government publications, and intelligence sources concerning state budgets, nationalization, agricultural production, industrialization,

natural and mineral resources, and labor relations. Comprehensive reports include such subjects as industrial mobilization (MID 2655-D-476), farming (MID 2655-D-509), minerals and critical materials (MID 2655-D-512), and the shipment of resources to Germany prior to World War II (MID 2655-D-555). One file (MID 2655-D-409) contains a series of publications by the "Special Delegation of the Far East Republic to the United States" promoting its trade and industrial resources.

Individual reports include accounts of the introduction of compulsory labor (MID 2655-D-25), the granting of oil concessions to the Sinclair Oil Co. by the Chita government of the Far East Republic (MID 2655-D-333), the adoption of the 7-day work week to increase flagging industrial production in 1929 (MID 2655-D-496/5), the final liquidation of the kulaks (MID 2655-D-509/2 and 3), a League of Nations report on economic conditions in Russia (MID 2655-D-458), and a report on the Stakhanovite system of incentives promoting squad competition to increase industrial production and the subsequent propaganda campaign to promote it (MID 2655-D-542/1 and 2).

"Army, Russia" (MID 2037)--Reports pertaining to conditions in the military services, including information on military organization, doctrine, training, personalities, and national defense. Subjects covered include situation reports on the Russian civil war, 1918-19 (MID 2037-191); orders of battle (MID 2037-1159); the history and activities of the Nabrodni Kommissariat Vnutrenk Dell (NKVD) and its predecessors, the Obyedinemoye Gosoudarstvennoye Politicheskoye Upravleniye (OGPU) and the CHECKA (MID 2037-1552); conscription (MID 2037-1769); personnel changes (MID 2037-1692); infantry organization (MID 2037-1709); mobilization and war plans (MID 2037-1814); strategic and tactical doctrine (MID 2037-1972); military training (MID 2037-1984), discipline and morale (MID 2037-1987); military budgets (MID 2037-2068); and the Soviet invasions of Finland, Poland, and the Baltic States at the beginning of World War II (MID 2037-2100).

Subjects covered less extensively include greed and the lack of discipline in the Red army following the Russian Revolution (MID 2037-10 and 25); Lloyd George's fear of a Russo-German military alliance (MID 2037-1346); the function of the political section of the Red army in the event of war (MID 2037-1726); the role of communism in the Red army (MID 2037-1815); German technical assistance to the Soviet Union to improve its aviation and chemical warfare capacities (MID 2037-1823); the effects of Stalinist purges and executions on military morale (MID 2037-1833/66) and party political organs in the Red army (MID 2037-1961).

Specific items of interest include a history of the Petrograd campaign (MID 2037-348), an account of Trotsky's attendance and successful completion of examinations at the Staff College (MID 2037-1303), a translation of the Soviet training text Organization of the Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R. (MID 2037-1854), and the opinions of NKVD defector General Liushkov on Soviet spying, the Soviet role in the Spanish Civil War, Stalin's fear of Hitler, and repression under Stalin (MID 2037-1997/11).

"Navy, Russia" (MID 2503)--Records pertaining to the composition, organization, and potential of the Russian and Soviet Navies, including orders of battle, ship and submarine movements, mines and minesweeping, morale, and biographic information on naval leaders. Specific subjects covered include naval policy (MID 2503-208), budgets (MID 2503-209), strategy and tactics (MID 2503-243), training (MID 2503-253), and distribution of fleets (MID 2503-249).

There are also reports on the imposition of political controls on the Soviet Navy through the placement of Komsomoltsi as junior officers (MID 2503-208/19), the turnover of the Wrangel fleet by France to the Soviet Union (MID 2503-168), the role of women in the Soviet Navy (MID 2503-208/20), and naval discipline (MID 2503226/1). Of special interest are reports from a former Soviet naval attache outlining strategic concepts of the Red navy as of 1931 (MID 2503-243) and a military attache report on Soviet attempts in 1937 to purchase plans and materials for the construction of battleships from the United States (MID 2503-261).

"Aeronautics, Russia" (MID 2090)--Reports relating to military and civil aviation, including developments, production, routes, photographs and outlines of aircraft, accidents, and industrial capacity compiled from official, foreign military, and military intelligence sources.

Subject covered at length include numbers of aircraft (MID 2090-163), distribution of aircraft and orders of battle (MID 2090-169), organization of the Soviet Air Force (MID 2090-179), civil aviation (MID 2090-183), manufacture of aircraft (MID 2090-189), location of aerodromes (MID 2090-239), research and development (MID 2090-244), types of aircraft (covered in annual aviation intelligence reports) (MID 2090-259), and biographic information on notable personalities in Soviet aviation (MID 2090-325). In addition, there is a series, dating from 1927, of translations of texts used in the Soviet Military Air Academy (MID 2090-269 through 272).

Specific reports document the German role in the development and maintenance of Soviet aviation (MID 2090-163/3), the preferential treatment accorded to members of the Soviet Air Force (MID 2090-191/14), the role of espionage in the acquisition of technology (MID 2090-319/2), and the Soviet occupation of the Baltic States in 1939 and 1940 (MID 2090-391/16).

Security Classification

Many of the documents filmed in this microfilm publication were classified as secret, confidential, or restricted at the time of their creation and had those classification markings stamped, typed, or written on them. The National Archives and the Department of the Army have reviewed and declassified all the records filmed on this publication.

Related Records

In RG 165 are additional intelligence records concerning Russia and the U.S.S.R. Information on Russia and the U.S.S.R. can be found under other file designations of the MID correspondence, 1918-41. However, it was not filmed here because of its relative insignificance or its dilution by materials extraneous to Russia and the U.S.S.R. Access to these records is by the name, subject, and geographic indexes to the MID correspondence and by the dispatch lists of incoming reports to the MID. Microfilm publications of these records are Name Index to Correspondence of the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department General Staff, 1917-1941, M1194, and Registers of Communications Received from Military Attaches and Other Intelligence Officers ("Dispatch Lists"), 1889-1941, M1271. Roll 5 of M1271 contains the lists of reports from the military attaches in Russia and the U.S.S.R. Also in RG 165 are the records of the War College Division of the War Department General Staff, which contain military attache and other reports on Russia for the period 1903-17. An index to these records has been microfilmed as Indexes to Records of the War College Division and Related General Staff Offices, 1903-1919, M912.

Military attache reports and Army intelligence records that relate to the U.S.S.R. and date from mid-1941 are in RG 319, Records of the Army Staff. Some information relating to the appointment of military attaches to Russia before 1916 is in

Records of the Adjutant General's Office, RG 94. Records pertaining to naval intelligence, including naval attache reports, are among Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, RG 38.

Of special interest are the microfilm publications Historical Files of the American Expeditionary Forces, North Russia, 1918-1919, M924, and Historical Files of the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia, 1918-1920, M917, documenting the American role in the Allied intervention in Russia during World War I. These records are a part of the Records of the American Expeditionary Forces (WWI), 1917-1923, RG 120.

Many records on relations between the United States and Russia and the Soviet Union are in RG 59, General Records of the Department of State. Microfilm publication of related records include Despatches from U.S. Consuls in St. Petersburg, Russia, 1803-1906, M81; Records Relating to Political Relations Between the United States and Russia, 1910-1929, M333; Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Russia and the Soviet Union, 1910-1929, M316; Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations Between the Soviet Union and Other States, 1930-1939, T1247; Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations Between the Soviet Union and Other States, 1940-1944, T1248; Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union, 1930-1939, T1249; and Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union, 1940-1944, T1250.

Gregory L. Fraser wrote these introductory remarks and prepared the records for microfilming.

APPENDIX

Military Attaches, Petrograd, Vologda, and Moscow

Brig. Gen. William V. Judson	July 10, 1917-Dec. 29, 1917
Lt. Col. M. C. Kerth	Dec. 29, 1917-Feb. 1, 1918
Col. James A. Ruggles	Feb. 1, 1918-Sept. 18, 1918
Lt. T. D. White (acting)	Mar. 13, 1934-July 16, 1934
Lt. Col. P. R. Faymonville	July 17, 1934-Jan. 31, 1939
Maj. F. B. Hayne	Feb. 1, 1939-Nov. 6, 1939
Maj. Ivan D. Yeaton	Nov. 6, 1939-Dec. 23, 1941

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5	MID 2070-1679 to MID 2070-2092
6	MID 2070-2095 to MID 2070-2269
7	MID 2070-2271 to MID 2070-2326
8	MID 2657-D-12 to MID 2657-D-884
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