

**AMERICA'S MESSAGE TO THE
RUSSIAN PEOPLE: ADDRESSES BY THE
MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL
DIPLOMATIC MISSION OF THE UNITED
STATES TO RUSSIA IN THE YEAR 1917**

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ADDRESSES

BY THE

**MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL DIPLOMATIC MISSION
OF THE UNITED STATES TO RUSSIA
IN THE YEAR 1917**

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE addresses printed in this book were delivered in Russia and immediately after returning from Russia, by members of the Special Diplomatic Mission sent by President Wilson in May, 1917, to express to the people of Russia the friendship and sympathy of the United States.

Many things have happened since the return of the Special Mission, and many friends of Russia have become despondent because of the discord and disorder which prevail in many parts of that vast country. The following quotation from one of these addresses may be useful for them:

The newspapers are filled with accounts of disputes, of political conflict, but how is it possible for a nation which began in the beginning with no government at all, with no institutions, with no habits of thought or action adapted to the exercise of the powers of government, how is it possible for them to avoid disputes and controversies? When you read in the newspapers about what happens in Russia, I beg you to remember how the people of Europe looked upon the condition of America for many a long year after the peace that ended the American Revolution. How certain they were that the new experiment in democracy was a failure. How they sneered and laughed at the presumptuous farmers who sought to govern themselves. I beg you to remember what Europe thought of the condition in America in those long dark years of civil war, when it was believed that the American experiment had failed at last.

At the time of the American Revolution, the American colonists had more experience in the difficult art of self-government than any other people in the world; yet it took them eleven years from their Declaration of Independence to reach an established government under the constitution of 1787, and there was still left a great unsettled question which required four years of civil war to determine. The Russians have had less than a year, and they have had the

distress of exhaustion, the weariness of a terrible war, and the constant disturbance of a vast and insidious German propaganda, taking advantage of their inexperience and frustrating their steps in the direction of rational development. The chief factor, however, in determining the result must be the underlying character of the people, and I think that every member of the Special Mission is firm in his opinion that the character of the Russian people makes them competent for free self-government and practically certain, after all their disputes and experiments, to establish and maintain such a government.

ELIHU ROOT.

JANUARY 31, 1918.

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