

The Aneurin Great War Project: Timeline

Part 10 - The War Itself, 1918

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First published 8th February 2021. This version 09:00 GMT 8th February 2021
[BUT UNDER CONSTANT EXTENSION AND CORRECTION, SO CHECK AGAIN SOON]

This timeline supports the *Aneurin* series of interdisciplinary scientific reflections on why the Great War failed so singularly in its bid to be *The War to End all Wars*. It presents actual or best-guess historical event and introduces theoretical issues of cognitive science as they become relevant.

UPWARD

[Author's Home Page](#)
[Project Aneurin, Scope and Aims](#)
[Master References List](#)

BACKWARD IN TIME

[Part 1 - \(Ape\)men at War, Prehistory to 730](#)
[Part 2 - Royal Wars \(Without Gunpowder\), 731 to 1272](#)
[Part 3 - Royal Wars \(With Gunpowder\), 1273-1602](#)
[Part 4 - The Religious Civil Wars, 1603-1661](#)
[Part 5 - Imperial Wars, 1662-1763](#)
[Part 6 - The Georgian Wars, 1764-1815](#)
[Part 7 - Economic Wars, 1816-1869](#)
[Part 8 - The War Machines, 1870-1894](#)
[Part 9 - Insults at the Weigh-In, 1895-1914](#)
[Part 10 - The War Itself, 1914](#)
[Part 10 - The War Itself, 1915](#)
[Part 10 - The War Itself, 1916](#)
[Part 10 - The War Itself, 1917](#)

FORWARD IN TIME

[Part 11 - Deception as a Profession, 1919 to date](#)

The Timeline Items

******* U.S. PEACE AGENCY PROMOTES WAR *******

1918 [1st-6th January (O.S. 19th-24th December 1917)] **The Russian Civil War [XV - Picking Over The Imperial Carcass (All Eyes Turn To Brest-Litovsk)]:** [Continued from [22nd December 1917](#)] On 1st January 1918 the Russians broadcast their peace terms to their Entente allies, and appeal for diplomatic support in their ongoing peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk.

LEST IT BE OVERLOOKED: Historians have long puzzled as to what was agreed between Trotsky and British intelligence during his stay in NYC January-March 1917, or what then occurred during his "detention" in Halifax, Nova Scotia, April 1917 [see inset 1st August 1917]. One of the (many) possible explanatory scenarios is therefore that since the October Revolution he had been taking a **previously promised** stance in his negotiations with the Central Powers. If so, then in all likelihood he is by now beginning to suspect that London is renegeing on whatever had been agreed, because his appeals for Entente backing are being studiously ignored. It may or may not be relevant that he was presently under investigation by a U.S. Federal judge on suspicion of having received money from German contacts while in NYC, but the judgement of that inquiry - that he was **not guilty** - will not be made public until later this month [see 20th January below]. **OUR VERDICT:** For our part, we suspect that the Western Allies originally saw revolutionaries such as Lenin and Trotsky as no threat to their ally the Tsar, but of great potential value as fomenters of dissent amongst the working class soldiers and factory workers of their Central Powers enemies. They therefore gave them a little lukewarm support as politicians, and surreptitiously funded the network of *agents provocateurs* which channelled their words into Germany and Austria-Hungary - hence the carefully cross-choreographed Berlin workers' uprising about to take place [see 9th January below].

On 2nd January a high level meeting takes place in Berlin, attended by the Kaiser, von Hertling, von Hindenburg, von Ludendorff, von Kühlmann, and others, after which Chancellor von Hertling addresses the *Reichstag*. The German negotiating line is henceforth that the Russian peace terms are unacceptable in their present form, and the Russians are duly informed of this decision.

ASIDE: With the benefit of hindsight, it is highly likely that the Prussian High Command used this meeting to assure the politicians that **perhaps a surprise attack against the now largely unmanned Eastern Front might pay off rather handsomely**, for this is exactly what they proceeded to do in **Operation Faustschlag** seven weeks later [see 18th February 1918].

Trotsky replies by openly denouncing Germany's peace terms as "hypocritical" in that they fail to guarantee the independence of the ethnically distinct provinces their armies have occupied since 1914. He mentions Poland, Lithuania, Courland, parts of Livonia, and Estonia. To make the same point for the public at large, that day's *Izvestia* describes the Germans as "wolves in sheep's clothing". Also on 2nd January the American Ambassador in Petrograd, **David R. Francis** [Wikipedia biography] briefs Colonel **Raymond Robins** [check him out **ESSENTIAL READING**] of the **American Red Cross Mission** [check them out **ALSO ESSENTIAL READING**] as to how best to steer "Lenin and Trotsky and other officers of the Soviet Government" away from a separate peace ...

QUICKIE - THE AMERICAN RED CROSS MISSION TO RUSSIA: The American Red Cross was founded in 1881 as a donation-funded religious charity, and had become respected in Europe during the pre-American phase of WW1, as part of the humanitarian aid industry behind the battle lines. Their man Raymond Robins had impressed the Soviets with his apparent revolutionary sympathies during the summer of 1917, and was now the Petrograd Embassy's main informal channel of communication with the Bolshevik leadership (Service, 2011, p219). Until he had returned to Washington four weeks previously, his minder had been Colonel **William Boyce Thompson** [check him out **ESSENTIAL READING**], one of life's unmitigated hustlers and personally briefed by President Wilson. The Ambassador's briefing to Robins was in writing, and is reproduced in **Judah Magnes's** (1919/2012) "**Russia and Germany at Brest-Litovsk**" [Amazon **VERY USEFUL RESOURCE**].

On 5th January Lloyd George follows *Izvestia* in a speech to the Trade Union Conference in London. "No one who knows Prussia," he warns, "[...] can for a moment doubt her ultimate intention. **Whatever phrases she may use to delude Russia she does not mean to surrender one of the fair provinces or cities of Russia now occupied by her forces**" (Magnes, p45). On 6th January the French government recognises the independence of the Finnish Republic (it will prove to be a short-lived gesture however - see 27th January 1918) [sub-thread continues at 7th January 1918 ...]. [**THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD**] [**THREAD = THE NEVER-ENDED RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR, 1917-ONGOING**]

******* WILSON'S "FOURTEEN POINTS FOR PEACE" *******

1918 [7th-8th January (O.S. 25th-26th December 1917)] **The Russian Civil War [XVI - Picking Over The Imperial Carcass (Trotsky to Brest-Litovsk)]:** [Continued from 1st January 1918] On 7th January 1918 Trotsky personally takes charge of the Russian delegation at Brest-Litovsk and engages in unofficial

discussions with the Ukrainian and other delegates prior to the plenary sessions (due to begin again in two days' time). In Washington, meanwhile, [President Wilson](#) updates Congress on 8th January as to the longer-term relevance of events on the Eastern Front ...

CAMEO - WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS: Wilson used this speech to float his Administration's thoughts regarding a global peace - his famous "**Fourteen Points**" [[Wikipedia briefing](#)]. The individual objectives (and they will be widely re-quoted and argued about for the ensuing decade) were as follows ...

I There should be no secret diplomatic promises or deals.

REMARKS: We may safely disregard this objective as entirely risible, because every second word in the remainder of the present resource derives from secret diplomatic promises or deals, many of them initiated by Wilson personally.

II Freedom of navigation.

III Minimal economic barriers.

IV Maximal disarmament.

V Colonisation only with consent of "the populations concerned".

REMARKS: This is another insult to our intelligence for the reasons set out in the inset on <POLITICAL CHICANERY> in the entry for 9th January below.

VI Evacuation of Russian territory.

REMARKS: As we shall shortly be seeing [see 18th February], the Central Powers are about to execute one of the largest unopposed land-grabs in the history of warfare, thus making this objective doubly pertinent.

VII Restoration of Belgium.

VIII Restoration of French territory (including Alsace-Lorraine from 1871).

IX Rationalisation of Italian border with Austria to reflect local ethnicity.

X Autonomy for ethnic minorities within Austria-Hungary.

REMARKS: The peoples of Bohemia and Moravia - the future Czechoslovakia will - albeit after much further bloodletting - be particular beneficiaries.

XI Restoration of Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro.

XII Reduce the Ottoman Empire to its core (modern Turkey), with autonomy for its former possessions.

REMARKS: This is exactly what was done at Versailles, albeit in most cases the "autonomy" was simply subjugation by either the British or the French Empire instead of the Ottoman. Fighting in Palestine, Syria, and Iraq is still going on a century down the line [= February 2021].

XIII Autonomy for Poland.

REMARKS: As with X and XII above, more blood will shortly be flowing here.

XIV Creation of "a general association of nations" guaranteeing the "independence and territorial integrity" of the new order of things

REMARKS: After months of diplomatic squabbling, the **League of Nations** will be created [[see 10th January 1920](#)], earning Wilson the 1919 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts. The United States promptly refuse to join it, thereby more or less single-handedly guaranteeing another world war (or two).

American propaganda agents promptly distribute copies of the speech by the hundred thousand¹ in Russia (Williams, 1919) [sub-thread continues at 9th January 1918 ...]. [**THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD**] [**THREAD = THE NEVER-ENDED RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR, 1917-ONGOING**]

¹ These pamphlets were distributed using the **YMCA WW1 Mission's** [[check them out](#)] humanitarian(-plus) network (Polk, 2012 [[full text online](#)]). Polk mentions "car loads" of them, and we are pretty sure she is talking railway cars!

******* TROTSKY PUTS HIS FINGER ON THE PROBLEM *******
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1918 [9th-10th January (O.S. 27th-28th December 1917)] **The Russian Civil War [XVII - Picking Over The Imperial Carcass (New Plenary at Brest-Litovsk)]**: [Continued from 7th January 1918] On 9th January 1918 the talks at Brest-Litovsk restart after their Christmas adjournment. The proceedings open with all four Central bloc representatives [that is to say, Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottomans, and Bulgaria - Ed.] expressing anger at ongoing Soviet wireless traffic trying to foment revolutionary discontent within their respective armed forces.

LEST IT BE OVERLOOKED: The idea that the working classes are put on earth to be exploited by their betters, even unto premature death in uniform, goes back to Roman times, became popular in the 18th Century, and achieved no little notoriety in the socio-economic theories of Proudhon and Marx in the mid-19th Century. The working classes have traditionally been happy to go along with their exploitation, thereby making it an act of pietà for leftists to go amongst them preaching class awakening. Hence *The Communist Manifesto's* (1948) famous exhortation (slightly embellished): "Workers of the world, unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains!"

Trotsky dismisses the Centrists' allegations as meaningless in practice, given that both sides are constantly seeking converts in the other's media. Trotsky then makes a substantial counter-allegation of his own, namely that it was not going to be acceptable to Russia for the Central Powers to rely on high-sounding appeals for the self-determination of the buffer states if **"the will of the people was in reality replaced by the will of a privileged group acting under the control of the authorities administering the occupied territories"** (Magne, p58).

ASIDE - POLITICAL CHICANERY: What Trotsky is describing, of course, is that scourge of democracy known as "loading the dice", that is to say, removing the element of risk from an inherently risky event such as an election. The ploy had already been used to very profitable effect in the American annexations of **Hawaii** [start 6th January 1895, then as directed], **Cuba** [start 20th February 1896, then as directed], **the Philippines** [start 2nd May 1898, then as directed], **Panama** [start 1st June 1898, then as directed], and the first clutch of the famous *Banana Republics* (incl. **Venezuela**, **Mexico**, and the **Dominican Republic**) [start 13th February 1903, then as directed]. It will positively flourish after WW1 with more Banana Republics (incl. **Nicaragua**, **Haiti**, and **Honduras**), only to fail dismally with **Chiang Kai-Shek's China** [start 1st June 1925, then as directed]. It then became nothing short of performance artistry in the hands of the CIA during the Cold War with **Iran** [Wikipedia briefing], **Guatemala** [start 18th June 1954, then as directed], **Indonesia** [start 25th September 1957, then as directed], and **South Vietnam** [Wikipedia briefing]. And it continues to the present day [= February 2021] in the puppet regimes created by the **Arab Spring Offensive** [Wikipedia briefing], **Brazil** [Wikipedia briefing], and (perhaps most blatantly of all, and still to be finalised) **Venezuela** [start 27th May 2015, then as directed]. **It is even possible to argue that the American deep state coupéd its own democratic structures in the presidential elections of November 2015!**

Unfortunately for the Russians, the West has already decided to cast Trotsky aside, and its media is this very week beginning to brief remorselessly against him, thus ...

******* MAJOR SHIFT IN WESTERN POSITION ON BOLSHEVIKS *******
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CAMEO - HOW OUR PAPERS REPORTED IT: Here is Lippmann again, explaining how the Western press was already actively promoting the idea that the Petrograd regime would shortly collapse, and that its views might therefore safely be disregarded ...

"The midwinter of 1917-18 is worth more detailed examination, because it has a character of its own. News items suggesting that the [Petrograd] regime was temporary appeared as follows. [Dates listed, totalling 20 in November 1917, 10 in December, **2 in January**, and 14 in February.] **What strikes the eye immediately is the scarcity of the items in January. The first of the two items appeared January 9.** It is a special to the *New York Times* from **Harold Williams** (Petrograd, January 6) [Williams was London's chief state propagandist in Petrograd - **check him out ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND**] headed: 'RUSSIA SEEN ON VERGE OF UTTER COLLAPSE // PETROGRAD FACES FAMINE AND PARALYSIS, WHILE ANARCHY REIGNS IN PROVINCES.' The second item on January 10 is a dispatch from the Petrograd correspondent of the London *Times*, headed: 'CRIME IS RAMPANT IN PETROGRAD // BURGLARY, ROBBERY, AND MURDER COMMON - FOOD SUPPLY IS GIVING OUT!'"

In Paris, meanwhile, the French announce that they have made a loan to the Ukrainians, in the sum of 180,000,000 Francs [= ca. £7 million 1918, £200 billion 2021] according to some sources [sub-thread continues at 11th January 1918...]. [\[THREAD = THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD\]](#) [\[THREAD = THE NEVER-ENDED RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR, 1917-ONGOING\]](#)

THE REST OF 1918 WILL BE INSTALLED BY THE END OF FEBRUARY 2021

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UPWARD

[Author's Home Page](#)

[Project Aneurin, Scope and Aims](#)

[Master References List](#)

BACKWARD IN TIME

[Part 1 - \(Ape\)men at War, Prehistory to 730](#)

[Part 2 - Royal Wars \(Without Gunpowder\), 731 to 1272](#)

[Part 3 - Royal Wars \(With Gunpowder\), 1273-1602](#)

[Part 4 - The Religious Civil Wars, 1603-1661](#)

[Part 5 - Imperial Wars, 1662-1763](#)

[Part 6 - The Georgian Wars, 1764-1815](#)

[Part 7 - Economic Wars, 1816-1869](#)

[Part 8 - The War Machines, 1870-1894](#)

[Part 9 - Insults at the Weigh-In, 1895-1914](#)

[Part 10 - The War Itself, 1914](#)

[Part 10 - The War Itself, 1915](#)

[Part 10 - The War Itself, 1916](#)

[Part 10 - The War Itself, 1917](#)

FORWARD IN TIME

[Part 11 - Deception as a Profession, 1919 to date](#)