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# Soviet Envoy Martens' Farewell Message to America

by Ludwig C.A.K. Martens

Published in *The Toiler* [Cleveland, OH], whole no. 157 (Feb. 5, 1921), pg. 1.

In taking leave of the United States, I wish to say a word of grateful appreciation for the great personal kindness and courtesy which I have received from many Americans in all vocations throughout the country. It has been a source of constant encouragement to me to find everywhere men and women who have not allowed hysterical fears or prejudices to move them from their sympathy with the cause which I have represented.

My departure has come as the logical and inevitable consequence of the policy of the American government toward Soviet Russia. So long as that policy was not declared, so long as I could not secure from any responsible official of the American government any frank expression of that policy, my government was justified in keeping me here to strive for the establishment of normal political and economic relations between the United States and Soviet Russia.

The order for my deportation, however, arrived at after long deliberation and signed by a member of the cabinet, was an unequivocal declaration of policy. The policy thus declared was

that which has actually guided the conduct of the American government in the past 2 years; namely, an absolute refusal to recognize even the de facto existence of the Soviet government, and a refusal

to permit the resumption of trade between Russia and America.

The decision of the Secretary of Labor [William B. Wilson] was directed not against myself, but specifically against the government which I represent. The decision said, in effect, that the American government would not permit any representative of the Soviet government to approach America for the purpose of establishing political or economic relations.

This was the answer to the several communications which I addressed to the Department of State immediately after my appointment as

the representative of the Soviet government in this country and to which the Department of State did not see fit to reply.

My mission here would have been terminated much earlier if the Department of State had been willing to take the responsibility which was



finally assumed by the Department of Labor. This, however, is a curious matter of American official procedure, which I do not pretend to understand.

My government accepted this declaration of the policy of the American government toward Russia and instructed me to close my bureau and to withdraw from the United States without delay.

I have no knowledge of the future plans of the American government, nor can I tell in what direction this policy of ignoring the existence of the established government of the largest country in Europe will lead. I know that the Soviet government is more firmly established, beyond fear or danger of foreign or internal assault, than it was on the day when I first approached the American government on its behalf.

I know further that the industrial and economic conditions of the world, not excepting America, are such that the resumption of normal economic relations with Russia has become an imperative necessity upon all nations.

I cannot say how the American government will solve the problem involved in these circumstances.

I can only say that when the American people are prepared to approach this problem, the government of the Russian workers and peasants will be ready to meet them in a reasonable and friendly spirit.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

*Photo of Ludwig Martens from The Outlook, issue of Feb. 2, 1921.*

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