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Counter-Revolution Goes Wild

Alexander Atabekian

21 June 1918

The counter-revolution is not coming. The counter-revolution is here. The counter-revolution is roaming free.

I was naive. I thought that the counter-revolution was a myth, a fiction of idle imagination.

Yesterday I saw it for real, in the image and likeness of God.

Isn't it right: everything that brings us back to the tsarist times of "controlling the common man" is counter-revolution?

In tsarist times, unknown persons in pea coats or in shiny uniforms (the point is not in the clothes) penetrated more or less insolently, more or less rudely into private flats, searched and questioned, or searched and arrested.

The day before yesterday, when I was not at home, some type in "civilian clothes" rang the bell at my flat. The door was opened by a fellow soldier who had just escaped from Austrian captivity and was staying with me.

It was not a slip of the tongue that I said "escaped prisoner". How many months had already passed since the signing of the Peace of Brest? Already "our" envoy in Berlin has long been organising "diplomatic" free dinners for his starving diplomatic friends, already Germany has taken possession of the whole oasis strip,

self-determined by her: Finland, the Baltic region, Ukraine, Crimea, Don, Transcaucasia, and our prisoners are still sitting in a foreign land for forced labour.

Bargaining. They want to start an exchange trade in live goods: “a head for a head”. Isn’t that equality?

Let’s go back to the story.

So: the door is opened by an escaped prisoner, and the “type”, having entered the flat, begins to interrogate — without mentioning his rank — whether “he” has ... a typewriter?

By “he”, he meant me, your humble comrade.

The “type” urgently demanded to see my “office,” warned that it would be bad if they concealed the machine, etc.

The fugitive prisoner with his strong appearance “persuaded” him to come back at another time, when I would be at home.

Yesterday the “type” turned up again.

Without greeting me, without calling my name, without asking for my consent or permission, he went into the room again, examined the objects on the table, lifted the paper covering them.

Hearing an unfamiliar voice, I came out of the next room. Asking:

“Who are you, and what do you want?”

“You have a typewriter here!”, said the “type” to me instead of answering.

“What do you care! Yesterday, some impertinent man came into my flat and started asking for a typewriter.”

“That was me”, said the “type” modestly.

“Not only do I have a typewriter, I have a lot of other things: a samovar, a kettle, glasses, etc. What business is it of yours!”

“Can’t you have everything you want?”, the “socialist-for-hire” objected to me literally, and, taking a notebook out of his pocket, asked me my surname and began to write something down.

Instead of his surname, I asked him not to embarrass me with his presence.

The “type” left, threatening to come back “or else”.

I looked round to see if anything was missing from the table, and now I wait.

Wait for you too, reader, to read the end of this “everyday story”.

Is this not a naked counter-revolution?

“Types,” without bowing, without identifying themselves, without asking permission, break into private dwellings, interrogate, inspect, threaten.

The Bolsheviks once had it in their programme: the inviolability of the home.

So they, the omnipotent ones in power, are sleeping!

The counter-revolution has come, the counter-revolution is trampling with its feet in broad daylight the “conquests of the revolution” and the best paragraphs of their programme, while they are amusing themselves there... by shooting at an anonymous target — a crowd of indiscriminately arrested people.