

Archangel of civilians of various nationalities and Russian refugees.

The policy adopted was to offer passages in the first place to all who might be the victims of Bolshevik reprisals on account of assistance rendered to us during the term of our occupation. In addition other applications for evacuation were favourably considered provided a Board of Intelligence Officers appointed for the purpose were satisfied of their genuineness.

In no case was a passage refused which passed the required test.

Many availed themselves of the opportunity thus afforded them to proceed to the Black Sea or Baltic Provinces, but on the whole the poorer classes did not come forward in the numbers expected. As a result, when the last ship detailed to carry civilians left Archangel on September 25th the total numbers evacuated had not reached six thousand.

As the date fixed for the final embarkation of the British troops approached it was evident that the anxieties of General Miller correspondingly increased.

Though the fronts were reported to be quiet and the enemy appeared to have generally abandoned his recent offensive attitude, he was apprehensive lest a section of the inhabitants of Archangel, who had Bolshevik tendencies or were otherwise ill-disposed towards his government, should seize the opportunity created by the departure of the British troops to riot and wreck the public buildings and shops of the town.

I was, of course, unable to accede to his request that British troops should be left behind to garrison Archangel.

I was anxious, however, to do everything in my power to assist the North Russian Government at this difficult period, and agreed to hand over for the maintenance of order two of the tanks which had been sent from England as part of my general reserve.

I was under a distinct obligation to leave the North Russian Government in a position to continue their resistance to Bolshevism after our departure, and, accordingly, instructed General Ironside to hand over such supplies, equipment, and stores as were both immediately available and at the same time, in my opinion, adequate to meet their requirements in the near future.

The story of the final evacuation of Archangel can be briefly told.

The arrangements made by General Ironside in consultation with Rear-Admiral Green for the withdrawal of his troops from the Archangel defence, and their embarkation on board ship under the protection of the Royal Navy, were skilfully planned and exceedingly well executed.

That the operation was carried out without the loss of a man, and that no single instance of a conflict between British and Russians has been recorded, testifies both to the efficiency of the staff work and the admirable conduct of the troops.

By 2 p.m. on September 27th the Allied evacuation of Archangel had been successfully completed, and by 6 p.m. on the same evening all transports had left the mouth of the Dvina homeward bound.

*Withdrawal of British troops from Murmansk front and completion of evacuation of Allied troops from North Russia.*

The withdrawal of the Allied troops from the

line of the Nurmis river had been successfully accomplished when the enemy achieved an initial success which, had it been followed up, might have involved a portion of the Russian Army in serious disaster. On the morning of September 25th a Bolshevik force, having succeeded in obtaining the temporary command of Lake Onega, effected a landing at Vatenavolok, and occupied Lijma village, thus turning General Scobeltsin's left flank and threatening his communications at a vital point. The position of the Russian troops further south appeared to be perilous, but no attempt was made by the enemy to cut their line of communication along the railway, and General Scobeltsin was permitted to withdraw his advanced troops at his leisure and establish himself securely on the line Lijma-Kavgora.

The situation, however, on our long and vulnerable line of communication along the Murman railway was causing me considerable anxiety, when, on receiving news on September 20th of the serious illness of General Maynard, I appointed Brigadier-General H. C. Jackson to carry out the withdrawal of the Allied troops.

The presence of parties of Bolsheviks and Red Finn deserters had been reported east of Kandalaksha, and a small detachment of British troops, sent on September 22nd to effect the arrest of certain suspicious characters at Kolvetsky, had been attacked while landing from boats and failed in its mission.

In order to support a stronger force which General Jackson was dispatching to Kandalaksha to clear up the situation at Kolvetsky and protect the Murman railway, I arranged with Rear-Admiral Green for the monitor "M. 23" and the seaplane ship "Nairana" to be placed at his disposal.

Further, in view of the inconvenience which would be caused at this stage through the cutting of the railway line by some party of evil-disposed marauders, I instructed General Jackson to accelerate the programme for his withdrawal, and at the same time arranged for the embarkation of a portion of his troops at Popoff and Kandalaksha.

Before leaving Archangel I had urged on General Miller the desirability of opening negotiations with the Finnish Government in order to obtain their active support in the organisation of the Russian resistance to Bolshevism on the Murmansk front.

The appearance of Red Finns in the Kandalaksha district provided another argument in favour of Finn co-operation, and I advised both Mr. Ermoloff, the head of the Russian Civil Administration in the Murmansk theatre, and General Scobeltsin to seize the earliest opportunity of approaching the Finnish Government with a view to inducing them to send two companies of White Finns to round up the small body of Red Finn deserters who were endangering life and property in that region.

As it was important that some troops should be found in the meantime to relieve the British and French garrisons under orders to depart, I consented to the retention of two Serbian companies for some days on the lines of communication.

On my arrival at Murmansk I found the arrangements for the final evacuation of the Allied forces well advanced, and by the evening of October 3rd the force which had been collected at Kandalaksha, having accomplished its mission, had left by sea and rail for the north.