## Editing Sample

Altogether, Chaikovskii spent over thirty years abroad, returning to Russia only in 1907. Initially joining the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, he eventually moved further away from revolutionary hopes, left the party, and devoted his energies to the growing cooperative movement, becoming more active again in politics during 1917. The Bolshevik seizure of power moved him firmly into opposition, and in September 1918, after the Allies had landed in Arkhangel’sk, he became head of the Provisional Government of the Northern Region. Of all the members of the RPC, Chaikovskii—not Sazonov or L’vov—was the only one with whom foreign heads of state seemed willing to converse. Clemenceau, for example, cross with the Russians following their “treason” (withdrawal from the war) in 1917, nevertheless had an audience with Chaikovskii soon after the latter’s arrival in Paris, on February 16, 1919. Chaikovskii presented him with a lengthy note on the desired form of Allied aid to Russia, including recognition of the RPC as the official Russian delegation to the peace conference. When Clemenceau invited him to speak before a meeting of the Council of Four the next day, Chaikovskii answered, “I am not alone, there are four of us” (Savinkov had not yet been co-opted into the delegation). But Clemenceau balked at the idea of inviting the rest of the delegates, and the matter was put aside. Obviously, Clemenceau feared making any binding commitments to the Russians and particularly wished to avoid meeting Sazonov, whose role was most official.[[1]](#footnote-1)

With the changed situation in late spring and the necessity for a greater degree of knowledge about the White movement, the work of the RPC, and Chaikovskii in particular, finally emerged from the realm of political salons and private conversations with junior members of foreign delegations. Interest in the Whites and their goals grew—Sazonov and Maklakov were invited to give their views before the commission on Polish borders. Golovin, as assistant to General Shcherbachev, the head of the White military mission abroad, was asked to present his views on aid to the Whites before groups of members of Parliament in London and to discuss the situation directly with Winston Churchill (who heretofore had been careful to avoid much direct contact with the Whites for fear of being tarred a reactionary himself). Golovin was also pressed to inform the Omsk government of the necessity of winning public opinion through the declaration of a democratic and liberal program. But Chaikovskii was the man of the hour. On April 29, Lloyd George invited him to breakfast in order to sound out his views on the state of Russia. It soon became obvious to Chaikovskii that none of the RPC’s declarations had reached Lloyd George, so he repeated their central points and went on to confirm the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the vesting of political power in the people, and the nonreactionary nature of Kolchak’s coup. Lloyd George, satisfied with Chaikovskii’s explanations, informed him that the Russian question would soon be before the Council of Four: “We foresee making aid to the [Omsk] Government conditional on its guarantee of democratic rule. This is also the opinion of President Wilson. Without such guarantees our public opinion will not allow the recognition of Admiral Kolchak’s government.”[[2]](#footnote-2) He warned that Kolchak’s declaration on the land question, for example, which allowed peasants to gather the current harvest but declined to affirm ownership to those who had taken land from legal owners, did not go far enough.

Lloyd George’s fear that a victory of the Whites would bring with it not democracy, but a new Napoleon, was the leitmotif of Allied perceptions of Kolchak at this time. As long as the Whites floundered on the outskirts of Russia with little apparent success, they were discounted. It was easy then to decline their participation in the peace conference and put forth the humiliating proposal of negotiations on Prinkipo. General Janin’s instructions and the actions of interventionist troops in South Russia and the Far East, responsible to no one, were a direct result of a situation where the Whites were not reckoned with as an entity capable of becoming an all-Russian authority in future. But Kolchak’s advance in the spring of 1919 put before the Allies the unexpected possibility that Moscow might be taken by a government that had been on the one hand aided by them, but on the other hand often slighted. These slights had already led to serious concerns over the growth of Japanophile and Germanophile tendencies.

1. GARF, f. 6094, op. 1, d. 223, ll. 41−43. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Mel’gunov, *N. V. Chaikovskii*, 290. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)