

# What Is The Red Army ?

## LITHGOW RESIDENT'S INFORMATIVE COMMENT

### CONVINCED GERMANY WILL BE BEATEN

One man in Lithgow, Mr. Louis Brodsky, of Main-street, is convinced that success will come to the Russian forces in their conflict with the German army.

"I am as sure of it as I am that the sun will rise to-morrow," he said to-day. Eventually the Nazis will be drawn into the Russian defences in depth, and then the Red Army will counter-attack and annihilate them."

Mr. Brodsky is a Ukrainian, born in Odessa, on the Black Sea. He was too young to serve in the Czarist army, but has spent a good deal of his life in Russia, and has revisited the country since the 1917 revolutions and has lectured on living and other conditions in the Soviet Union.

"The Red Army is of the people," he said, "and its soldiers will fight all the fiercer because they know they are defending their native land and their homes; they have something to fight for."

Mr. Brodsky said the Red Army had in its favor new and exclusive methods of making war and was well supplied with materials, including tanks, some of which known as land battleships, had not yet been thrown into the fray. The Soviet was the first to develop the parachute troop method of infiltration, and its army's methods were advanced to a high pitch of efficiency.

The Red Army had a basis different from that of any other. It comprised one homogeneous whole—offic-

prised one homogeneous whole—officers, N.C.O's, and men. It was now a university where cultural, political and other education was inculcated and developed. Discipline was self-imposed, and though there was no saluting, the bond between officers and men was founded on deep mutual respect. Saluting, on duty only, was introduced some years ago.

The birth of the Red Army, Mr. Brodsky said, came after the October, 1917, revolution (the March revolution was bourgeois-capitalist inspired against the monarchy) which sprang from the masses. Actually at the end of hostilities against Germany, following the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, there was no army, merely partisan groups of peasants and workers which fought the White Guard elements with success until 1920. The interventionists, as well as armies led by Generals Kalchak, Denikin and Wrangle, were successfully combated on 18 fronts. Finally, when it was realised by the outside Powers that the Russians were capable and in a mood adequately to defend themselves, the Soviet was left to its own devices.

"What is the Red Army?" asked Mr. Brodsky. Not everybody understood its real basis and outlook, he said. It was a voluntary army of workers and peasants, formed by M. Trotsky as War Commissar. Later the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. found it necessary to remove Trotsky on account of his traitorous directions to the army. The bourgeois-landlord class could not

...class could not enter it, and it represented and was of the masses. More or less illiterate recruits entered it and emerged comparatively well educated men. From their experience in the interventionists wars of 1917-21 the Red Army soldiers knew that the Soviet would have organized itself against the outside forces of capitalism, and it was with this in mind that a huge force was built up. Thus a basis of building a defence had to be laid. The Soviet at that time had no heavy industry to speak of, but out of the wilderness of the Ural Mountains, which contained iron, coal, oil—everything necessary for a war effort—the Socialist city known as Magnetogorsk was founded with its vast heavy industries. This was the basis, and from this city of 250,000 workers poured out a constant stream of iron and steel for fabrication in factories of arms of all kinds.

Relationship between the higher commands and the ranks, Mr. Brodsky said, was different from that in any other army. There was no aloofness between officer and man, as in the army of the Czars, but a comradeship founded on mutual respect and trust. Those who proved themselves in the partisan wars capable of leadership became officers, and their numbers were increased by thousands who graduated at officer-training schools in all parts of the country. Graduates were selected by their comrades to undertake these courses, and though they returned to their regiments as officers the social basis of officers and men were the same.

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Mr. Brodsky said that the cultural base of the Russian army was of the highest. The army was a self-sufficing community and advanced the cultural interests of its members. The soldier knew what he was fighting for; he was driven to carry out his duty. He owned the country; he owned his home; he had something to fight for. A political commissar was attached to each regiment, and he widened the political education of the soldier.

"The Red Army soldier will be the best fighter the world has produced, because he knows what he is fighting for," Mr. Brodsky added. "There is no doubt that the Soviet Union will defeat Germany. But we must not lull ourselves into inactivity on account of that. All aid must be given to Russia; it will be so much easier to beat Hitler and his gang because of that."

Mr. Brodsky explained that Marshal Timoshenko was in supreme control of the Red Army. A ranker in the last Russo-German war, he fought also in the partisan wars following the 1914-18 conflict. Stalin, he said, was a great strategist, and it was due to his skill that General Semionoff was defeated in the central and far eastern section of the U.S.S.R. during the period of the revolution. Marshal Tuchachevsky, head of the Red Army, had been an

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imperialist officer, but was tried and shot several years ago because he sold secrets and gave information to foreign Powers.

Mr. Brodsky said that corruption in the Russian army in the Russo-Japanese war was rampant, and it had not been eradicated by any means when war again broke out in 1914. His brother, an artilleryman in the Russo-Japanese conflict, had told him that the regiment took delivery of some guns on one occasion and found them to be made of cardboard. Similarly it was no exaggeration to say that whole regiments were required to go into battle with very few rifles. Service was compulsory—four years in the infantry and five in the artillery, with 20 years in the reserve. The peasants and workers, who comprised the bulk of the army had supplied none or few of its officers, adopted all sorts of devices to avoid services, cutting off trigger fingers and maiming themselves generally. Officers were drawn from the landlord and bourgeoisie class and did not have the ideology of the peasantry; the two were never friends.

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