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World Economic Conference Opens in Genoa; Tchitcherin Speaks

Genoa.—Genoa is crowded, a modern Babel with a corps of perspiring interpreters trying to bring the representatives of forty different countries together. The narrow streets flow with crowds kept orderly by thousands of Italian troops. The journalists, however, today deserted Genoa to see the Soviet delegation at Rapallo, a hot eighteen-mile ride, to interview George Tchitcherin. Tchitcherin, blond and wearing new Berlin clothes with a large red rectangular badge, looks like a businessman. He talks with a slight purr because of missing teeth.

He saw the flood of reporters in batches, speaking to them in their own languages. Hundreds of photographers tried to get past guards who examined their cameras for bombs.

Tchitcherin said to me, "Regarding all matters of debts, we come with our hands free, without committing ourselves. The rights of foreign capital will be perfectly secured but Russia will resist all attempts by consortiums to make Russia a colony."

Questioned about Soviet revolutionaries and moderate Socialists now on trial, Tchitcherin said: "The social revolutionaries are not being persecuted. They are being prosecuted for real offenses, such as the blowing up of banks, shooting at Lenin, blowing up ammunition dumps, and attempting to dynamite Trotsky's train. We are changing our penitentiary system to educate and reform criminals."

Questioned on the famine, Tchitcherin said: "Four years of blockade made the famine. The government is taxing all of Russia to aid the starving, and the transport system is working well."

The eighty members of the Soviet delegation sat at a common table. The delegation is guarded by circles of soldiers, carabinieri and volunteer guards of Italian Communists. The telephone service is horrible and the Soviets are dissatisfied with their quarters so distant from Genoa.