In January, 1920, Enver Pasha, Turkey’s strongman during World War I, paid a visit to the British Military Mission in Berlin. He had returned from Russia, and remained incognito in Germany. Among the topics he discussed with British officers was the Russian Civil War.

Enver Pasha was categorical: he held the Red Army in high esteem, whilst he felt contempt for the White one. Soviets were to win the fighting; for their most effective ally was the peasantry. Peasants, in fact, had taken over the nobility’s land, worked on it and considered it to be their own. The White Army, on the other hand, was staffed with former landowners. Wherever the “White Danger” approached, the result was the determined, unanimous and united effort on the part of the peasants to defend their own land. Enver further clarified that in the whole of Soviet Russia there was an iron military discipline. The only people starving were the former aristocrats and the bourgeois, whilst peasants, soldiers and officers of the Soviet Government had more than sufficient food.