The Red Terror

**(1)** [**Bolshevik**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/RUSbolsheviks.htm) **newspaper, *Krasnaya Gazeta*, announcing the start of the Red Terror on 1st September, 1918.**

We will turn our hearts into steel, which we will temper in the fire of suffering and the blood of fighters for freedom. We will make our hearts cruel, hard, and immovable, so that no mercy will enter them, and so that they will not quiver at the sight of a sea of enemy blood. We will let loose the floodgates of that sea. Without mercy, without sparing, we will kill our enemies in scores of hundreds. Let them be thousands; let them drown themselves in their own blood. For the blood of Lenin and Uritsky, Zinovief and Volodarski, let there be floods of the blood of the bourgeois - more blood, as much as possible.

**(2)** [**Felix Dzerzhinsky**](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/RUSDzerzhinsky.htm)**, interviewed in *Novaia Zhizn* (14th July, 1918)**

We stand for organized terror - this should be frankly admitted. Terror is an absolute necessity during times of revolution. Our aim is to fight against the enemies of the Soviet Government and of the new order of life. We judge quickly. In most cases only a day passes between the apprehension of the criminal and his sentence. When confronted with evidence criminals in almost every case confess; and what argument can have greater weight than a criminal's own confession.

**(3)** **An English teacher in a Moscow secondary school escaped from Russia during the Red Terror. When he arrived in London he (referred to as Mr. A.) was interviewed by the British Foreign Office (21st, January, 1919).**

Executions still continue in the prisons, though the ordinary people do not hear about them. Often during the executions a regimental band plays lively tunes. The following account of an an execution was given by Mr. A. by a member of one of the bands. On one occasion he was playing in a band, and as usual all the people to be executed were brought to the edge of the grave. Their hands and feet were tied together so that they would fall forward into the grave. They were then shot through the neck by Lettish soldiers. When the last man had been shot the grave was closed up, and on this particular occasion the band-man saw the grave moving. Not being able to stand the sight of it, he fainted, whereupon the Bolsheviks seized him, saying that he was in sympathy with the prisoners. They were on the point of killing him, but other members of the band explained that he was really ill, and he was then let off.