

Geneva: A People's Victory

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

THE GENEVA conference of the Big Four was a very important victory for the peace-loving forces in the world. Comprising the vast majority of the world's population, these masses were determined to maintain world peace. At Geneva they served notice upon the warmongers (head office Wall Street) that the big powers must adjust their disputes by negotiation and not by the horror of an atomic war. This action, if supported by continued pressure by the peace forces, could mark the beginning of the end of the cold war.



Geneva was a major defeat for the war drive of American imperialism. It wrote "bankrupt" all over that policy, both in its domestic pro-fascist and its aggressive foreign phases. The victory was achieved because hundreds of millions of people all over the world realized the acute danger of war and took definite steps to avert that war. The balking, even temporarily, of the war drive of American imperialism could bring in its train vital progressive economic and political developments.

The great peace struggle leading up to Geneva included such

basic developments and forces as the firm peace diplomacy of the USSR, People's China, and the European people's democracies; the forcing through, by popular pressure, of the truces in the Korean and Indo-China wars, despite American opposition; the peoples' defeat of the attempts of Truman, MacArthur, and Eisenhower to A-bomb Chinese cities; the world-wide campaigns of the World Peace Council, with its 700 million adherents; the growth of the immense "neutralist" (i.e. peace) sentiment in all parts of the capitalist world, and the historic Bandung conference of Asian and African nations, which was basically a vast demand for peace. The general result of all this was that at Geneva the United States warmongers confronted a world overwhelmingly opposed to their policies of world conquest and war.

Among the many factors that brought about Geneva, of most decisive importance was the ending of Wall Street's atom-bomb monopoly. The Soviet development of the A and H-bomb served notice upon the world that if the Washington militarists undertook to use this fearsome weapon the result would be a two-sided atomic holocaust. This dreadful perspective spurred the world peace forces into action, and American diplomatic prestige tobogganed. Big sections of the capitalist warmon-

gers, dreading the loss of their capitalist system in such a war, lost their eagerness for a third world war.

NOT THE LEAST important of the many world peace factors leading up to Geneva has been the stubborn resistance, despite treacherous leadership, of the American people, especially the workers, to a world atomic war. This was shown by their bitter hostility to the Korean and Indo-China wars; by their strong opposition to the scheduled American war over the offshore islands in the Formosa straits, and by various other expressions of their deep peace sentiments. Tragically weak as a peace force, however, has been the top leadership of the trade unions. In fact, many of them have acted as unvarnished warmongers and outright supporters of the whole aggressive program of Wall street imperialism.

The Eisenhower Administration, true to its reactionary record, resisted the Geneva conference as long as it could. The President laid every possible obstacle in its way, seeking by various devices to keep it from being held, to delay it, and finally to restrict its scope. But in the face of the world-wide demand this sabotage was ineffectual. The peoples of the world forced the Geneva con-

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ference upon American big business.

Once Eisenhower saw that he had no alternative but to go through with the conference, however, he was skilful in exploiting it. Laying aside his recent warlike threats to "liberate" the Socialist countries, to "unleash Chiang Kai Shek" upon People's China, to use "instant massive retaliation" against a mythical Soviet attack, his demand for unlimited war powers in the Formosa situation, and his announcement that in "the next war" the United States would use atomic weapons—the President, thrust himself forward at Geneva in the garb of the champion of world peace.

BY THIS COURSE, Eisenhower had, among others, two major objectives in mind: first, to redress, if possible, the sadly shattered peace reputation of the United States throughout the world; and, second, to write himself out a ticket to the White House in 1956 as a great battler for world peace. In the latter respect, the Democrats walked right into his net by not having made an issue beforehand of the Geneva conference (aside from the speeches of Senator George and Adlai Stevenson) when posing the holding of the conference. Consequently, the Democrats now face an Eisenhower who will be far harder to defeat in the coming elections.

The historic action at Geneva was to block the imperialist warmongers, to thrust their war program into the background, and to provide a mandate for continued negotiations to adjust the various problems now dividing the powers. These problems, many and complex, include the destruction and banning of A and H-bombs, the cutting down of armaments and the liquidation of the worldwide network of Wall Street's air-bases, the development of East-West trade and cultural relations, the replacement of the NATO, SEATO, and other war alliances by new systems of collective security, the unification and democratization of Germany, the seating of People's China in the United Nations, the ending of the American occupation of Formosa, and many other questions.

THE FIRST IMPORTANT tasks now confronting the peace forces is to defeat those reactionary elements, and they are many and powerful, who, rejecting the mandate of Geneva, will strive to re-ignite the cold war. By sabotaging the prospective negotiations that are now planned, they will try to

push with all vigor the program of military aggression. Especially President Eisenhower should be held responsible to translate into concrete peace deeds the peace commitments which he gave in Geneva.

Then there is the danger that would arise from any notion that the great peace fight has been already won, that henceforth all will be beer and skittles between the USA and the USSR; that the peace forces can now look for harmony between labor and capital, and that we can rest generally upon our oars. Such pollyanaism is nonsensical. The basic difference between the world Socialist and world capitalist systems as such will continue, but, they must not be allowed to create atomic war crises. The relaxation of international tensions may also give freer and sharper expression to the natural competition among the capitalist powers, American imperialism, with such means as can command, will continue its drive for world domination. On the other hand, an end to the cold war, with its hysteria and attacks upon civil liberties, would also result in a more active defense of their class interests by the workers.

Geneva gave a powerful impetus to the policies of the peaceful co-existence of the countries of capitalism and those of Socialism and people's democracy, which is the very heart of the world peace program. The big job now is to drive further along this constructive way. We may be sure that this will be no easy task. The situation demands, particularly of the workers and their allies, the utmost vigilance and a clear understanding of just what took place in Geneva. This is a time for intelligent and persistent action by the workers and other peace forces, not for complacency and inactivity.

On the basis of Geneva, the workers and other peace forces can carry forward their struggle for world peace with new energy and confidence.

Broadway

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from our Bolshoi Ballet Troupe?"

The delegates greeted the Russian's remark with applause. A similar exchange between Moscow and New York would certainly receive the plaudits of theatre audiences in both the U.S. and USSR.

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