

# Fourth International

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## PROBLEMS OF NATIONAL LIBERATION:

1. Why India Spurned the Cripps Plan

2. Lenin's Teachings on National Wars

*An Answer to the Latest Stalinist Forgeries*

*By Felix Morrow*

3. Why We Are Defending China

*By John G. Wright*

4. The Revolutionary Tasks in Ceylon

*From the Program of the Ceylon Socialist Party*

The Auto Workers' Conference . . . by Joe Andrews

Cripps: Too Little, Too Late . . . by Larissa Reed

The Riom Trial . . . . . by Marc Loris

## Manager's Column

We've received many heartening letters this month, not only from our agents but from readers in other countries as well as in the United States:

*J. W. of Los Angeles:* "The FOURTH INTERNATIONAL sold better than usual on the stands this last month. A new issue—the March issue—is here; it is the best yet."

If you haven't been putting the magazine on the newsstands, like our Los Angeles agent, now is the time to do it.

*H.S. of Kansas:* "It is midnight and I've just finished reading the March issue of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL which came today. The contents have got me so worked up—so excited—that I can't sleep. So I thought I'd better get off the bundle order payment, and get some of this excitement off my chest by writing about it, by telling you what a moving revolutionary message that F.I. issue is—for the 'feel' of revolution is certainly in it!"

*M. J. of Pittsburgh:* "Enclosed is a belated \$4.00 on our F. I. bill. Hope we can keep it coming in more regularly hereafter."

*J. B. of Montana:* "I am sending \$1.68 for the March F.I. It has taken awhile longer to sell them this time, but I've done the job. In a small country town like this there have been many young fellows who have gone to the war and a lot of them were readers of the F.I., so I had to look for new readers."

*R. A. of Kansas:* "I received a sample copy of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL for the month of March. I am enclosing check for \$2.00. Please send me the publication for one year beginning with the April issue."

*C. A. of Indianapolis:* "I have been unable to work much this winter, but I am getting lined up okeh now and will take care of part of my account in a week or two at most."

*A. K. of Boston:* "Your system of reminding subscribers—by the large prominent stamp on the cover—is, I think, very good. It is hard to miss it. Glad you got this idea. Enclosed is check for \$2.00 for a year's sub."

*H. A. of England:* "I require for filing and binding purposes single copies of back issues of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL . . . If you have spare copies of these issues in your back number files, you will earn my grat-

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Editor FELIX MORROW

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itude by sending them on. Most of my 1938 copies have been either destroyed or lost in their travels, around the ranks of the newcomers to our tendency and, if it isn't asking too much, I would gladly welcome a complete set of the 1938 NEW IN-

TERNATIONAL, either bound or loose. I regret having to ask for these knowing the burdens, financial and otherwise, already imposed upon you, without being able to pay for them, but believe me, I would be only too pleased to do so were it not for

the currency export restrictions which prevent this."

*M. O. of England:* "Many thanks for the letter which you sent us some weeks ago and the copies of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL . . . which have been arriving fairly regularly.

"We have followed the events in America with close interest, especially the accounts of the trial and indictment of those prosecuted by the government. Goldman's speech was a masterpiece, and certainly ranks amongst the greatest revolutionary defense speeches in history. As a simple but clear exposition of all that revolutionary Marxism, and Trotskyism in particular, stands for, it was perfect. We have not read Cannon's speech, although we have heard about it...

"Needless to say, we are grateful for the literature you have sent. We only hope you continue to send it and that it continues to arrive here. We are in great need of basic works on the Fourth International, the Soviet Union, etc. There is a dearth of Trotsky's work here. Any books, pamphlets, etc. which you can afford to send, we should receive with open arms, and we guarantee that they would be put to a good purpose. Already the papers you have sent us are being circulated around the members here."

\* \* \*

We were pleasantly surprised in checking the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL accounts to find that the following twenty agents have sent in payments during the past month on their bundle accounts: Buffalo, Chicago, Kansas, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Rochester, Montana, St. Paul, Newark, New York, Detroit, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Akron, Boston, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Allentown, New Haven, and Quakerstown. For some of these agents, it is usual; for the others, it is an event. But each month the list of those who have paid lengthens and we hope that soon we won't have the following list of those who have not paid during the month: Texas, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Flint, Youngstown, Indianapolis, New Orleans, Reading, and St. Louis.

While monthly payments from agents become more regular, subscriptions are lagging. Chicago is so far ahead with the number of subs sent in that they stand alone in the field. Minneapolis is the only possible runner-up.

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# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME III

APRIL 1942

NUMBER 4

## Editorial Comment:

### The Indian People Have Answered Cripps—Washington's Campaign Against India —What the British War Cabinet's Proposal Really Means—How the British "Protect" the Minorities—The Rising Tide in the East

The "No!" to Cripps came from the great masses of India. The "No!" would have been a thousandfold more firm and vehement had the toilers been given the opportunity to express themselves directly, in mass meetings in the cities and villages, or in a vote by universal suffrage. But neither the British nor the bourgeois leadership of the Congress wanted to consult the masses; on the contrary, as far as possible, Cripps and Nehru joined in barring the Indian people from learning the content of the negotiations. During the first week of the negotiations the British War Cabinet's "offer" was not revealed to the public; during the next two weeks Nehru and his associates concealed from the Indian people whether they were accepting parts of the British plan and what counter-proposals they were making. It is clear that Nehru very much wanted to arrive at an agreement with the British, and indeed was almost on the point of doing so, as was indicated by the semi-official report on April 9 from New Delhi that "The plan was reported to be acceptable, with the exception of a few minor adjustments." The Congress leaders have made such rotten compromises with the British more than once. One has only to recall the provincial elections of 1937, when the Government of India Act of 1935 went into effect despite Indian protests; the Congress candidates ran on a pledge to reject and combat that new constitution and swept the elections almost everywhere; then, in direct violation of their election pledges, they formed provincial ministries under the new constitution. They abandoned those shiny portfolios reluctantly only after Britain declared India in the war without consulting the Congress or anybody else. . . . If these habitual compromisers, these would-be junior partners of imperialism, had to reject the Churchill-Cripps plan, the masses of India must be surging as never before.

Pressed by Cripps and Roosevelt's special envoy, Louis Johnson, Nehru longingly reached out toward the ministerial portfolios—then looked back fearfully over his shoulder. He told Leland Stowe in an interview that he might be accused of "selling out." What a revealing phrase! Can one imagine genuine revolutionists—Lenin, for example—worried about the masses suspecting a sell-out? Nehru and his bourgeois group *have* sold out more than once; the only limit to their treachery is their fear of losing all influence over the masses—the influence which is the stock-in-trade which they have for sale—and when they reject a proposition from the British overlords it is not the Nehrus but the masses who are resisting.

Perhaps the most remarkable indication of the new tide of national self-confidence of India in facing the im-

perialists was Nehru's statement about Roosevelt and the United States press on April 9, the eve of the breaking off of negotiations. The Indian bourgeoisie has long understood that the United States is becoming heir to the British Empire, and has welcomed it; the Nehrus think they will fare better as junior partners of dollar-diplomacy and have been servile in their praise of Washington. Yet now Nehru spoke in a new tone:

" . . . I must say that many American press comments have amazed me and I can only understand them on the basis of American ignorance of the conditions in India.

"We have had long homilies and patronizing advice as to what is good for us and what is not. There has been sometimes the element of a threat in case we do not accept that advice.

"The advice of friends is always welcome and worthy of consideration, but we are not used to patronage from any country or people and we do not shape our policy on the basis of superior homilies or threats.

" . . . I want to make it clear that we issued no appeals to anybody nor asked for anybody's intervention.

"For my part I admire President Roosevelt . . . but reports that we have asked his intervention in our problems are incorrect, for we realize the burden is ours and we must shoulder it.

"We have shouldered it against the might of a great empire during these last twenty-two years and we have not bowed down to superior might, despite the pains and penalties. We propose to stand erect in the future also, whatever happens. We realize that the achievement of freedom for India, which we have desired so passionately and worked for these long years, is our business. If we are strong enough to achieve it we shall do so; if not, we shall fail.

"We rely ultimately upon ourselves only and no others..."

Such strong language toward the great imperialist powers, and especially toward Washington, is strange on the lips of the spineless Nehrus. And in truth it is not their language. Their words are but the muted reflection of the angry and terrible voice of a great people determined to put an end once and for all to foreign oppression. It is the voice of the Indian revolution.

### Washington's Campaign Against India

Nehru's protest against United States press comment understated the reality. He explained it by "American ignorance of the conditions in India," but the systematic character of the press campaign, the fact that practically the entire press voiced the same opinions, indicates a conscious design. Washington, knowing the usual servile sensitivity of the Indian bourgeoisie toward the United States, undoubtedly inspired a

pressure campaign in the press. Nor was Washington's activity limited to the press and to Louis Johnson's teamwork with Cripps at New Delhi. In the army camps the American troops were being shown British motion pictures about India which pictured a "divided" country united thanks to the white man, and army colonels were lecturing the troops along the same line. Can this have any other meaning than that these troops are being propagandized to shoulder the "white man's burden" in India?

On March 29 Cripps made public the text of the British War Cabinet's proposals. Thereafter, day in and day out, the United States press—Republican and Democratic, liberal and Stalinist—painted up the British "offer" so that blame for no agreement should fall upon the Indian people. Seldom has there been such unanimity in the press—and such brazen falsification of the plain facts. Typical was the New York *Times* editorial (March 31): "British rule in India, if only India herself so will it, has come to an end. No other meaning can be read into the text. . . . There is no room for doubt . . . if they refuse this gift of freedom they will lose . . . the offer of American comradeship that is now theirs for the asking." The liberal New York *Post* editorial (March 31) ecstatically proclaimed: "Britain is giving up 'the brightest jewel in the crown of Empire' to beat Hitler. Those isolationist newspapers which have been throwing dead cats at England ought to stand for a moment of silence while they think that one over." *Time* magazine hailed "India's Magna Charta." The Stalinist press published the completely pro-British UP dispatches and editorial comment of the same stripe. The "left" liberal *Nation* hysterically urged India to accept what Norman Thomas' *Call* pronounced to be "liberal proposals." And so it went, this vile chorus.

None of these papers submitted the Churchill-Cripps proposal to an analysis. The United States press is "free" but a totalitarian press could have scarcely been more successful in concealing from the American people the obvious facts about the British proposition.

## What the Cripps Proposal Means

Leaving aside the proposals for ruling India between now and the end of the war—which the British themselves admitted were less "generous" than the post-war proposals—what kind of regime would be set up by the Cripps plan?

The so-called Native Princes, who autocratically rule over 93 million Indians, maintained in power only by British bayonets, would continue to do as they pleased. If they feel like it, they can *appoint* (no elections of any kind) 25 per cent of the delegates (in proportion to their population) to the "constitution-making body" which Britain will convene after the war, but they can also (after wielding that bloc of 25 per cent of the votes in the service of their British masters) reject the constitution and remain outside the Indian Union, serving the same foul role in India as British-controlled Ulster does in Ireland.

The "Native" Princes are Britain's most venal agents in India, maintained consciously for that purpose since the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. That revolt alarmed the British and led them to seek bases of support within the country; Britain abandoned its previous policy of successively annexing Indian states whenever a pretext arose and instead proceeded to guarantee the feudal rulers of the remaining states their parasitic positions in the innumerable petty principalities, protecting them from the masses and receiving in return the support of the princes for Britain.

Anybody with the slightest acquaintance with India knows that the princes would be toppled from their thrones the moment British soldiers ceased to uphold them. Even the New York *Times* reported from India on March 22, 1942: "The Princes fear that if the British-Indian link is broken, they will ultimately be swept away." Even the ex-Viceroy of India, Lord Halifax (in his April 7 speech in New York which constituted an official British explanation to the American people), who brazenly lied about practically everything else, could make no other claim for the princes except that "the independence of the princes is enshrined in solemn treaties between them and their [British] King-Emperor" and "to scrap them unilaterally would be to scrap one of the principles for which we went to war with Germany." Lord Halifax here says more than he intended: Britain fights not for the right of universal suffrage and the right of self-determination of nations but for the "right" of Britain's puppet princes to oppress the masses.

The text of the Congress statement makes clear that more than anything else the retention of the Native Princes made it impossible for the Congress to go along with Britain. Already the Congress' failure to combat the princes has led to a situation where powerful State Congress movements in the "native" states have bitterly criticized the Nehru-Gandhi leadership as hostile to freedom for those states. In the face of this situation the Congress leadership did not dare sign a plan underwriting the continued rule of the princes.

British imperialism can be measured by this standard: the continuation of the autocratic rule of its puppet princes over 25 per cent of India weighed more in the scales than an agreement with the Indian people. Not even the greatest crisis that ever shook the British Empire, not even the proximity of the Japanese threat, could induce the imperialist bulldog to relax his grip on the throat of India. At all costs Downing Street would retain its suzerainty over the "native" states, where it could maintain British armies and thus maintain its will over the rest of India. The basic assumption of this line of reasoning is: if Japan invades India, Anglo-American forces may eventually dislodge the Nipponese, but if India wins real independence then the British are dislodged from India forever. Churchill-Cripps would much rather lose this war with the chance of fighting another and winning back India than to win this war and surrender India to the Indian people.

All this is obvious enough, but not a hint of it has appeared in the Republican, Democratic, liberal or Stalinist press which, on the contrary, has deliberately whitewashed the British "offer."

## How Britain Protects the Minorities

Cripps, Churchill and Lord Halifax have proclaimed that their plan is designed to protect the minorities—the 80 million Moslems—the 50 million of the Depressed Classes (the Untouchables). Almost all the Moslems are poor peasants, the Depressed Classes are proletarians and landless peasants; from the point of view of misery and oppression one should also list the great masses of the Hindu peasantry (70 per cent of India's 400 millions are peasants) among the "minorities." The character of Cripps-Churchill "protection" of the minorities is indicated by the franchise system dictated to India for provincial elections by the Government of India Act of 1935. The franchise is limited to those with property and education; the great masses are not permitted to vote; only 36 million out of a population of over 300 million in British India were enfranchised voters in the provincial

elections of 1937, as compared to 44 million voters out of a population of 130 million in the United States (where millions of Negroes and poor whites in poll-tax states are still disfranchised). The property-education qualifications disfranchise an even larger proportion of the Moslems about whom Cripps is so solicitous: out of about 80 million Moslems only 7 million could vote in 1937. And practically all the 50 million of the Depressed Classes are disfranchised. This is how England protects the poor minorities!

The entire press—including the Stalinists—has concealed the fact that this is the franchise system under which the provincial assemblies would be elected which in turn (this was the method which used to make the United States Senate notorious as the Rich Man's Club) would choose British India's delegates to the "constitution-making body" of the Cripps plan. Even if there were not a bloc of 25 per cent of the delegates appointed by the Native Princes, the body chosen thus indirectly by the propertied minority would give short shrift to the interests of the Hindu peasantry, the Moslems and the Depressed Classes. Yet this is palmed off by Cripps as a plan for protecting the minorities!

The Moslems of the Arab Middle East, who have so vainly sought freedom from British domination, must derive bitter humor from Britain's solicitude for the Moslem minority in India. Lord Halifax, pointing to the profound difference in the Hindu and Moslem religions as the source of conflict, flatteringly discovers that the differences are all in favor of the Moslem faith: "The outlook of Islam, practical, realist, democratic, is poles asunder from that of Hinduism, mystic, introspective. . . . Hinduism represents a static conception of society. . . . Islam on the other hand is completely out of sympathy with a system that seems to fetter human freedom. . . ." It follows—naturally!—that Britain must protect this admirable Moslem minority which has a "fundamental antipathy" to Hindu religion. . . . The truly impenetrable mystery is why Lord Halifax never proposed that the Moslems should be permitted to rule themselves without British troops in Palestine, Egypt, etc. Or are those Moslems not as democratic as Lord Halifax terms them to be in India?

Halifax may be "sincere" in uttering this tripe about religions as a source of conflict; he is a hide-bound Tory whose every word is weighed down by outlived traditions. But Cripps, says Cripps, is a Marxian socialist, and he certainly is educated in the findings of modern historians. Undoubtedly he could lecture competently on how the progressive struggle of the rising bourgeoisie against the feudal lords was clothed in the religious forms of Protestant-Catholic conflicts. Every English schoolboy knows that Cromwell's Bible-toting Presbyters represented the merchant capitalists in crushing the absolute monarchy and its feudal Church of England defenders. Cripps should know that in Czarist Russia Moslem-Christian riots were a commonplace, not to mention the Black Hundred pogroms against the Jews, and that all this disappeared when the October revolution wiped out the Czarist instigators of the riots and pogroms and the economic roots of division. In fact, if time permitted, we are sure that we could dig up something by Cripps (who was very radical in 1935 when the last Moslem-Hindu riot occurred) which would show that he knew that it was essentially a riot of Moslem *peasants* against Hindu *landlords* and that the British divide-and-rule policy has instigated Moslem-Hindu conflicts. Cripps knows very well that the so-called

Moslem League of Jinnah represents only a small group of ultra reactionary landlords and industrialists who make capital out of trying to keep the Moslem masses separated from the Hindu masses; and that the Moslem League was repudiated decisively at the 1937 elections when it won only 104 out of the 480 seats reserved for Moslems in the provincial legislatures and received only 300,000 votes out of the 7 million cast by Moslems.

So it is not possible to believe that Cripps believed it when he said on the breakdown of negotiations that "The War Cabinet was in a position rather like an arbitrator who tries to arrange a fair compromise between conflicting points of view" of Moslem and Hindu. Cripps lied and knew that he lied.

The Moslem peasants want the land and the Depressed Classes want social, political and economic freedom; these they will achieve, and there will be an end to religious and national friction in India, when the Indian revolution, like the Russian revolution, successfully develops into a proletarian revolution. That is the only solution, both for the minorities and the great masses. All other proposals are deliberate falsehoods.

## The Rising Tide in the East

The 400 millions of India are not alone in their growing national self-confidence. The same spirit of national liberation pervades the 450 millions of China. On April 10 Raymond Clapper sent a significant dispatch from China, which said in part:

"India is by no means the only great nation that has a self-rule issue with the United Nations.

"Talks with top-flight Chinese leaders here have made it clear to me that when this war has been won, China will never submit to a resumption of the foreign controls that were exercised over her affairs for so many decades before the war. . . .

"Chinese leaders emphasize specifically that they cannot submit any longer to extra-territoriality—the fight of foreign powers to operate their own courts in China—or to treaty-port concessions, or to foreign control of customs. . . .

"China has been to some degree in the same fix as India, except that India has been dominated by Britain alone, and China by a number of powers. There has been a growing pressure for years to throw off this control. Today China feels that her resistance to Japan has further strengthened her claim to real freedom in practice."

Such strong language toward the "democracies" is as strange on Chiang Kai-shek's lips as on those of Nehru; in Chiang's case, too, it is but a muted expression of the angry voice of the great masses.

India and China *shall* be free. And in smashing their shackles, these 950 millions—more than two-fifths of the human race!—will be striking perhaps the greatest blow for the freedom of the entire world. "Labor with a white skin cannot emancipate itself where labor with a black skin is branded," said Marx. He was writing of chattel slavery. His words apply equally to colonial slavery. The revolutionary flames in the West in 1917-1923 provided the sparks that brought revolution in the East—in Turkey, Afghanistan, the Arab Middle East and above all in China in 1925-1927; and now the revolution in the East will rekindle the flame in the West.

# Lenin's Teachings on National Wars

## *An Answer to the Latest Stalinist Forgeries in Lenin's Name*

By FELIX MORROW

On March 15, 1942, a grotesque ceremony took place in London. At the Holford Square tenement in which Lenin forty years ago lived for a time in exile, a plaque was unveiled in his honor, draped in the Red Flag and . . . the Union Jack. High officials of the Churchill government surrounded Soviet Ambassador Maisky and his wife as she unveiled the plaque. "Here some of his best works were written," Ambassador Maisky said, according to the press. "Here he developed many of the ideas that led to the creation of the USSR." Nobody disrupted the affair by telling what those ideas were.

This obscene ceremony is aptly characterized by Lenin's own words in *State and Revolution*: "During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes have visited relentless persecution on them and received their teaching with the most savage hostility, the most furious hatred, the most ruthless campaign of lies and slanders. After their death attempts are made to turn the revolutionaries into harmless icons, canonize them, and surround their *names* with a certain halo for the 'consolation' of the oppressed classes and with the object of duping them, while at the same time emasculating and vulgarizing the *real essence* of their revolutionary theories and blunting their revolutionary edge." During 1917-1920 Churchill tried to bury Lenin beneath the ruins of the young Soviet republic; today Churchill collaborates with Stalin in trying to turn Lenin into a harmless icon. Maisky is the appropriate ambassador for this work: he was Minister of Labor in the anti-Soviet Samara Government in the years when Churchill led world capitalist intervention against Lenin.

### The Stalinist Line on War Until 1935

Lenin died in January, 1924. During the next four years the Stalinist bureaucracy seized control of the USSR and of the Communist International. At the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, in 1928, a *permanent* Program was adopted; it was a Stalinist document, which Trotsky submitted to exhaustive criticism in *The Third International after Lenin*. But Stalinist degeneration had not yet reached the point of openly calling upon the workers in imperialist countries to support "their" governments if allied to the Kremlin; on the contrary the Program still had to repeat some Leninist formulations on the question of war; it states:

"The Communist International must devote itself especially to systematic preparation for the struggle against the danger of imperialist wars. Ruthless exposure of social chauvinism, of social imperialism and of pacifist phrase-mongering intended to camouflage the imperialist plans of the bourgeoisie; propaganda in favor of the principal slogans of the Communist International; everyday organizational work in connection with this in the course of which constitutional methods must unflinchingly be combined with unconstitutional methods; organized work in the army and navy—such must be the activity of the Communist Parties in this connection. The fundamental slogans of the Communist International in this connection must be the following: 'Convert imperialist war into civil war'; defeat the 'home' imperialist government; defend the USSR and the colonies by every possible means in the event of imperialist war against them. It is the bounden duty of all Sections of the

Communist International, and of every one of its members, to carry on propaganda for these slogans, to expose the 'socialistic' sophisms and the 'socialistic' camouflage of the League of Nations, and constantly to keep to the front the experiences of the war of 1914-1918." (*Handbook of Marxism*, International Publishers, 1935, p. 1040.)

Incidentally this is still officially the Program of the Communist International.

But perhaps the rise of fascism to power in Germany changed the character of our epoch so it was no longer, as Lenin termed it, "the epoch of imperialist wars, proletarian revolutions and colonial uprisings"? Now it was an epoch of war between fascism and democracy? Stalin dared not say anything of the sort in 1934 in his lengthy Report to the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It was clear that a second world war was coming; how did Stalin characterize it:

"In this connection the victory of fascism in Germany must be regarded . . . as a symptom of the fact that the bourgeoisie is no longer able to find a way out of the present situation on the basis of a peaceful foreign policy, as a consequence of which it is compelled to resort to a policy of war.

"Thus, you see that things are moving towards a new imperialist war as a way out of the present situation.

"Of course there are no grounds for assuming that the war can provide a real way out. On the contrary, it must confuse the situation still more. More than that, it will certainly unleash revolution and put in question the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries, as was the case in the course of the first imperialist war. And if, notwithstanding the experience of the first imperialist war, the bourgeois politicians clutch at war as a drowning man clutches at straw, it shows that they have become utterly confused, have reached an impasse, and are ready to rush headlong over the precipice." (*Handbook of Marxism*, pp. 920-921.)

But perhaps all this was said on the assumption that the "democracies" would be siding with Germany in the coming war and there was an alternative policy if the "democracies" were fighting Germany? This question was dealt with specifically by the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1934, in a pamphlet by R. F. Andrews, and it said:

"Supposing Fascist Germany attacks the USSR, are you in favor of the workers supporting the British or French Government in an attack on Fascist Germany?

"UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES! . . .

"Such action would help the German capitalists to represent the war as one of self-defense. It would strengthen British capitalists and weaken British workers, it would put British imperialism in the event of victory in a favorable position for attacking the USSR, it would mean suppressing the inevitable revolt in India and the Empire.

"On the contrary, by supporting the workers in their struggle against exploitation, profiteering and oppression in wartime—a struggle which is unavoidable in any case—and developing it into a struggle against the war itself, the British workers would undermine Hitler's own front, which would be the most effective assistance British revolutionaries could give to the USSR in such circumstances." ("The Labour Party and the Menace of War.")

A year later this anti-war principle was formulated even more definitively in the leading editorial of *The Labour Monthly* edited by R. Palme Dutt, the most authoritative

Stalinist publication in the English language. Condemning "the attempts to preach the obligation of the working class to subordinate itself to the leadership of the League of Nations," the editorial proclaimed:

"What is our answer to these 'left,' 'pacifist,' 'democratic,' 'anti-fascist' arguments in support of future imperialist war? Our answer remains the Leninist line, the line of international socialism from Marx and Engels, from Stuttgart and Basle up to today. We need more than ever to warn the workers *never* to become entangled in the lines of imperialist policies, but to judge every question of war and peace solely from the standpoint of the working class revolution. The workers under capitalism have no fatherland; their only fatherland is so much of the territory of the globe as they have conquered and made their own, today the territory of the Soviet Union. The participation of the Soviet Union in the League of Nations no more transforms the character of the League of Nations than the participation of a Communist in Parliament transforms the character of Parliament... The false comparison of the position of a working class which has not yet conquered power, which has not yet overthrown its capitalist class, with the position of a working class which has conquered power and has now to maneuver in a capitalist world (and has to maneuver only because the workers in the other countries have not yet overthrown their capitalists) is the favorite fallacy of reformism to confuse the issues and conceal its own capitalist policies..."

"Must we then let the Nazis 'walk over us,' demand the trade union leaders with great heat. Must we not 'defend our country' against Fascism? Is not pacifism in such conditions equivalent to surrender to Fascism? The revolutionary answer is clear. We hold nothing in common with the pacifist position. We do not for a moment exclude military defense against Fascism—on one condition and one condition only, namely, that we have a country to defend. We shall defend Workers' Britain, as an integral part of the World Workers Republic, of the future World Soviet Union, against Fascism with every means in our power. Let the exploiting class in France make way and surrender power to the workers' united front, and the French workers will defend Workers' France against every attack, as they defended the Commune, against the combined French-German ruling class. But until then we shall fight our own exploiting class; we shall not let ourselves be dragged into warring for one set of masters against another; we shall raise the slogan of fraternisation with the German workers and soldiers. Is this 'unpractical'? On the contrary, it is the *only* practical line. For such fraternisation, such fight of the British workers against British Imperialism, will more rapidly undermine the shaking Nazi regime in Germany, will hasten the German revolution, than any 'union sacree' of the trade union leaders with British Imperialism, which will only strengthen the Nazi hold, confirm the Nazi propaganda of the vanity of working-class internationalism, and prolong the war. This is the Leninist line, which remains the only line for the working class in any imperialist war." (*The Labour Monthly*, January, 1935.)

One could ask for nothing clearer than these quotations; they indicate the extent to which, as late as 1935, the Stalinist parties paid lip-service to Lenin's line on war in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution.

## In and Out of the New Line

Then, May 15, 1935, came the Stalin-Laval communique and in it this pregnant sentence: "M. Stalin understands and fully approves the policy of national defense undertaken by France by maintaining her armed forces at the level necessary for security." "Monsieur Stalin" was not then a government official, but General Secretary of the Communist Party. His endorsement of France's war plans subsequently became the open line of all the Communist parties toward the "democracies." How appropriate that this began with a joint state-

ment of Stalin and the "democrat" Laval! Lenin's "epoch of imperialist war, proletarian revolutions and colonial uprisings" was proclaimed to have been transformed into an epoch of "democratic wars against fascism."

However nearly five years of this new epoch ended not in a democratic war against fascism but in the Stalin-Hitler pact which, freeing Hitler from a second front in the East, enabled him to mobilize all his forces for war against the West, a war which (after a few days of insistence that the pact made no change in their policies) was characterized by the Communist parties of Britain, France, etc., as an imperialist war which they would not support. It was in the name of Leninism that this new policy operated, but it was a policy which has been aptly characterized by our French comrades as "defeatism without revolution."

The invasion of Greece (begun by the Italians October 28, 1940, completed by the Germans April 27, 1941) and of Yugoslavia (begun at the end of March 1941 and completed in six weeks) produced in the Comintern press condemnation of . . . Britain for dragging the small countries into the imperialist war.

From September, 1939 until June 22, 1941 the Communist parties proclaimed again that this was the "epoch of imperialist war, proletarian revolutions and colonial uprisings." The colonial peoples of the British and French empires were exhorted to win their independence arms in hand. These tag-ends from Leninism were to hide the nakedness of the period of collaboration under the Stalin-Hitler Pact.

## The War "Changes" Once Again

The epoch of imperialist war and proletarian revolutions abruptly ended, by Stalinist computation, on June 22, 1941. As James W. Ford put it in *The Communist*, October, 1941: "When the war broke out in 1939 it was clearly imperialistic. It was unmistakably a struggle to determine which group of powers was to dominate the world. . . . The strength of the Soviet Union gave stimulus to the peoples of Western Europe in their struggle for national independence against fascism [i.e., after Hitler subjugated them with the aid of the Stalin-Hitler pact—F.M.]. In desperation the Nazis treacherously violated the non-aggression pact and ruthlessly attacked the Soviet people on June 22. Thus a new phase of the war entered, changing all the relation of forces and the character of the war."

It is interesting to note that it took the Communist Party of Britain, busily engaged in rabidly condemning the imperialist war aims of the Churchill government, two weeks to make the switch. As late as the July 5, 1941 issue of *World News and Views* (formerly organ of the Communist International, now published in England without reference to organizational connections), R. Palme Dutt wrote:

"But the British imperialists by no means wish to see a victory for the Soviet Union, with its liberating consequences for Europe. They count, instead, on the basis of the weakening of both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, on establishing their own domination in Europe, and eventually to return to their ultimate aim of crushing the Soviet Union. There is no room for illusions on these ulterior aims of the imperialists."

However, Dutt quickly transferred this correct characterization of British (and American) imperialism into an individual accusation against Moore-Brabazon, Minister of Aircraft Production, who had been indiscreet enough to say just that about the Soviet Union in a speech, and the very concept of British imperialism disappeared from the Stalinist press.

What makes a war imperialist? Stalin and R. Palme

Dutt told us not so long ago, repeating Lenin's thought. Warring for one set of capitalist masters against another is imperialist. The workers under capitalism have no fatherland. Imperialism is the latest—and last—stage in the unfolding of capitalism. Any war conducted by an imperialist power—i. e., the great capitalist powers, ruled by finance capital and holding the colonial peoples in subjection either by direct rule or by dollar diplomacy—is an imperialist war. The participation of the Soviet Union in the war no more transforms the character of the war of the imperialist nations than the participation of the Soviet Union transformed the character of the League of Nations. The British-Soviet pact no more changes the politics of Britain's war than the Hitler-Stalin pact changed the politics of Germany's war. War—Lenin never tired of repeating Clausewitz's formula—is the continuation of politics by other means. And the politics of an imperialist power is always imperialist. Lenin's sharpest condemnations of Kautsky were directed at his attempts to characterize imperialism as but one of several policies which the capitalist powers might pursue. Imperialism, Lenin answered, is not merely a policy; it is a social, economic and political *stage* of capitalism, the latest and last; an *epoch* which determined the character of all specific policies of capitalist states. Lenin branded Kautsky as a traitor for *implying* that capitalist powers could pursue an alternative to imperialism. The Stalinist assertion that defense of the Soviet Union requires that the American and British workers support "their" imperialist governments in the war is refuted by the fact that for 18 years after the establishment of the Soviet Union no one dreamed of proposing such a policy.

These truths penetrate into the ranks of the Communist Party in spite of the totalitarian regime. Its Acting National Secretary, Robert Minor, complains of "adulteration of the point of view of the revolutionary working class by admixtures of pacifism and opposition to war 'in general'" and blames it with utter brass on "ignorance of the history and the theoretical basis of our movement among even honest sympathizers or members of our Party itself."

## The Latest Stalinist Forgeries

To calm these doubters, Minor tells them that Lenin himself predicted just such a "war for national liberation" as the "democracies" are now waging! Such is the thesis solemnly offered by Minor to the "honest sympathizers or members of our Party" who are now "stumbling," in an article entitled "Lenin on the Junius Pamphlet," in the October, 1941 *Communist*, the gist of which Minor has since repeated in numerous articles and speeches.

Minor's thesis is stated as follows: "By the Hitler war, Europe and the whole world are 'thrown back for several decades,' and against this hideous reaction, 'wars of national liberation' have become inevitable on the part of all nations of the world and all states capable of defending their national independence."

If "all nations of the world" are now capable of waging wars of national liberation, this is obviously no longer the epoch of imperialist war and proletarian revolution. Proof? Minor adduces the fact that in August, 1916, Lenin wrote that "to picture world history as advancing smoothly and steadily without sometimes taking gigantic strides backward is undialectical, unscientific and theoretically wrong." Minor then pours vituperation on Trotsky and others who allegedly

claim that history always moves forward.\* This paves the way to falsifying a quotation from Lenin in order that Lenin's thought that strides backward are possible *within the epoch of imperialism* is identified with the Stalinist claim that this is no longer the epoch of imperialism!

Here is Minor's deliberate forgery:

"It should be noted that Lenin states this carefully as a question of scientific principle: that 'gigantic strides backward' do occur in history and are in accord with the laws of motion of society. At an earlier time, during the World War, he referred to the matter, saying: 'We are dealing here with large historic epochs; there are and there will be, in every age, individual, partial, backward and forward movement . . .' (*The Imperialist War*) . . . The 'temporary step backward' has eventuated."

Minor does it very neatly—a quotation from Lenin and a reference to the book from which it comes. The reader is not provided by Minor with the page number from the 402-page *The Imperialist War*—and no wonder! For Minor's "quotation" is deliberately faked to give exactly the opposite idea from that which Lenin wrote!

Minor's "quotation" comes from page 125 of *The Imperialist War* and the extent of his deliberate falsification of Lenin's thought will be clear only to those who read that article; entitled "Under A Stolen Flag," it is an attack by Lenin on the Menshevik, A. Potresov, for using the "stolen flag" of Marxism to cover support of the imperialist war.

Lenin condemns Potresov for dragging the proletarian movement backward; "he drags it back to the slogans and ideology of the old bourgeois democracy, to the dependence of the masses upon the bourgeoisie." Then, to show the falsity of thus going backwards in policy, Lenin shows that we live in an entirely different epoch from that in which Marx lived. The second sentence of the following passage is the one which Minor "quoted"—but notice that Lenin is referring to the possibility of developments backward which, however, he insists, would *not* determine our policy; our policy is determined by the fundamental character of our epoch! Lenin writes:

"We are undoubtedly living on the border-line of two epochs, and historic events of the greatest importance that are taking place before our eyes can be understood only if, in the first place, we analyze the objective conditions of the

\*Minor's "quotation" from Trotsky is of course faked: "Is it not possible that Mr. Trotsky was right in saying that what Hitler is doing is to bring about the 'national unification' of Germany, in saying that 'Bismarck only half fulfilled this task, leaving almost intact the entire feudal and particularist rubbish,' and failed to centralize Germany. If, as our latest books tell us, history moves only forward, then is it not possible that Trotsky spoke the truth in saying 'Both these tasks fell to Hitler. The leader of fascism came forward in his own fashion as the continuator of Bismarck.'" Minor wisely does not cite his source; his "quotation" is from Trotsky's "A Fresh Lesson: On the Character of the Coming War," in the Dec. 1938 *New Internationalist*. What Trotsky actually wrote was:

"The leader of Fascism came forward, in his own fashion, as the continuator of Bismarck, who in his turn had been the executor of the bourgeois bankrupts of 1848. But this is in the long run only the superficial aspect of the process. Its social content has radically changed. From the progressive factor that it was, the national state has long since been transformed in advanced countries into a brake on the development of productive forces. Ten million more Germans within the boundaries of Germany do not alter the reactionary nature of the national state. For Hitler it is not at all a question of 'unifying Germans' as an independent task, but of creating a broader European drill-ground for future world expansion."

In short, Trotsky wrote the *opposite* of what Minor's "quotation" attributes to him.

Such is the Stalin school of falsification.

transition from one epoch to the other. We are dealing here with large historic epochs; there are, and there will be in every age, individual, partial, backward and forward movements; there are and there will be various deviations from the average type and average tempo of the movement. We cannot know how rapidly and how successfully the various historic movements of a given epoch will develop, *but* we can and do know *which class* occupies the centre of one or the other epoch, determining its main contents, the main direction of its development, the main characteristics of the historic circumstances of that epoch, etc. Only on this basis, i.e., by taking into account, in the first place, the fundamental distinguishing features of the various 'epochs' (and not individual episodes in the history of individual countries) can we correctly determine our tactics; and only the knowledge of the fundamental features of a given epoch can serve as a basis for understanding in greater detail the peculiarities of one or the other country. . . .

"The usual division of historical epochs, many times quoted in Marxian literature, is this: (1) 1789-1871; (2) 1871-1914; (3) 1914. . . The First Epoch, from the great French Revolution to the Franco-Prussian War, is the epoch of the rise of the bourgeoisie, of its full victory. . . . The Second Epoch is the epoch of the full domination and decline of the bourgeoisie, an epoch of transition from the progressive character of the bourgeoisie to reactionary, even rabidly reactionary, finance capital. This is the epoch when there are being prepared and there slowly gather the forces of a new class of modern democracy [the proletariat—F.M.]. The Third Epoch, which is just beginning, places the bourgeoisie in the same position as that in which the feudal lords found themselves during the First Epoch. This is the epoch of imperialism and imperialist convulsions resulting from the nature of imperialism. . . .

"In place of the struggle of rising capital striving towards national liberation from the remnants of feudalism, there has come the struggle of the most reactionary finance capital against the new forces, the struggle of a power that has exhausted and outlived itself, that is headed downward towards decay. The bourgeois-national framework of states, which in the First Epoch was a support to the *development* of the productive forces of humanity then in the process of liberating itself from feudalism has now, in the Third Epoch, become a *hindrance* to the free development of the productive forces. From a rising, progressive class the bourgeoisie has become a sinking, decaying, internally dead, reactionary class. The rising class—on a wide international scale—has become an entirely different one." (*The Imperialist War*, pp. 125-129.)

After reading this passage, a reader, unfamiliar with the Stalin school of falsification, will rub his eyes as he realizes Minor's conscious misuse of a sentence out of a passage—and an entire book—which teaches exactly the opposite of Minor's doctrine.

Why is it treason to the working class to support an imperialist state in war? Lenin answers: because the bourgeois-national state has become a hindrance to the free development of the productive forces. Lenin's answer applies to 1942 even more than to 1914—after the permanent world crisis of 1918-1939. Imperialism is not a spigot, turned on and off by Stalin's twists and turns; it is the economic, social and political character of our epoch, and determines the character of any war conducted by the imperialist powers.

Minor's forged quotation about "backward movements" is merely the atmospheric setting for something much more grandiose—"proof" that Lenin and other Marxists were able "to describe accurately 25 years ago the main conditions under which we are fighting now in a war which they then said would justifiably be supported by the workers and peoples of the world and by the revolutionary party of the working class." His "proof" is a section from an article written by Lenin in August, 1916, entitled, "On the Junius Pamphlet."

This monstrous falsification of Lenin, really breath-tak-

ing in its scope, demonstrates anew the extent to which Stalinism shares Hitler's precept: "the grosser the lie the more readily people believe it." But we must try to cleanse these Augean stables.

## Lenin's Teachings on National Wars

During 1916 Lenin found himself in conflict with an important section of the Bolshevik leadership—Bukharin, Pyatakov and others—and with some of his closest international allies in the Zimmerwald Left—the Dutch and Polish revolutionists—on the national question. The main question immediately at issue was the connection of the slogan of national liberation for oppressed nationalities with the coming revolutions in the "prison-houses of peoples," Russia and Austro-Hungary; in reaction against the national-chauvinism of the Pilsudski socialists, the revolutionary socialists of Poland, led by Rosa Luxemburg, mistakenly rejected the slogan of national liberation, and out of similar circumstances came the similar mistake of the others. Lenin, firmly keeping to the forefront the importance of colonial uprisings against imperialism and of revolts of small nations against imperialist domination, sharply defended the Bolshevik position on the national question—the issue, indeed, nearly led to a split in the Bolsheviks abroad.

Preoccupied with the struggle within the Bolsheviks and the Zimmerwald Left on the national question, Lenin devoted two pages to it in the course of his article, warmly hailing the famous Junius pamphlet, *The Crisis of Social-Democracy*, the first illegal revolutionary pamphlet to appear in Germany during the war. Junius (Rosa Luxemburg) had written at one point: "In the epoch of imperialism there can be no more national wars." Her mistake, said Lenin, is "to lose sight of the national movements against imperialism," and to show the possibility of national wars *against imperialism* he gave three examples, which are worth describing because they exemplify Lenin's method on the national question and they will show how deliberately false is Minor's "quotation."

### I.

Very significant for today is Lenin's insistence that a war waged by a colonial or semicolonial country against an imperialist power can remain a progressive war—such as China's war against Japan—in *spite* of China having imperialist "allies." Lenin writes:

"Every war is a continuation of politics by other means. The continuation of the national-liberation politics of the colonies must *necessarily* be national wars on their part *against* imperialism. Such wars *may* lead to an imperialist war of the present 'great' imperialist powers, but they may also not lead to this—it depends on a number of circumstances.

"To take an example: in the Seven Years War, Britain and France were fighting for colonies; that is, they were waging an imperialist war (which is possible on the basis of slave rule or of primitive capitalism just as much as on the contemporary basis of highly developed capitalism). France was vanquished and lost a part of her colonies. Several years later there began a national-liberation war of the North American States against Britain alone. France and Spain, who still owned a part of the present United States, were led by their hostility to Britain—that is, by their imperialist interest—to enter into a friendly agreement with the States that were rebelling against Britain. French troops fought along with the Americans against the English. We thus see a national-liberation war, in which the imperialist cooperation [with the colony—F.M.] appears merely as a secondary element without serious significance. . . ."

(Lenin, "On the Junius Pamphlet," first printed in English in *The Labour Monthly*, Jan. 1935.)

It is clear here that Lenin gives no credit for progressiveness to the imperialist powers which for "their own imperialist interests" would be supporting such a war as China's war against Japan. Here is the essence of Lenin's method on such wars. That method, applied to the present war, characterizes the war of China and the Soviet Union, non-imperialist countries, as progressive, while the war of the imperialist powers *on both sides* remains reactionary. Contrast this Leninist method with the Stalinist claptrap whereby—presumably by osmosis or contagion—imperialist allies of non-imperialist countries are whitewashed into progressives!

## II.

In the above example Lenin was considering the great colonial and semicolonial countries like India, China and Persia, fighting their main imperialist oppressors where it was possible for the imperialist cooperation with the colonial country to be "merely a secondary element." In Europe, however, as the example of Serbia showed, the small capitalist countries are swallowed up in a general imperialist war so that the national element then "has no serious significance compared to the basic imperialist rivalries."

But, added Lenin, thinking particularly of the coming break-up of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires, opening the way to national independence for the Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Letts, Finns, Poles, etc., there may be occasions when the national struggles for liberation by these small peoples may not be submerged in a general imperialist war:

"The imperialist era has made the present war into an imperialist war; it will necessarily (until the advent of socialism) produce new imperialist wars; it has made the politics of the present great powers essentially imperialist—but this 'epoch' in no way excludes a national war, e.g. on the part of the small (even though annexed or nationally subjected) states *against* the imperialist powers, in the same way as it does not exclude large scale national movements in Eastern Europe. . . . In the event of the 'great' powers being thoroughly exhausted in the present war, or in the event of a victory of the revolution in Russia, national wars are quite possible and may even be successful. On the one hand, the interference of the imperialist powers would *not* necessarily take place in every case. If, on the other hand, it is decided 'off one's bat' that a war of a small state against a giant is hopeless, then we must answer that a hopeless war is also a war. Besides that, the appearance of certain phenomena inside the 'giants'—for instance the outbreak of a revolution—may change a hopeless war into a very hopeful one." (*idem.*)

Lenin's thought here is too unambiguous to permit of Stalinist "interpretation": the exhaustion of the imperialists or the Russian revolution can provide conditions for an *isolated* war of national liberation of a small nation against an imperialist power, *but* if a general imperialist war breaks out "the national element . . . has no serious significance compared to the basic imperialist rivalries." By this criterion it is clear how anti-Leninist is the claim of the Stalinists that Britain's allies, Greece and Yugoslavia (the latter an imperialist state oppressing the Croats), were fighting "national-liberation" wars against Germany.

## III.

Lenin was writing this article in the dark days of August, 1916, when the European proletariat was dormant; it was conceivable that the war might end without a revolutionary upheaval. In March, 1916, Lenin wrote: "It is possible, however, that five, ten and even more years will pass before

the beginning of the socialist revolution." In January, 1917, he said: "We, the older men, will perhaps not live long enough to see the decisive battles of the impending revolution." Under certain conditions, if no revolutions come, said Lenin, there might even be a national war in Europe:

". . . if the European proletariat proved to be powerless for twenty years; if the present war should end with Napoleonic victories and the subjection of a whole series of national states that are capable of life; if non-European imperialism (mainly Japanese and American) should also hold out for twenty years, without going over to socialism, for instance, as a result of a Japanese-American war,—then a large-scale national war in Europe would be possible. This would mean for Europe a *retrograde* development of several decades, and is improbable. But it is *not* impossible, since it is non-dialectical, non-scientific, and theoretically incorrect to imagine world history as progressing smoothly and accurately forward, without occasional enormous retrogressive steps." (*idem.*)

Fortunately for humanity, the "improbable" did not occur. The European proletariat did *not* prove to be powerless for twenty years; on the contrary the October revolution destroyed capitalism in one of the key countries of world imperialism, the Soviet Union survived and its weight in Europe and the post-war wave of revolution made impossible any attempt by France to establish a Napoleonic domination of the continent. Otherwise it is conceivable that, over a period of twenty years (note Lenin's emphasis on how long such a development would take) victorious France, with an absolutely free hand in Europe, permanently occupying the Ruhr and stripping Germany of its industries and economic resources (as well as its colonies) could have reduced Germany to the status of a non-imperialist nation (its finance-capital structure would have been wiped out). And after twenty years, with the old German capitalist class gone from the scene, a new generation in Germany whose bourgeoisie would have been equivalent to the bourgeoisie of a semicolonial country might have, in alliance with other subjugated nations on the continent, conducted a war of national-liberation *in Europe*. This is an example of the "improbable" but "not impossible" perspective had no revolutions come during or after the first imperialist war.

But revolution did come, and henceforth Lenin never gave any place in his thoughts to the possibility of such a national war in Europe. Lenin lived for six years after the October revolution, perhaps the most fruitful years of his life. It is no accident that Minor and the Stalinists have to dig back to 1916, *before* even the February revolution, for something in which Lenin concedes even the possibility of such a national war in Europe! No amount of combing will find anything of the sort in Lenin's writings between February, 1917 and his death in January, 1924.

Now, having described what Lenin had to say on national wars *against imperialism* in his August, 1916 articles, we are in a position to measure the monstrosity of the Stalinist falsification of that article.

## Five Stalinist Forgeries

Minor writes:

"In this article Lenin, with startling accuracy, sketched the possibilities and even foretold as probable a great national war in Europe in connection with the rise of a dictator-conqueror of the Napoleon type—provided that certain conditions were to come about. The reader will see what the conditions were, as forecast by Lenin. Among them are: if the war of 1914-1918 were to be concluded in such a way that 'the proletariat of Europe proved to be powerless for some twenty years'; and if that were to result in 'victories of the type of Napoleon's

and the enslavement of a number of vital national states'; if 'extra-European imperialism' held out for twenty years; and if there should come a victorious revolution in Russia. If these conditions were to come about, said Lenin, a 'great national war'—i.e., a just war in defense of national independence, would be possible.

"The occurrence of the first three of these conditions 'would be a development of Europe backward by some decades,' said Lenin. . . .

"The 'temporary step backward' has eventuated. By the Hitler war, Europe and the whole world are 'thrown back for several decades,' and against this hideous reaction, 'wars of national liberation' have become inevitable on the part of all nations of the world." (*The Communist*, Oct. 1941, p. 881, my italics—F.M.)

Let us list the main Stalinist forgeries in this fabrication of Minor which follows the Hitler-Stalin precept that "the grosser the lie the more readily people believe it."

*Forgery No. 1:* Of Lenin's examples of different types of national wars cited above, Nos. II and III are *mutually exclusive*: the existence of one excludes the other. III was based on what might happen if there were no Russian revolution and II is based on the perspective of a Russian revolution—II and III could not *both* happen. But in order to connect together the "great national war" of a revolution-less Europe with the not-to-be-denied Russian revolution, Minor, deliberately committing a forgery, *puts together as a single set of conditions* Lenin's mutually exclusive conditions for II (revolution) and III (no revolution)!

*Forgery No. 2:* Example III—a great national war in Europe—could happen only if, in addition to the absence of any successful revolutions, there would be a Napoleonic domination of Europe for "some twenty years," says Lenin, i.e., long enough to wipe out the imperialist structure of a country like France and reduce it to semicolonial character. This, of course, did not happen after the first imperialist war. This has not happened and could not have happened in the two and a half years since the second imperialist war began—if nothing else, the time that has elapsed is too short for such a process: both Vichy and DeGaullist France are imperialist powers retaining colonial empires, the governments-in-exile are fighting both to recover their own imperialist interests (Holland's great colonial empire, Yugoslav oppression of the Croats, Czech oppression of the Slovaks and the Sudetens, etc.) and as satellites of Anglo-American imperialism. *And the war is still unfolding*—to be ended, we are certain, by proletarian and colonial revolutions far greater in scope than the revolutionary wave of 1917-23. The task of the masses in the occupied countries is not "national war"—wars can only be fought by *states* and *armies*—but revolution against Nazi domination. To apply to this situation in Europe Lenin's hypothesis of what could happen after "some twenty years" of Napoleonic domination of Europe can only be done by a Stalinist falsifier.

*Forgery No. 3:* To Lenin the possibility of a great national war in Europe was "improbable" even in the dark days of 1916, and he never referred to it again after the February revolution. Minor falsifies this to mean that "Lenin, with startling accuracy, sketched the possibilities and even foretold as *probable* a great national war in Europe." Lenin wrote "improbable"; Minor simply changes it to "probable"!

*Forgery No. 4:* Even if this improbable situation became reality, Lenin never said that imperialists if allied to a non-imperialist country thereby become capable of fighting progressive wars. As we saw by his example I, China's war against Japan does not make Anglo-American imperialism's

war against Japan progressive, any more than Spain and France's war against England became progressive because they were allied to the American colonies. Lenin makes this absolutely clear. It would be a "national war" only for the semicolonial countries. Minor deliberately falsifies Lenin to mean that "wars of national liberation have become inevitable on the part of all nations of the world."

## Marx and Lenin on National Wars

*Forgery No. 5:* Minor pretends that the Marxist-Leninist tradition is that, in a national war, it is the duty of the proletariat to collaborate with the bourgeois government, vote for its war budgets, etc. This is precisely the *same* falsification of Marx's teachings concocted by the social-chauvinists during the first imperialist war.

Here is what Lenin had to say on the *real* Marxist tradition toward national wars and its falsification by the social-chauvinists:

"The policy of the social-chauvinists, their justification of the war from the bourgeois standpoint of national liberty, their acceptance of the "defense of the fatherland," their voting for war appropriations, their participation in the cabinets, etc., etc., is a direct betrayal of Socialism. . . .

"The Russian social-chauvinists refer to Marx's tactics in the war of 1870. . . .

"All these references are an abominable distortion of Marx and Engels' views. . . . The war of 1870-71 was historically progressive on Germany's side up to the defeat of Napoleon III. . . . Even at the beginning of the war of 1870-1871 Marx and Engels approved of Bebel's and Liebknecht's refusal to vote for military appropriations; they advised the Social-Democrats not to merge with the bourgeoisie, but to defend the independent class-interests of the proletariat." (*The Imperialist War*, p. 228.)

Thus the class struggle was to go on even in a national war, for Marx and Engels, and for Lenin. According to the Stalinist falsification of Marxism-Leninism, however, Bebel and Liebknecht—who correctly considered a vote in favor would be a vote of confidence for the bourgeois government—should have been shot as "fifth columnists" for refusing to vote military appropriations in a national war.

There were many who wanted to do just that to Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht; "millions looked upon every Social-Democrat as having played the part of a murderer and a vile criminal in 1870; the Socialist had been in the eyes of the masses a traitor and an enemy," recalled Liebknecht, "so it was no small thing at that time to swim against the current. But what is to be done, must be done. And so we gritted our teeth in the face of the inevitable. There was no time for fear. . . . Certainly Bebel and I never for a moment thought of the warning. We did not retreat. We had to hold our posts, come what might." "They stuck to their posts," Rosa Luxemburg adds, in the Junius pamphlet, "and for forty years the socialist movement lived upon the moral strength with which it had opposed a world of enemies." The millions who wanted to lynch Liebknecht had at least the excuse that they were not socialists but under bourgeois influence, and that it was a national war for the unification of Germany. The Stalinists, joining the howling bourgeois pack, want to lynch revolutionary internationalists during an imperialist war—in the forged name of Leninism.

But the revolutionary internationalists fear neither the imperialists nor their Stalinist murder-gangs. Following Lenin, we take our motto from Liebknecht in 1870: *against the current*.

# The Riom Trial: The Truth About French "Democracy"

By MARC LORIS

The political life of unoccupied France is one of prostration. "Sit tight and don't budge," seems to be the official watchword. The press submissively follows the instructions of a censorship which oversees everything even to deciding the size of type for the headlines. All polemic is frowned upon, and there is no response except silence to the raging campaign which the Nazi-inspired press of Paris leads against the "Vichy gang." The octogenarian Petain appropriately heads this senile paternalism.

The Riom trial unexpectedly caused a break in this pattern, from the middle of February to the first days of April. The court sessions were more like a parliament than a judicial tribunal. All the political questions of the recent past and of the present were dealt with. Moreover, the trial seriously affects the French-German relations at the present moment.

The history of the trial is very long. Since the military debacle, that is to say for nearly two years, its preparation has been going on. An entirely new category of law and a special court of justice were created by Petain with the aid of the so-called "Constitutional Acts." Petain also created a Council of Political Justice which in October 1941, without a public session, rendered what amounted to a verdict on the five men accused at Riom, declaring them guilty and condemning them to "detention in a fortified enclosure." Many actually believed that this was all of the trial and that the business was finished. But it soon became apparent that this was only a preparation for the trial.

The reasons for the trial are simple. The revenge of the bourgeoisie for the great fright of June 1936, the attempt to compromise definitively the "democratic" ideas of those charged with the military defeat. This blind hate of the revolution led the prosecution to pure idiocy. Thus the indictment charges that Daladier "opened facilities for foreign invasion in peace time, notably through the entry into French territory of thousands of dangerous Spaniards and their leaders." How this "invasion in peace time" of "dangerous Spaniards" could bring on the very real invasion of the German troops is a mystery which the prosecutor would have difficulty in explaining.

An equally important reason for the trial is to give a badly needed appearance of authority to the Petain government. Immediately after the military debacle, the team of Petain-Weygand-Laval brushed aside the entire republican and democratic apparatus and took the power into its own hands with absolute disregard of constitutionality. The trial must serve as a justification and a sort of *post factum* consecration of this *coup d'etat* by juridically establishing the incapacity of Petain's predecessors.

## Gamelin's Silence

The silence of Gamelin, Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies, revealed immediately the purely political character of the trial: it was the trial of democracy and not the trial of the Army. At the very first session Gamelin, who

should know something about the causes of the defeat, declared that he would remain silent during all the debates. His reason: he could not permit that the army be judged! And during all the debates up until the present moment, Gamelin has stayed silent, with the exception of one or two episodic declarations on secondary questions. The Commander-in-Chief has obstinately refused to participate in the discussion on the causes of the military defeat.

But the plot thickens when we learn that the decree by which the special court was created had been slightly altered a short time before the trial, in order to enable the court to prevent the discussion of military operations. In other words, the Vichy government directly permitted, if not ordered, Gamelin to keep his mouth shut.

## The Truths Told by Leon Blum

Leon Blum's defense is as simple as it is explicit: "M. Blum took credit for having saved France from civil war, which he said at the time was a far more imminent threat than that of war with Germany."\* That which is true is true. Blum does nothing more now than repeat what the Trotskyists had charged as early as 1936. Blum is also reported to have said that when he took power the situation was not "pre-revolutionary but practically revolutionary." This phrase seems to be taken word for word from the 1936 documents on France of the Fourth International. Blum's declarations also confirm the estimation that the Trotskyists always gave to all those who saw in Blum a man of good will poorly understanding the needs of the revolution and who tried to enlighten him and convince him: Blum is a perfidious agent of the enemy, perfectly conscious of his role, and he must be denounced as such. Blum himself has just settled this controversy.

At Riom, Blum denounced the hypocrisy of the French bourgeoisie. He recalled that in June 1936 "he found himself considered by French employers and the bourgeoisie generally in the light of a savior, and he denied that anyone had ever appealed to him to use force in repressing sit-down strikes." In June 1936, the French bourgeoisie, no less exactly than Blum, judged that the situation was "not pre-revolutionary but practically revolutionary." The bosses hurried to sign the collective contracts, in fact without even an invitation from the government—the "invitation" of the workers was sufficient. The "social laws" were hastily passed by the deputies, and the senators approved with a celerity unusual for them. The French bourgeoisie showed excellent political judgment. The slightest resistance on their part would have provoked an explosion. Instead the movement was vanquished by the conciliatory policy of Leon Blum. Without conciliation it would have been an open and armed struggle. The bourgeoisie was right when they considered Blum "in the light of a savior." And Blum is right when he now denounces the

\*All quotations are from the New York Times' reports from Riom.

hypocrisy of that bourgeoisie which today pretends to condemn him.

However, there is someone whose hypocrisy Blum forgets to denounce: Blum. In 1936 did Blum tell the workers that the situation was "practically revolutionary" but that he, Blum, was undertaking the job of preventing the revolution and of becoming the savior of the bourgeoisie? No, these truths are told only now and to the bourgeois judges alone. In order to defend himself before the Riom judges Blum was compelled to reveal in broad daylight what a dirty role he had played. We hope the workers will remember these confessions of a traitor.

## The Military Preparation of France

It was undoubtedly Daladier who transformed the trial, and from accused made himself the accuser of the High Command. Much more than to the personal efforts of Daladier, however, such a transformation was due to the enormous responsibility of the military chiefs for the defeat of 1940. This responsibility is so direct that one need only glance at this period to be struck by the fact.

Pétain, however, did not neglect to take precautions. The first had been the understanding with Gamelin that he would remain silent. Another, so it seems, was the choice of witnesses. During six weeks the court saw not a few witnesses pass before it. They were all military men, colonels or generals. It would be hard to explain why they were chosen—why those and not others. For although some of them are important, they are not the foremost figures of the French army. That is clear. Pétain wished to leave the real chiefs out of the trial. This explains the non-appearance of Weygand, head of the army for a number of years and Commander-in-Chief at the moment of the debacle. The witnesses came to the bar to tell their petty personal experiences in their own sectors. It seems that Pétain chose those who could throw the responsibility for their particular difficulties on some scapegoat. However, after several questions, the picture becomes perfectly clear: the prosecution is absolutely incapable of showing that the lack of preparation was due to the insufficiency of credits, to the bad will of the government or to the time lost in strikes. The obvious and immediate fact is the incapacity of the High Command, and not only of Gamelin but of his predecessors, Weygand and Pétain. The last in particular, president of the Commission of National Defense from 1934 to 1939, made in those years precise and well-known declarations against a too great motorization of the army, against a too great utilization of aviation, against the use of tanks as the main offensive force, against the fortification of the Sedan breach.

Some declarations taken at random show the state of the French army. "General Requin said that tank maneuvers had long been under study but were theoretical, without materiel on the field. General Hering declared that he had always espoused the formation of motorized units and at one point in his testimony exclaimed: I only succeeded in converting one disciple, and that was General von Brauchitsch!" On March 24, "several of the generals professed entire ignorance of German preparations and progress in military science. General Huret declared . . . that they were unaware of the German use of rubber boats. 'The use of these rubber boats came to us as a great surprise,' he told the court." If the use of rubber boats was a surprise, what a greater surprise was the combined use of tanks and planes!

After the experience of Poland the High Command

started to wake up a bit. Daladier declares: "Armored divisions were only formed in 1940, but they might have been organized with the material already manufactured long before the war. The obstacle was this singular timidity of the High Command in approaching the question of tanks." The communications among the different parts of the army on campaign were assured by pigeons or messengers as in 1870. The French High Command wasn't yet acquainted with the use of the radio. This is certainly not the fault of the forty-hour week.

## An X-Ray Picture of the Bourgeois State

Independently of the will of the organizers, there appeared at the trial a new defendant: French capitalism. We suddenly learn (in 1942) of the role the big bourgeoisie played in curbing production. And there is plenty of testimony on the subject. General Bernard declares: "The private purveyors' cartel did everything to hamstring the spreading out of orders among manufacturers throughout the country." That is something our American readers understand well! One of the defendants, Pierre Jacomet, former Secretary-General of the French War Ministry, "advanced as a reason for the delay in rush contracts the fact the arms manufacturers, such as Renault, enjoyed a virtual monopoly and so demanded very high prices." Another defendant, former Air Minister Guy LaChambre confessed that, although Minister, he was completely "dependent on plane manufacturers who could not always be held to their promises." Daladier himself explained what was meant by nationalization of war industry. "M. Daladier declared that the measure had been limited to ten principal factories that had been working with antiquated methods. . . . Nationalization had equipped them with modern machinery and made it possible for them to triple their output. . . . He said that generous compensation had been paid by the government to the expropriated munitions makers." One can believe Daladier that the capitalists lost nothing in the exchange!

However, what happened? "M. Daladier said the Schneider factory has built a wall across its premises to prevent access from the nationalized portion to private shops. He charged M. Brandt [another munitions maker] with having removed official records in the dead of night from one of the factories, so that it was necessary to take police measures to have the documents returned." Of course, the police took the documents but were careful not to touch M. Brandt. Imagine what would have happened to a worker caught "removing official documents in the dead of night." How revealing these accounts are. This is a real picture of the French boss, not only in his egotistic thirst for profits, in his blind hate of socialism, but also in his niggardliness and meanness. Schneider, one of the largest French capitalists, raised a wall in the middle of his factory! Brandt, another big boss, stole documents "in the dead of night"! One could not possibly invent more caustic traits with which to characterize a class that has outlived itself. And what to think of the Daladiers and the Blums, not to mention Thorez, who prevented the workers from sweeping away this rotteness!

The government was powerless not only in the face of the trusts, but also in face of the High Command. Daladier lengthily explains how in reality his position as War Minister gave him not the slightest power over the military chiefs, but that on the contrary he could merely act as a rubber stamp for their decisions. The former Air Minister, Guy LaChambre, explains that "Cabinet Ministers did not have full control over

the functioning of their own departments." From one side he had to submit to the decisions of the High Command, from the other "he was dependent on plane manufacturers."

To complete this picture of the bourgeois state it is necessary to speak also of the attitude of the government towards the fascists in the army. Before the Riom court appears a witness, General Gerodias. "He testified a document reached his hands relating to the Spanish Civil War, describing munitions against officers of the Spanish Civil War. 'The document appeared interesting to me,' General Gerodias stated, 'and I had it circulated to the officers of the French Army for their information.'" In reality, the document was a piece of fascist propaganda, and the General actively distributed this propaganda in the army. What happened to the fascist general? Listen carefully: "I was relieved of my command on orders of General Gamelin. Six months later General Gamelin gave me another command of equal importance." Imagine a simple soldier circulating a revolutionary leaflet among the soldiers "for their information"! Five years in prison would be the ordinary penalty. For a general and fascist propaganda it is a six-month vacation. One learns later that this General Gerodias, incidentally, had served on Marshal Petain's staff.

"Another witness, General Montagne, said he had been removed from his command but was restored to favor and sent to another command in a few days. . . . General Montagne said, 'The real reason was that I dared to say that if things kept on as they were we might as well give up.'" Imagine a simple soldier going before his general and declaring to him, "We might as well give up." We doubt very much that he would be "restored to favor" in a few days!

The paradox of the dispute which unfolds before the Riom court is that the defendants can defend themselves only by revealing some truths about the past. By doing this they really condemn the regime of decadent capitalism and they condemn those who defended this regime—themselves.

## The Attitude of Germany

Berlin's attitude toward the Riom trial reflects the dynamics of the French-German relations since the defeat. At the beginning the trial was far from displeasing to the German authorities. The very day after the armistice in June 1940, it is reported, there was German insistence on the establishment of "war guilt." It was hinted by Daladier, indeed, that there would have been no trial at all had it not been for such insistence. Several different times during the very long preparation of the trial, the press of Paris, inspired by the Nazis, started a campaign against the Vichy government, saying it was seeking to stifle the trial.

Now the situation is completely reversed. The Nazis and their lackeys denounce the trial as a farce and a scandal and demand its suspension as soon as possible. The German attack started at the beginning of March, two weeks after the opening of the trial, with a long and violent dispatch from the diplomatic correspondent of the official German news agency D.N.B. The problem was clearly posed: "Definitely to clarify the atmosphere, a controversy in which the aim seems to be to ascertain whether this or that politician or this or that general is responsible for defeat, is immaterial. What matters is to have the answer to the question: Why did France declare war on Germany, knowing full well the Fuehrer's desire for peace? That answer might well become an absolute necessity."

The German opposition to the Riom trial found its ex-

pression most clearly in a speech by Hitler himself. The 15th of March, in a Memorial Day speech, the Fuehrer declared: "At present, proceedings are taking place in France which are characterized by the fact that those responsible for this war are not mentioned in a single word. The proceedings merely deal with insufficient preparations for war. This mentality appears to us incomprehensible, but it reveals perhaps better than anything else the causes for this war." The last sentence is not distinguished by its logic, but one thing is clear: Hitler wants the French to acknowledge their "war guilt."

This question of the responsibility for the war has always had a burning interest for Hitler. In *Mein Kampf* his principal grievance against the Versailles Treaty was that it proclaimed German responsibility for the first World War. Now, the bloody clown, in the midst of the carnage and wreckage, proclaims his love for peace: "I did not want this," trying to convince himself. Besides this personal interest, very apparent in Hitler, the question of war guilt has an enormous political interest. If France's guilt in starting the war were officially recognized, that would be a trump card in the hands of the Nazis in all the occupied countries and—this becomes important—even in Germany. Finally, the confession of "war guilt" would permit Hitler to extract from France many political and economic concessions. But that is also precisely why the French bourgeoisie cannot make such a confession. The pressure on Vichy is great. After Hitler's speech, Fernand de Brinon, Vichy's envoy to the German authorities in Paris, on March 19, came to see Petain especially about the trial. And one can imagine that this question was one of the principal topics of the recent rather mysterious interviews between Petain and Laval. Nevertheless, it is impossible at present for Hitler to get the French bourgeoisie to confess "war guilt."

## The Lessons of the Trial

It seems impossible, however, that the trial will continue as it started. It is too scandalous a defeat for Petain.

It is more important to draw up the balance sheet of that which the trial has already revealed to us. Blum and Daladier by their declarations, Gamelin by his silence, have shown us the real structure of the bourgeois state, the impotence of the elected politicians before the cartels and the General Staff. Blum completely confirmed the analysis of the Popular Front given by the Trotskyists in the face of all the other tendencies of the working class movement.

For the present, the trial has shown the extreme weakness of the Vichy government, the fraud on which it rests. It remains to be seen what the repercussions of the trial are in France. Exactly what do the French know of what is going on in the little provincial town of Riom? Petain took good care of that. Daily instructions are given out by the Bureau of Censorship to the French newspapers indicating even the "commentaries" which are to accompany the reports of the trial. It is certain that from the daily press the French know less about the trial than the Americans. Nevertheless, with the lack of internal cohesion of the police apparatus of Vichy, the debates are probably widely known on the outside; the speeches will very likely be reproduced in the numerous illegal papers. The Riom trial, in revealing the emptiness and the fraud of the Petain government, may under present conditions, contribute to the regeneration of political life in France.

April 8, 1942

# The Auto Workers' Conference

By JOE ANDREWS

The War Emergency Conference of the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers Union met in Detroit April 7-8. It showed that the vital militancy that shattered the defenses of the Fords and duPonts has not been extinguished in the ranks of the automobile workers.

At this conference there was voiced the first powerful voice of protest against the retreat of labor since December 7.

This opposition—150 delegates—was the first sign of a new movement in the auto union, and a new development in American labor as a whole. It was unlike any group or faction in the UAW-CIO in the past.

The daily press, although it correctly pointed out the militancy and determination of this opposition group, did not properly estimate its true strength and importance. At first glance, a group of 150 delegates at a conference of 1,400 delegates may seem insignificant. But these 150 delegates were local officers and shop committeemen representing over 100,000 auto workers of key locals which have been in the forefront of all the battles of the union. The delegation from the locals of Flint, Michigan, always recognized as the heart of the auto union, was solidly against the International Executive Board's policy of retreat before the wartime anti-labor drive. The Flint delegation led the opposition. This was not accidental, since the Flint workers have in every crisis led the auto workers and have provided the militancy for great victories.

In addition delegations from the Dodge and Murray Body locals of Detroit were solid for a militant program in defense of labor's gains. Even more significant, local unions which had formerly been the unpenetrable property of Walter Reuther, notably the West Side Local of Detroit, were split on the question. Both in the numbers they represented, and in the important role of the locals from which they spring, the opposition was a real power.

## A Fight on Basic Questions

Not only was the opposition strong, but the issues were the most fundamental and clearest yet debated in the trade union movement.

There were two main points immediately at issue. First, the International Executive Board's proposal to surrender double-time pay for week-ends and holidays and, second, the question of endorsement of the WPB labor-management speed-up committees. The six-hour debate, in which dozens of delegates participated on both sides, moved inevitably from a specific discussion of these two points to the broadest political issues confronting the workers.

In the end, the International Officers found it impossible to win a favorable vote except by posing the question as a vote for or against President Roosevelt. Opposition speakers proved that to sacrifice double-time pay meant a wage cut while the employers were profiteering. The union administration admitted this in the course of the debate and openly stated in their 10-point program: "The foregoing of this right actually means the acceptance of substantial wage cuts, even in the face of sharply increased living costs during the past 12 months." But the leaders dared not ask the delegates to vote on the issue of wage cuts; the vote was taken as a vote

of confidence in Roosevelt. The President personally intervened with a letter to the conference. It was read again at the end of the debate. Finally, the moment before the vote on overtime pay, Frankensteen shouted from the platform: "Are you going to tell the President of the United States to go to hell?" And with this and on this the vote was taken. One hundred and fifty delegates voted no confidence in Roosevelt—and in his labor lieutenants.

Every previous struggle in the UAW has been channelized into clique fights for power between groups of International Board members. Program and issues were always secondary. Not so this time.

It is an extremely important development that the militant auto workers find not a single member of the International Board to take up their fight. Workers who hitherto blindly followed Secretary-Treasurer George F. Addes, because he paid lip service to their militancy, are now forced to look to themselves for leaders. Men who had been the unqualified supporters of Walter Reuther and his pseudo-socialistic phrase-mongering also find themselves on their own. The top leadership, under pressure from Washington, moved away from the workers; the best of the local union officers, who face the workers in the plants every day, would not follow Addes and Reuther.

The auto union has therefore entered upon a new phase of its life: a struggle between the militant workers in the plants led by local leaders against the top officers of the union acting for the government. It is a battle for the most basic economic and political needs of the workers.

The opposition necessarily must fight not only their own top officials but also Roosevelt, in whose name the officials speak.

## In the Tradition of the UAW

The auto union provides a favorable arena for such a struggle. The conference served to show that the leaders have as yet been unable to wipe out the deservedly famous democracy of the UAW. The union tradition that an opposition has the right to express itself fully had to be observed by the officials.

That the opposition was more powerful than its 150 votes, and that it represents a great proportion of the union membership was admitted by R. J. Thomas, who repeatedly stated at the conference that the opposition was taking the "easy road" by supporting the "popular position." The leadership itself feels the stirring of the ranks and fears the coming storms. The newspaper *PM* has pointed out: "Unless some phases of the UAW's counter-program for 'Equality of Sacrifice' are written into reality there will be a major upheaval in this union." Since the ten-point program includes such demands as the limitation of profits to three per cent, wage adjustments to meet increased living costs, moratorium on debts of draftees and unemployment, it can be predicted that the auto workers will never receive what their officers and Roosevelt promised them in return for the speed-up and the sacrifice of overtime pay.

The UAW has a healthy tradition of rejecting outlived leaders. In the short life of the dynamic auto union since its

rise in 1935 the membership has toppled one leadership after another.

The AFL thought their dictatorial craft union methods could be imposed on the auto workers. But a stormy upheaval unseated the AFL-appointed dictator Francis J. Dillon and launched industrial unionism.

Homer Martin was catapulted to the top as the leader of the fight against Dillon. He was driven from the leadership and reduced to oblivion when he tried to impose a personal dictatorship of his own and to lead the auto workers back to the AFL.

The Stalinists inherited the leadership from the fallen Martin. Then they tried to impose their zig-zag policies and bureaucratic grip on the union, and were quickly discredited and reduced to an impotent minority.

For a period after that, George Addes and Walter Reuther jockeyed for control. Today Walter Reuther, having forced Addes to capitulate, dominates the docile executive board. But he sits on an uneasy throne.

In six years there have been four sets of leaders. Those who are now in power have never been fully trusted by the membership. They have already against them their unprincipled maneuvers and clique fights which have disgusted the rank and file.

Never has a UAW leadership stood in such open opposition to the needs of the ranks. Never has a leadership in the UAW dared to propose speed-up, wage cuts, sacrifice of the basic union rights. They have temporarily found cover under the wing of Roosevelt. In effect the militant opposition

is being told: "You can't fight the leadership of the UAW without fighting Roosevelt." And this is absolutely true.

The fight confronting the auto militants is now infinitely more serious and more difficult than any previous struggle. To unseat the present leaders will require a far more revolutionary upheaval than the past changes of power. The auto workers this time will have to fight on the higher plane of national political issues.

The opposition which took its first steps at the Detroit conference has a great historic task. In leading the struggle against the policy of surrender in the UAW, it will also be providing the inspiration and the program for the entire American trade union movement.

It is singularly appropriate that this task should fall upon those who, in the sit-down strikes, gave the American workers a new revolutionary weapon and a new perspective of industrial unionism. The victory of industrial unionism over craft unionism meant a higher stage of both economic and political development for the American working class. The victory of the new opposition would be even more significant than the rise of the CIO. It would represent the *politicalization* of the American workers. To fight Roosevelt logically means independent labor political action. At last the workers as a class would confront the capitalists as a class in the political field. And that means to raise the decisive question: what class shall rule? Those who stormed the Ford and duPont Empires—perhaps history has also destined them to storm the political Bastilles of the American ruling class.

## Why We Defend China

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

In the fifth year of the Chino-Japanese war and in the third year of the second World War, the Oehlerites and Shachtmanites have suddenly discovered that it no longer is permissible for them to support China's war for national emancipation.

For a time after their break away from us, the Oehlerites and Shachtmanites continued to repeat a few of the scientific formulas they learned in our movement but never completely understood. They accepted our position that the nationalist war of China must be supported despite the crimes of the Chinese bourgeoisie led by the butcher Chiang Kai-shek.

China's war has unfolded since 1937 under Chiang's leadership who continued his role as a willing agent of any imperialist whom he could approach. Still Oehler and Shachtman remained supporters. The second World War exploded. They saw no reason for change. To be sure, the Oehlerites decided to penalize the Chinese people by refusing to extend them material aid, because, they said, Chiang headed their struggle. The Shachtmanites for their part were "able to give only critical support to the Chinese struggle" (*Labor Action*, March 16, 1942). Nevertheless for the more than two and a half years of the war China remained assured of Oehlerite-Shachtmanite support. But not today! Why?

The Oehlerite position, presented in the name of the theory of the permanent revolution, can be summed up in one proposition. Marxists must now conclude that China's role is today identical with that of Serbia in 1914, and that therefore, Oehler's position in 1942 is the same as Lenin's in 1914: "In precisely the same way the Serbian national strug-

gle was no longer supported by the Marxists when it became a phase of the first imperialist war" (*International News*, February 1942).

Lenin used to complain that a sectarian could so confuse issues in a few lines that twice as many volumes were needed to unravel the complex mess. We shall be as brief as possible.

### Lenin's Position on the National Question

Leninist policy on the national question is not reducible to an empty abstraction which may be applied in the same way, under all conditions, at all times, everywhere.

In his 1916 theses on the national question Lenin differentiated between three *types* of country. "The first type — are those advanced countries of western Europe (and America) where the national movement is a thing of the *past*. The second type — eastern Europe, where the national movement is a thing of the *present*. And thirdly, the *semicolony* and colonies where it is in large measure in the *future*" (Lenin's *Collected Works*, Russian edition, vol. XIX, pp. 203-204).

Lenin was not splitting hairs. Nor was he quibbling about grammatical tenses. He was laying bare in this analysis the dialectic of history with regard to the national question. These three types represent three different paths of historical development. The tasks of the workers differ profoundly depending upon the type of country involved.

In the most advanced countries of Europe and America and in Japan the national issue is today simply a reactionary cover for the imperialist bourgeoisie. The national problem has been solved in these nations long ago. Here the revolution-

ists can and must advance immediately to socialism. Since 1914-18 the imperialist bourgeoisies have only further revealed themselves as the mortal enemies of their own nations and of all mankind. For the sake of preserving even a share of their profits and ruling positions they unhesitatingly slaughter millions, destroy vast wealth and betray the vital interests of their respective peoples. The American workers need only look at the French bourgeoisie and its Pétain to discover the real attitude of the bosses towards their "nation." Since the war of 1914-18 the lie of "defense of the fatherland" has become all the more monstrous and vile.

Among the countries of the second type Lenin included the "prison-houses of the peoples," the empires of Austro-Hungary and Russia, and the Balkan cockpit of Europe. In these countries imperialist regimes were denying national independence to the Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Ukrainians, Poles, Finns, Letts, etc. In these countries, Lenin taught, the question of national independence plays a different role from that in advanced countries. Under certain circumstances it is progressive; under other conditions reactionary. What decides is whether or not in every given situation a small country plays an *independent* role in its struggle for national existence. If it does, then the Marxists say: Support of a national struggle in such a case is obligatory upon all workers. Thus, in an *isolated* struggle between a small country like Serbia and an oppressor nation like Austria, Lenin and the Serbian socialists supported Serbia. However, because of the overwhelming economic and political preponderance of the imperialist bourgeoisie, the small European countries cannot play such an independent role in the conditions of an imperialist war. They are too closely integrated economically and politically with the great powers to pursue their own nationalist goals at a time when the full power of the imperialists is unleashed. Lenin and the Serbian socialists never denied during the last war that the Serbs were fighting for their national existence. What they denied was the *independent* role of this struggle once Serbia became involved in the imperialist war. Serbia's war then became completely subordinated to the aims and goals of the imperialists. To support Serbia under these conditions was to support the imperialist war.

"The national element in the Austro-Serbian war," wrote Lenin, "has no serious significance in comparison with the all-determining imperialist competition" (Lenin's *Collected Works*, Russian edition, vol. XIX, p. 183).

The experience of the first World War and the post-war period has proved to the hilt Lenin's analysis that the complete subservience of the small European countries to the great powers precludes for them the attainment of national independence through participation in the imperialist wars. Czech nationalism played a completely reactionary role, during the war as the ally of the "democratic" imperialist camp, after the war as a junior partner of victorious French imperialism; Czechoslovakia was herself an imperialist country, oppressing the Slovaks and the Sudeten Germans. Serbia emerged from the war not as an independent nation, but as an *imperialist-vassal state (Yugoslavia) set up at Versailles*. Polish nationalism supported the Central Powers against the "democracies," and switching camps, also emerged as an imperialist oppressor of Ukrainians and Germans.

In the second World War, the fate of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Roumania, et cetera, demonstrates that the small countries cannot maintain an independent existence but must line up with one or another camp whenever the showdown between the imperialists comes.

This does not mean that the small European countries should forsake their struggle for independence. But they can achieve a lasting and genuine independence only in one way, by joining the proletariat of the ranking imperialist countries in the struggle against the imperialist system, and for socialism. That is why Marxists, while refusing to support the small countries participating in the imperialist war, nevertheless raise the slogan of self-determination.

"The dialectic of history," explained Lenin, "is such that small nations who are impotent as an *independent* factor in the struggle against imperialism, play the role as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, aiding the arrival on the scene of the *real* force against imperialism, namely, the socialist proletariat" (*idem*, p. 270). Lenin's position in regard to the small European countries—after more than two decades in which the bourgeois national movements of these countries demonstrated their completely reactionary content—is as valid today as it was in 1914-18. Their struggles can be progressive only in *isolated* instances.

## Colonial and Semicolonial Countries

We now come to the third type of country—the colonies and semicolonies of Asia, Africa and South and Central America. The world imperialist system consists of two diametrically opposed spheres: the metropolitan centers (the "mother-countries") at one pole and the colonies and semicolonies (the doubly enslaved peoples) at the other. The national task of the workers in the colonial and semicolonial countries differs profoundly from that of the other two types. Their countries are integrated in a different way into the imperialist system. The oppression strikes at all classes in the colonies and semicolonies with the exception of a tiny minority of native agents and partners of the imperialist rulers.

During the first World War there were also sectarians who tried to deny the duty of Marxists to give *unconditional* support to the nationalist mass movements in colonies and semicolonies. Lenin explained:

"Is the actual position of the workers in the oppressor countries and those in the oppressed nations one and the same from the standpoint of the national question?"

"No, it is not the same.

"1. The *economic* difference lies in this, that sections of the working class in the oppressor countries profit from those crumbs of *superprofits* obtained by the bourgeoisie of the oppressing nations, who always tear two skins from the backs of the workers of the oppressed nationalities . . . the workers of an oppressor nation are to a certain extent partners of *their* bourgeoisie in the latter's plundering the workers (and the mass of the population) of an oppressed nation.

"2. The *political* difference lies in this, that the workers of the oppressor nations occupy a *privileged* position in a whole number of spheres of political life as compared with the workers of an oppressed nation.

"3. *Ideologically* or psychologically the difference is this—that the workers of oppressor nations are always educated both in schools and by life itself in the spirit of contempt or indifference toward the workers of oppressed nations.

"And so, in objective reality there is a differentiation *all along the line*" (Lenin's *Collected Works*, Russian edition, vol. XIX, p. 218).

Marxists give political expression to this differentiation in objective reality by singling out the different tasks confronting the workers of the oppressed nations with regard to the national question.

Today as in 1914-18, the task of the European workers, no matter what their country, is the accomplishment of the

socialist revolution, i.e., resuming the road pioneered by the Bolsheviks in the Czarist empire of 1917. The national element—for all its importance—can play in Europe only the same subordinate role that it did in 1914 in the case of Serbia. But the workers in colonial and semicolonial countries in Asia have before them, first of all, the *objective tasks of the democratic revolution*. For them the national question is the most burning and immediate. Whoever seeks to divert them from the solution of this task cannot speak in Lenin's name.

When Lenin wrote his theses on the national question during the first World War, these semicolonial and colonial struggles were still in the *future*. Despite, or rather because of this fact, he kept reiterating in the very midst of an imperialist war, that such struggles were progressive, and must be supported if and when they did occur.

On October 14, 1914, Lenin said:

"The class-conscious proletarians in India and China cannot follow any but the national road, as their countries have not been formed as yet into national states. If China had to wage an aggressive war for this purpose, we could only sympathize with it, since objectively that would be a progressive war" (Lenin's *Collected Works*, English edition, vol. XVIII, p. 69). In August 1915, Lenin wrote:

"The socialists recognized and do recognize at this very moment the legitimacy, progressiveness and justice of 'defending the fatherland' or of a 'defensive war.' For instance, if Morocco were to declare war against France tomorrow, or India against England, or Persia or China against Russia, et cetera, these wars would be 'just,' 'defensive' wars. . . . Every socialist would then wish the victory of the oppressed, dependent, non-sovereign states against the oppressing, slaveholding, pillaging 'great' nations" (*idem*, p. 220).

Dozens of similar quotations could be cited from Lenin's speeches and articles during and after the first World War.

The difference between Serbia and China remains no less profound today. It is impermissible even to talk about the theory of the permanent revolution unless one first understands that the position of the colonial and semicolonial countries in relation to the imperialists is different not only in degree but in kind from that of the small European countries. The colonial and semicolonial peoples can play and are playing an *independent* role not only in isolated struggles, but also in the very midst of an imperialist war.

National struggles of colonial and semicolonial peoples are doubly progressive. First, the struggle tears vast masses of backward peoples out of barbarous systems, particularism and foreign bondage, and thus opens the road for their economic and cultural advancement. Secondly, it strikes mighty blows at the very heart of imperialism, and thus facilitates the struggle for socialism of the workers in Europe, the United States and Japan.

This was Lenin's position. These principles were later incorporated in the programmatic documents of the first four World Congresses of the Communist International. The Trotskyist movement, the genuine continuator of Leninism, has never swerved from this position.

Lenin died in January 1924, on the eve of the first great movement of liberation in Asia. The Chinese revolution erupted in 1925. The Indian masses began to move in the late twenties.

Owing to uneven development the nationalist movement in the colonies and semicolonies is today differentiated into: 1. those countries where it is a thing of the *present* (China, Ceylon, Malaya, Syria, India); 2. those where it is still largely in the *future* (Kenya Colony, Libya, Togoland, Liberia).

What is the criterion whereby Marxists determine whether a colonial or semicolonial country is conducting a progressive struggle? We determine our position, first of all, on the basis of *fact*. Does this struggle play an *independent* role? If it does, we support it. The actions of the imperialists are decisive only to the extent that the nationalist element of the struggle is destroyed by them or their agents. Any one who opposes support of China's war against Japan must first demonstrate that the nationalist element in China's war against Japan has no serious significance in comparison with the direct intervention of China's imperialist "allies."

\* \* \*

Marxists begin by taking the historical task as their point of departure. China must solve her national problem. Is China's struggle today still a national struggle? Oehler still speaks of the Chinese armies as *nationalist armies*. This is precisely what we maintain. We support China's war unconditionally, because, among other things, her armies are today still *primarily* waging a national war. Oehler calls our policy "spreading nationalist confusion." The confusion, however, is in his own head and not in our Leninist policy.

### Petty-Bourgeois Confusionism

Shachtman motivates his current position on China as follows: "China's struggle against Japan was progressive when it was an anti-imperialist struggle; it loses that characteristic when it becomes a struggle against one imperialist power conducted and directed by another imperialist power and its interests" (*Labor Action*, March 16, 1942).

No more than Oehler does he attempt to determine *in fact* whether or not what he claims has actually taken place.

To dispose of China's nationalist struggle, Shachtman waves a magic wand and—presto! change-o!—"the character of the war has changed."

"In the person of Chiang Kai-shek, China has become a tool in the hands of Anglo-American imperialism. . ." (*loc. cit.*).

China—"in the person of Chiang Kai-shek"!

Chiang looms titanic in the imagination of many muddleheads. But just how has the august person of Chiang wiped out the national struggle of China? Shachtman does not say.

Not so long ago Shachtman applied the self-same formula to the Soviet Union. He then argued in effect that "in the person of Stalin" the Soviet Union had become not only a tool of imperialism, but also a counter-revolutionary state, etc., etc., and hence unworthy of his support. Apparently he now wishes to extend this same formula to China. But why stop there? Why is India exempted? If Anglo-American imperialists ever had a tool, they surely possess one in the person of Nehru. Hitler is operating as best he can with Bose. Thus far, the score stands: for China—one tool in one imperialist camp, for India—two tools in two camps. According to Shachtman's logic it would therefore follow that India's national struggle is twice-damned and doubly unworthy of his "critical support."

Chiang is a counter-revolutionary scoundrel today, as he was yesterday, as he will be tomorrow. Nehru will try to repeat in India all the abominations of Chiang in China. If this is a cogent argument for not supporting China or India, then how could the question of support have ever arisen? Why has Shachtman supported China all these years? No, this undeniable fact is only an argument for conducting an irreconcilable struggle against these and all other representatives of the colonial and semicolonial bourgeoisies. A Marx-

ist would draw from this the conclusion that the nationalist struggle must be guided in such a way as to make it easier for the masses to learn from their own experience the true nature of such bourgeois leadership. We propose to help the movement to sweep over the heads of the treacherous bourgeois leadership and thus gain the opportunity for a real proletarian leadership to come to the fore. But to do this, one must not turn one's back on the movement beforehand.

We remain supporters of national struggles whether they are led by Chiang in China, by Nehru or Bose in India. This is what we mean by *unconditional support*. But this does not at all mean that so far as the *outcome* of the struggle itself is concerned, the leadership is of no consequence. On the contrary, the question of the leadership is of paramount importance. That is why we are irreconcilable opponents of Chiang, Nehru, Bose and Co. and their respective bourgeoisies.

To invoke Chiang Kai-shek's role as tool of "Anglo-American imperialism" settles nothing in and of itself. A tool is one thing; a finished job is something else again. If Shachtman means to say thereby that Chiang's role is automatically reducible to that of Wang Ching-wei, the Japanese puppet opposing China's independence, he is merely employing a piece of sophistry which falsifies present reality and is fatal to a really revolutionary policy.

It goes without saying, England and the United States hope to establish the same relationship in China with respect to Chiang that Japan has with Wang. But have they already established it as Japan has? We answer, emphatically no!

To invest his reasoning with a semblance of seriousness Shachtman tries to adduce historical illustrations. China, he says, now occupies the same position as "that occupied by countries like Ethiopia and Libya, Slovakia and Norway" (*Labor Action*, March 16, 1942).

Oehler with his Serbia is rational in comparison with this mish-mash.

Slovakia and Norway lie prostrate under the Nazi boot, but at no time did Shachtman propose to defend those "fatherlands." China's armies are fighting against the same invader today as when Shachtman was for the defense of *this fatherland*.

For both Slovakia and Norway the national question was decided long ago; the only path open for them is to join directly and immediately in the struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe. In short, China's position is not the same as Slovakia's and Norway's but just the opposite.

In Ethiopia England now rules through Haile Selassie's regime. Libya is still in Italy's hands by grace of Hitler and Rommel. For both Ethiopia and Libya the national struggle lies ahead. Their present position is not comparable to that of Norway, Slovakia or China.

## Can China's War Change Character?

To justify his latest betrayal of Marxism, Shachtman points in two opposite directions: with one hand to European peoples whose sole progressive road is socialism, and with the other to African peoples who have not yet entered the road of national existence. Shachtman's crime consists in deserting the *existing* nationalist struggle in the semicolonial country of China, just as he deserted the defense of the Soviet Union.

Naturally, should China's imperialist "allies" establish their domination over China as absolutely as, say, England has over Ethiopia, then China's war against Japan would remain her war in name only. However, to pose the question of a change in the character of China's war, it is first of all

necessary to demonstrate that the relationship of forces has unquestionably shifted in favor of the imperialists. This is the crux of the whole issue.

The only semi-coherent argument adduced by either Oehler or Shachtman for their flip-flop on China is the declaration by Britain and the United States of war against Japan. Oehler blurts this out: "Before the imperialist war (December 7, 1941) we classified the Chinese struggle as progressive." Shachtman employs a shame-faced evasion: "Up to recently, to defend China in her war with Japan was righteous and just. . . ."

We await a rational explanation of just how the Japanese imperialists succeeded in also blowing up China's war by bombing Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 (or "up to recently").

For reasons known only to himself, Shachtman drags in Burma to support his position on China: "The Chinese Army is . . . already fighting on Burmese soil to maintain the imperialist rule of the British bourgeoisie. . . ."

Shachtman declares that the Chinese troops in Burma are fighting on behalf of Anglo-American imperialism. Is this so? Yes and no. More no than yes. The Anglo-American imperialists have a stake in the defeat of the Japanese in Burma as elsewhere, but this is not the only factor in that particular segment of the struggle. The victory of the Chinese forces in Burma over Japan would give a tremendous impetus to the national-revolutionary movement in all Asia, including that of the Burmese peasants, and would bulwark the independence of China.

## The Real Situation in China

The existing Burmese situation proves just the contrary of what this petty-bourgeois confusionist seeks. Japan is better situated to assert her domination over the insurgent peasants of Burma than both England and the United States are today in relation to China. Should the Burmese peasants therefore suspend their struggle for liberation? Should the Marxists on this account refuse to support them?

It is incomprehensible how anyone can support—and correctly so!—a peasant struggle in such an unstable relationship of forces as that in Burma and in the same breath withdraw support from the struggle of the Chinese people who are in a far more advantageous situation.

A demagogue might invoke the Burmese struggle to say that those who are today supporting China bear their share of responsibility for the blood of any insurgent Burmese peasants slaughtered by Chiang in Burma.

But Chiang is also covered from head to foot with the blood of Chinese workers and peasants whom he butchered yesterday as he still does today. Only a Shachtman could imply that any of this blood-guilt is borne by those who support China today just as they have during all these years, despite and against Chiang.

The extension of military hostilities does not and cannot eliminate the national question. On the contrary, it sharpens this struggle in the extreme degree, especially in colonial and semicolonial countries. Above all, China and India.

The outbreak of hostilities between Japanese and Anglo-American imperialism has, in actual fact, complicated rather than solved Japan's difficulties in China. On the other hand, China is freer today to play an independent role *vis a vis* Anglo-American imperialism than at any other time since 1937.

The imperialists in both camps cannot at will transform colonial and semicolonial struggles into their opposite. They

have the will, but they lack the magic powers with which both Shachtman and Oehler endow them. As matters stand at present, all the imperialists who unquestionably intend to destroy nationalist struggles *if* given the opportunity, are not crushing these struggles but are involuntarily doing just the opposite in relation to China and India.

Yes, these bandits are now up to their necks in the dangerous game of supporting Chinese and Indian nationalist movements. Hitler and Japan fan the flames in India. The United States and England are committed to the same maneuver in China, hoping to spread the revolt to Manchuria, Korea, Formosa. Each hopes to weaken thereby his imperialist opponent today, and then to strangle these movements on the morrow. Japan feels sure she can repeat in India what she did in Korea. American imperialists think they can repeat in China their past performances in the Philippines, Cuba, Panama. This is easier said than done. Meanwhile, China is in position to profit from the contradictions in the imperialist camps. So is India.

The intentions of the ruling classes by no means decide great issues. Let us recall two historical instances.

During the Civil War, England and France gave aid to the South. Lincoln's government entered into a *de facto* alliance with Czarism. Russian warships under the command of Grand Duke Alexis appeared in San Francisco harbor at one of the critical junctures in the relations between Washington and France and Great Britain. Thus, in order to defend its national existence and independence, the most progressive government in the world at that time, the United States, was obliged to ally itself with the most reactionary regime in the world—Czarist Russia. This fact did not prevent Marx from wholeheartedly supporting the war of the North against the South, and against the South's imperialist backers.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, two of the most reactionary regimes in Europe, the monarchy of France and the monarchy of Spain, supported the struggle of thirteen insurgent English colonies in North America. Both of these feudal empires possessed vast colonies of their own on this continent. In supporting the American revolution of 1776, the French and Spanish monarchs were intent primarily on dealing a blow to their rival, mighty England, then rising to supremacy. They doubtless proposed to deal with these colonial upstarts at their leisure at some future time. Spanish and French armies and navies fought, side by side, with the forces of the American revolutionists. From the conflict America emerged as an independent nation, signing a separate peace with England in defiance of her pact with France. The Royal Exchequer of France already sadly depleted was further drained by the considerable cost of French support to the American revolution. The financial bankruptcy of the French monarchy, as is well known, played a part in bringing about its downfall and unleashing the Great French Revolution a decade later. It is likewise well known that as a direct consequence of the French revolution, the Spanish monarch toppled from his throne. Very little remained of the colonial empires of France and Spain in the western hemisphere.

Many other examples could be cited to show that time and again the ruling classes found colonial and national-revolutionary movements passing over their heads and taking entirely different direction from the one they had expected and planned for.

The contradictions which are now convulsing all imperialists surpass in intensity the contradictions besetting the French and Spanish monarchies in the eighteenth century. This is

especially true of Japan—*today* the main enemy of China, just as Britain is *today* the main enemy of India.

The Japanese empire now sits astride the volcano of agrarian revolution at home and has temporarily added to her social volcanos abroad (Korea, Manchuria, Formosa) those of Indo-China, Malaya, Philippines, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Burma, etc. The Mikado's strategists are bent on further warming their posteriors on the already white-hot lava of India.

The Chinese revolution, despite seventeen years of terrible bloodletting, still smoulders. Great lessons, great experiences, great traditions have been accumulated. By no means the least of these are the traditions and experiences of the years of struggle against Japan. The decisive battles of this war are still ahead.

India's struggle for liberation strengthens China and is in its own turn strengthened by the latter. All the millions of Asia are watching, learning, waiting. To the Indian workers we say: China's struggle is your struggle. Support it. Whoever tells you otherwise is not your friend, but the friend of your enemies.

Not so very far from Asia stands the Soviet Union where the socialist revolution still lives on. Traitors have turned against the USSR, but not the masses of Asia. They are waiting, watching, learning, preparing to act. Our task is to aid them and not to deal them blows.

From all this we draw the conclusion that the chances of the nationalist movement in Asia sweeping over the heads of all the imperialists are far greater in 1942 than they were in America in 1774.

Oehler and Shachtman today say in effect: Chiang is the main enemy. We, on the contrary, say to the Chinese workers: The Japanese invader is the main enemy. Fire at Japan first—and shoot with anybody who shoots in the same direction. In this way you are best preparing yourselves to assume the leadership of the Chinese nation today. In this way you will best be able to deal on the morrow with all the traitors from Chiang down.

Given the opportunity, Chiang will again betray the Chinese people as he has done so many times in the past. Roosevelt and Churchill are depending a lot on Chiang whom, like Shachtman and Oehler, they identify with the Chinese nation. Only they place a plus where Shachtman and Oehler put a minus sign. At the same time, it is by no means excluded that a section of the Chinese bourgeoisie, particularly the one led by Chiang, may decide that they can strike, after all, a better bargain with Tokyo. Meanwhile, the final outcome will be decided not by the plans in the minds of statesmen but by the struggle itself. To intervene and participate in this struggle, it is necessary to equip the Chinese masses with a correct program, tell them who their main enemy is *today* so that they may concentrate their fire in the right direction.

The divergence between us, on the one hand, and the sectarians and the petty-bourgeois confusionists, on the other, is not at all accidental. It represents the divergence between Marxism and pseudo-Marxism. Those who orient themselves in politics on the basis of a principled method, i.e., the Marxist dialectic, invariably find themselves in conflict with those who operate with sterile formulas and those who slither all over the landscape, depending upon episodic developments in the field of diplomacy, or moves on military maps, or the most recent impressions.

In May 1940 Leon Trotsky predicted: "By its very creation of enormous difficulties and dangers for the imperial-

ist metropolitan centers, the war opens up wide possibilities for the oppressed peoples. The rumbling of the cannon in Europe heralds the approaching hour of their liberation." This prediction is beginning to be realized before our very eyes. The peoples of Asia are stirring to life. A revolutionary situation exists in India; her chances for a successful struggle for emancipation have never been so great as they are at the present time. China's possibilities for success are increasing.

We are passing through the critical juncture in the imperialist epoch when the *nationalist element* in the colonies and semicolonies is assuming titanic proportions. The Oehlerites and Shachtmanites have chosen precisely this moment to desert the struggle for national emancipation in one of its

chief centers, China! Yet these people are trying to issue directives to the revolutionary vanguard in the name of the theory of the permanent revolution. This spectacle would be funny, if it were not so pathetic.

Real Marxists will give unconditional support to China's war against Japan and to India's struggle for national existence. The nationalist struggles of the Chinese and Indian peoples against Japan and England are indispensable and integral parts of that great revolutionary tidal wave in the colonial countries which, merging with the impending socialist revolution in the advanced countries, will sweep away forever the decayed imperialist system.

## The Road to Freedom for Ceylon

EDITOR'S NOTE: On March 13 Governor Sir Andrew Caldecott of Ceylon announced that he had suppressed the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Ceylon Socialist Party), adherent of the Fourth International. This act, coming simultaneously with the British War Cabinet announcement of Cripps' mission to India, indicated in advance the reactionary character of Cripps' proposals. The Ceylon Socialist Party has been especially successful among the In-

dian proletarians who are imported to Ceylon to work the plantations; the party and its Indian following have played an important role in establishing recently the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, adherent of the Fourth International.

The formal suppression of the Ceylon Socialist Party by the British is merely the latest repressive step. In September 1939, the British violated the parliamentary immunity of two party members who had

been elected to the State Council, arresting them and others; seized the printing presses on which the party had been publishing organs in Sinhalese, English and Tamil (for the Indian workers); and this was followed by "unofficial" terrorism against the party by the plantation owners. The party has thus in reality been outlawed for more than two years.

We publish below a section of the program adopted by the party in 1941.

### Introduction of Capitalism in Ceylon

The British completed in 1815 the conquest of Ceylon which they had begun in 1795. By 1834 they built up a modern administrative system which cleared the way for the systematic capitalist development of the country.

The first introduction of capitalism to Ceylon was through the opening of coffee plantations by British capital. This necessitated the recruitment of immigrant labor from South India. This process of the development of the country by means of British capital investment and the exploitation of immigrant labor has continued steadily to the present day. The birth of capitalism was signaled to the people, in its stark reality, in the ruthless expropriation and decimation of tens of thousands of the peasantry in the Kandyan districts to make room for the plantations. The same process was to be repeated in large areas of both the up-country and the low-country with the opening of tea plantations in the late 19th century and of rubber and coconut plantations in the 20th century.

In 1848, upon the heels of the economic crisis in Europe and the resulting coffee crash, there occurred a peasant revolt throughout the Kandyan districts. The movement represented the reaction of the peasantry to their ruthless expropriation. It revealed that the hereditary feudal class had already ceased to exist as an independent historical force: in contrast with the 1818 revolt, the feudal elements did not play a leading part in 1848.

Indeed, the relics of this class have been utilized by the British as the instrument of imperialist administration in the rural districts. This role has been one of petty corruption and medieval oppression. Through the headman system they have been employed to carry out the more menial of the tasks of imperialist administration—a role distinguished by unbridled gangsterism over a disarmed peasantry.

With the exportation of plantation products for the world market, Ceylon entered the world economy. This fact, together with the newly adopted capitalist mode of production, created in Ceylon the main characteristic of capitalist society—the modern divisions of capitalist class and working class—and tied the destinies of our toilers to the whole system of world capitalism.

### The New Classes

In Ceylon the proletariat has had as its beginning the thousands of expropriated peasants of India brought into the plantations. Side by side with them grew in numbers the expropriated peasantry who flocked into the towns to form the urban proletariat.

But in virtue of their overwhelming numbers, their complete class differentiation, their ruthless and direct exploitation by imperialism, the plantation workers are the most important section of the working class in Ceylon. These workers constitute the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat which is destined to be the emancipator of all our toiling masses.

A stunted native bourgeoisie has come belatedly on the scene to take part in the capitalist exploitation of the working class. But the ownership of the main and effective means of production has been and still is in the hands of British capital. Consequently the working class in Ceylon has developed out of all proportion to the relative growth of the native bourgeoisie.

The Ceylonese bourgeoisie had its origin in the primitive accumulation of capital firstly through government service of salaries and prerequisites and contracts and next through the forming of Arrack and toddy rents. At the beginning of this century, through the export of plumbago, and later of coconuts and rubber, the Ceylonese bourgeoisie grew in dimensions as a class. Their planting interests are represented by the Low-country Products Association while the Ceylon Mer-

chants' Chamber represents their more recently developed commercial and trading interests.

Nevertheless, the almost complete absence of manufacturing industries and the subsidiary role that the Ceylonese capitalist class plays in the economy of the country doomed it to subservience to British imperialism.

The stirrings of national-revivalism in 1912-14 proclaimed the fact that the Ceylonese bourgeoisie had at last arrived as a political force upon the social arena.

They organized themselves in 1918 in the Ceylon National Congress through which for almost a decade they played an oppositional role to British imperialism. Even that role began to be given up with the rise of the working class as a political force in the late twenties. Instead, consonant with their class position, they have replaced the feudal remnants as the instrument through which British imperialism administers the country.

It is not possible to serve imperialism and advance the interests of the toiling masses, because imperialism, itself subject to the iron laws of the capitalist process, can survive only by the bloody and ruthless oppression of the toiling masses. Consequently within the first decade of the accession of the bourgeoisie to puppet ministries, the position and relations of the various class interests have fully clarified themselves. Thus the native bourgeoisie can now play only a counter-revolutionary role in the national struggle against imperialism. The development of events since 1931, when the Donoughmore Constitution was introduced, amply illustrates this fact. Indeed, the increase in political consciousness of the masses consequent on the exercise of the adult franchise and general deterioration of economic conditions has only served to make the native bourgeoisie increasingly conscious of its counter-revolutionary role.

## The Struggle Against Imperialism

The first and foremost task facing the toiling masses in Ceylon is the overthrow of British imperialism. With the entry of the anti-imperialist struggle to the openly revolutionary stage, the native bourgeoisie will completely side with the imperialists. Neither the urban petty bourgeoisie nor the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, because of their position of dependence on the capitalist class, can play an independent role in the revolution. Yet because there is no prospect whatsoever of improving their conditions under imperialism, but on the contrary they are actually faced with actual decline and pauperization, they are forced on the revolutionary road.

Although the Ceylon economy is mainly agricultural, the Ceylon peasantry is not subject to the usual form of tenure prevailing under landlordism. The bulk of the peasantry are still proprietors although of uneconomic holdings. The fragmentation of holdings, and the joint ownership of fragmented holdings, the heavy load of peasant indebtedness, the absence of credit and marketing facilities, and the heavy indirect taxation of necessities, all continue to drive the peasant into a chronic state of degradation and misery. At the same time, the number of landless peasants has increased and is increasing even more rapidly. By reason of the fact that these landless peasants and even sections of the small peasant proprietors do part time work in the plantations, they constitute a link between the working class and the peasantry. For these reasons and because of the comparatively high literacy and the already noticeable growth of political consciousness among them, the

peasantry will play an important role. Nevertheless because of their isolation, lack of cohesion, political backwardness and because of the veiled nature of their exploitation by imperialism, the peasantry cannot play an independent revolutionary role.

The only class capable of leading the struggle against imperialism to a successful conclusion is the working class. The concentration and discipline induced by its very place in capitalist economy, its numerical strength, the sharpness of the class antagonisms which daily bring it into direct conflict with the imperialists who are the biggest capitalists in Ceylon, its organization and experience of struggle, and the vital position it occupies in the economy of the country, as well as its steadily worsening conditions under imperialism, combine to make the working class the natural and inevitable organizer and leader of the toiling masses for the overthrow of imperialism.

In India today the bourgeoisie is either openly with the imperialists or is engaged in utilizing the growing anti-imperialist mass tide for striking a bargain with British imperialism while simultaneously diverting the mass movement into innocuous channels. The revolutionary foreground is already occupied by the proletariat, which is the only class capable of leading the peasant majority against imperialism, landlordism and the Native Princes. This opens to the Indian workers the prospect of capturing power before this takes place in the advanced countries of the world. The Indian revolution to be victorious must result in the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In Ceylon, the social tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution, namely the liquidation of landlordism and other feudal forms, have already been accomplished in the low country through the impact of repeated foreign invasions and in the up-country by the British to meet the needs of the plantation development on capitalist lines. Consequently, the development of the struggle against imperialism leads directly to the proletarian revolution. But this does not mean that the seizure of power by the workers in Ceylon can take place only after the proletarian revolution has occurred in the advanced countries of the world. Since the revolution in Ceylon is dependent on and is indeed an integral part of the Indian revolution, the prospect of proletarian revolution, before that can take place in more advanced countries, arises for Ceylon as much as for India.

For this purpose the working class must win the support particularly of the peasantry with whom links exist already in the landless peasants and the small peasant proprietors working on capitalist estates. The proletariat can win for itself the support of the peasants by the slogan of "land to the landless" and establish with this support the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The dictatorship of the proletariat neither in India nor in Ceylon, however, can maintain itself permanently against imperialist reaction, without the support of the international proletariat. Nor can the proletariat of either country, isolated from the world proletariat, solve the economic problems of the country. Only with the support of the international proletariat, through world revolution, can the dictatorship of the proletariat be finally established, and the victory of the socialist revolution be completed.

# From the Arsenal of Marxism

## *A Soviet Note to President Wilson*

*Note of Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs Chicherin to President Woodrow Wilson, transmitted through the Norwegian Attache in Moscow, October 24, 1918.*

Mr. President:

In your message of January 8th to the Congress of the United States of North America, in the sixth point, you spoke of your profound sympathy for Russia, which was then conducting, single-handed, negotiations with the mighty German imperialism. Your program, you declared, demands the evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her political development and national policy, and assure her a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. And you added that "the treatment accorded to Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good-will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy."

The desperate struggle which we were waging at Brest-Litovsk against German imperialism apparently only intensified your sympathy for Soviet Russia, for you sent greetings to the Congress of the Soviets, which under the threat of a German offensive ratified the Brest peace of violence — greetings and assurances that Soviet Russia might count upon American help.

Six months have passed since then, and the Russian people have had sufficient time to get actual tests of your Government's and your Allies' good will, of their comprehension of the needs of the Russian people, of their intelligent unselfish sympathy. This attitude of your Government and of your Allies was shown first of all in the conspiracy which was organized on Russian territory with the financial assistance of your French Allies and with the diplomatic cooperation of your Government as well — the conspiracy of the Czecho-Slovaks to whom your Government is furnishing every kind of assistance.

For some time attempts had been made to create a pretext for a war between Russia and the United States by spreading false stories to the effect that German war prisoners had seized the Siberian railway, but your own officers, and after them Colonel Robins, the head of your Red Cross Mission, had been convinced that these allegations were absolutely false. The Czecho-Slovak conspiracy was organized under the slogan that unless these misled unfortunate people be protected, they would be surrendered to Germany and Austria; but you may find out, among other sources, from the open letter of Captain Sadoul, of the French Military Mission, how unfounded this charge is. The Czecho-Slovaks would have left Russia in the beginning of the year had the French

Government provided ships for them. For several months we have waited in vain for your Allies to provide the opportunity for the Czecho-Slovaks to leave. Evidently these Governments have very much preferred the presence of the Czecho-Slovaks in Russia—the results show for what object—to their departure for France and their participation in the fighting on the French front. The best proof of the real object of the Czecho-Slovak rebellion is the fact that although in control of the Siberian railway, the Czecho-Slovaks have not taken advantage of this to leave Russia, but by the order of the Entente Governments, whose directions they follow, have remained in Russia to become the mainstay of the Russian counter-revolution. Their counter-revolutionary mutiny, which made impossible the transportation of grain and petroleum on the Volga, which cut off the Russian workers and peasants from the Siberian stores of grain and other materials and condemned them to starvation—this was the first experience of the workers and peasants of Russia with your Government and with your Allies after your promises of the beginning of the year. And then came another experience: an attack on North Russia by Allied troops, including American troops, their invasion of Russian territory without any cause and without a declaration of war, the occupation of Russian cities and villages, executions of Soviet officials and other acts of violence against the peaceful population of Russia.

You have promised, Mr. President, to cooperate with Russia in order to obtain for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her political development and her national policy. Actually this cooperation took the form of an attempt of the Czecho-Slovak troops, and later, in Archangel, Murmansk, and the Far East, of your own and your Allies' troops, to force the Russian people to submit to the rule of the oppressing and exploiting classes, whose dominion was overthrown by the workers and peasants of Russia in October, 1917. The revival of the Russian counter-revolution which has already become a corpse, attempts to restore by force its bloody domination over the Russian people — such was the experience of the Russian people, instead of cooperation for the unembarrassed expression of their will which you promised them, Mr. President, in your declarations.

You have also, Mr. President, promised to the Russian people to assist them in their struggle for independence. Actually this is what has occurred: While the Russian people were fighting on the Southern front against the counter-revolution, which has betrayed them to German imperialism and was threatening their independence, while they were using all their energy to organize the defense of their territory against Germany at their Western frontiers, they were forced to move their troops to the East to oppose the Czecho-Slovaks who were bringing them slavery and oppression, and to the North — against your Allies and your own troops, which had invaded their territory, and against the counter-revolutions organized by these troops.

Mr. President, the acid test of the relations between the United States and Russia gave quite different results from those that might have been expected from your message to the Congress. But we have reason not to be altogether dissatisfied with even these results, since the outrages of the counter-revolution in the East and North have shown the workers and peasants of Russia the aims of the Russian counter-revolution, and of its foreign supporters, thereby creating among the Russian people an iron will to defend their liberty and the conquests of the revolution, to defend the land that it has given to the peasants and the factories that it has given to the workers. The fall of Kazan, Symbyrsk, Syzran and Samara should make clear to you, Mr. President, what were the consequences for us of the actions which followed your promises of January 8. Our trials helped us to create a strongly united and disciplined Red Army, which is daily growing stronger and more powerful and which is learning to defend the revolution. The attitude toward us which was actually displayed by your Government and by your Allies could not destroy us; on the contrary, we are now stronger than we were a few months ago, and your present proposal of international negotiations for a general peace finds us alive and strong and in a position to give in the name of Russia our consent to join the negotiations. In your note to Germany you demand the evacuation of occupied territories as a condition which must precede the armistice during which peace negotiations shall begin. We are ready, Mr. President, to conclude an armistice on these conditions, and we ask you to notify us when you, Mr. President, and your Allies intend to remove your troops from Murmansk, Archangel and Siberia. You refuse to conclude an armistice unless Germany will stop the outrages, pillaging, etc., during the evacuation of occupied territories. We allow ourselves, therefore, to draw the conclusion that you and your Allies will order the Czecho-Slovaks to return the part of our gold reserve fund which they seized in Kazan, that you will forbid them to continue as heretofore their acts of pillaging and outrages against the workers and peasants during their forced departure (for we will encourage their speedy departure, without waiting for your order).

With regard to your other peace terms, namely, that the Governments which would conclude peace must express the will of their people, you are aware that our Government fully satisfies this condition. Our Government expresses the will of the Councils of Workmen's, Peasants' and Red Army Deputies, representing at least eighty per cent of the Russian people. This cannot, Mr. President, be said about your Government. But for the sake of humanity and peace we do not demand as a prerequisite of general peace negotiations that all nations participating in the negotiations shall be represented by Councils of People's Commissars elected at a Congress of Councils of Workmen's, Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies. We know that this form of Government will soon be the general form, and that a general peace, when nations will no more be threatened with defeat, will leave them free to put an end to the system and the cliques that forced upon mankind this universal slaughter, and which will, in spite of themselves, surely lead the tortured peoples to create Soviet Governments that give exact expression to their will.

Agreeing to participate at present in negotiations with even such Governments as do not yet express the will of the people, we would like on our part to find out from you, Mr. President, in detail what is your conception of the League of Nations, which you propose as the crowning work of peace.

You demand the independence of Poland, Serbia, Belgium, and freedom for the peoples of Austria-Hungary. You probably mean by this that the masses of the people must everywhere first become the masters of their own fate in order to unite afterward in a league of free nations. But strangely enough, we do not find among your demands the liberation of Ireland, Egypt or India, nor even the liberation of the Philippines, and we would be very sorry if these peoples should be denied the opportunity to participate together with us, through their freely elected representatives, in the organization of the League of Nations.

We would also, Mr. President, very much like to know, before the negotiations with regard to the formation of a League of Nations have begun, what is your conception of the solution of many economic questions which are essential for the cause of future peace. You do not mention the war expenditures — this unbearable burden which the masses would have to carry, unless the League of Nations should renounce payments on the loans to the capitalists of all countries. You know as well as we, Mr. President, that this war is the outcome of the policies of all capitalistic nations, that the governments of all countries were continually piling up armaments, that the ruling groups of all civilized nations pursued a policy of annexations, and that it would, therefore, be extremely unjust if the masses, having paid for these policies with millions of lives and with economic ruin, should yet pay to those who are really responsible for the war a tribute for their policies which resulted in all these countless miseries. We propose, therefore, Mr. President, the annulment of the war loans as the basis of the League of Nations. As to the restoration of the countries that were laid waste by the war, we believe it is only just that all nations should in this respect aid the unfortunate Belgium, Poland and Serbia; and however poor and ruined Russia seems to be, she is ready on her part to do everything she can to help these victims of the war, and she expects that American capital, which has not at all suffered from this war and has even made many millions in profits out of it, will do its part to help these peoples.

But the League of Nations should not only liquidate the present war, but also make impossible any wars in the future. You must be aware, Mr. President, that the capitalists of your country are planning to apply in the future the same policies of encroachment and of super-profits in China and in Siberia; and that, fearing competition from Japanese capitalists, they are preparing a military force to overcome the resistance which they may meet from Japan. You are no doubt aware of similar plans of the capitalists and ruling circles of other countries with regard to other territories and other peoples. Knowing this, you will have to agree with us that the factories, mines and banks must not be left in the hands of private persons, who have always made use of the vast means of production created by the masses of the people to export products and capital to foreign countries in order to reap super-profits in return for the benefits forced on them, their struggle for spoils resulting in imperialistic wars. We propose, therefore, Mr. President, that the League of Nations be based on the expropriation of the capitalists of all countries. In your country, Mr. President, the banks and the industries are in the hands of such a small group of capitalists that, as your personal friend, Colonel Robins, assured us, the arrest of twenty heads of capitalistic cliques and the transfer of the control, which by characteristic capitalistic methods they have come to possess, into the hands of the masses of the world is all that would be required to destroy

the principal source of new wars. If you will agree to this, Mr. President—if the sources of future wars will thus be destroyed, then there can be no doubt that it would be easy to remove all economic barriers and that all peoples, controlling their means of production, will be vitally interested in exchanging the things they do not need for the things they need. It will then be a question of an exchange of products between nations, each of which produces what it can best produce, and the League of Nations will be a league of mutual aid of the toiling masses. It will then be easy to reduce the armed forces to the limit necessary for the maintenance of internal safety.

We know very well that the selfish capitalist class will attempt to create this internal menace, just as the Russian landlords and capitalists are now attempting, with the aid of American, English and French armed forces, to take the factories from the workers and the land from the peasants. But, if the American workers, inspired by your idea of a League of Nations, will crush the resistance of the American capitalists as we have crushed the resistance of the Russian capitalists, then neither the German nor any other capitalists will be a serious menace to the victorious working class, and it will then suffice, if every member of the commonwealth, working six hours in the factory, spends two hours daily for several months in learning the use of arms, so that the whole people will know how to overcome the internal menace.

And so, Mr. President, though we have had experience with your promises, we nevertheless accept as a basis your proposals about peace and about a League of Nations. We have tried to develop them in order to avoid results which would contradict your promises, as was the case with your promise of assistance to Russia. We have tried to formulate with precision your proposals on the League of Nations in order that the League of Nations should not turn out to be a league of capitalists against the nations. Should you not agree with us, we have no objection to an "open discussion of your peace terms," as the first point of your peace program demands. If you will accept our proposals as a basis, we will easily agree on the details.

But there is another possibility. We have had dealings with the president of the Archangel attack and the Siberian invasion, and we have also had dealings with the president of the League of Nations Peace Program. Is not the first of these—the real president—actually directing the policies of the American capitalist Government? Is not the American Government rather a government of the American corporations, of the American industrial, commercial and railroad trusts, of the American banks—in short, a government of the American capitalists? And is it not possible that the proposals of this government about the creation of a League of Nations will result in new chains for the peoples, in the organization of an international trust for the exploitation of the workers and the suppression of weak nations? In this latter case, Mr. President, you will not be in a position to reply to our questions, and we will say to the workers of all countries: Beware! Millions of your brothers, thrown at each other's throats by the bourgeoisie of all countries, are still perishing on the battle fields, and the capitalist leaders are already trying to come to an understanding for the purpose of suppressing with united forces those that remain alive, when they call to account the criminals who caused the war!

However, Mr. President, since we do not at all desire to wage war against the United States, even though your government has not yet been replaced by a Council of People's Commissars and your post is not yet taken by Eugene Debs, whom you have imprisoned; since we do not at all desire to wage war against England, even though the Cabinet of Mr. Lloyd George has not yet been replaced by a Council of People's Commissars with MacLean at its head; since we have no desire to wage war against France, even though the capitalist government of Clemenceau has not yet been replaced by a workmen's government of Merheim; just as we have concluded peace with the imperialist government of Germany, with Emperor William at its head, from whom you, Mr. President, feel as alien as we, the Workmen's and Peasants' Revolutionary Government, from you—we finally propose to you, Mr. President, that you take up with your Allies the following questions and give us precise and definite replies: Do the governments of the United States, England and France consent to cease demanding the blood of the Russian people and the lives of Russian citizens, if the Russian people will agree to pay them a ransom such as a man who has been suddenly attacked pays to the one who attacked him? If so, just what tribute do the governments of the United States, England and France demand of the Russian people? Do they demand concessions, that the railways, mines, gold deposits, etc., shall be handed over to them on certain conditions, or do they demand territorial concessions, some part of Siberia or Caucasia, or perhaps the Murmansk Coast? We expect from you, Mr. President, that you will definitely state just what you and your Allies demand, and also whether the alliance between your government and the governments of the other Entente Powers is in the nature of a combination which could be compared with a corporation for drawing dividends from Russia, or does your government and the other governments of the Entente Powers have each separate and special demands, and what are they? Particularly are we interested to know the demands of your French allies with regard to the three billions of rubles which the Paris bankers loaned to the government of the Czar—the oppressor of Russia and the enemy of his own people. And you, Mr. President, as well as your French allies, surely know that even if you and your Allies should succeed in enslaving and covering with blood the whole territory of Russia—which will not be allowed by our heroic revolutionary Red Army—that even in that case the Russian people, worn out by the war and not having had sufficient time to take advantage of the benefits of the Soviet rule to elevate their national economy, will be unable to pay to the French bankers the full tribute for the billions that were used by the government of the Czar for purposes injurious to the people. Do your French allies demand that a part of this tribute be paid in installments, and if so—what part, and do they not anticipate that their claims will result in similar claims by other creditors of the infamous government of the Czar which has been overthrown by the Russian people? We can hardly think that your government and your Allies are without a ready answer, when your and their troops are trying to advance on our territory with the evident object of seizing and enslaving our country. The Russian people, through the people's Red Army, are guarding their territory and are bravely fighting against your invasion and against the attacks of your Allies. But your government and the governments of the other Powers of the Entente, undoubtedly, have well prepared plans, for the sake of which you are shedding the blood of your soldiers. We expect that you will state your

demands very clearly and definitely. Should we, however, be disappointed, should you fail to reply to our quite definite and precise questions, we will draw the only possible conclusion—that we are justified in the assumption that your government and the governments of your Allies desire to get from the Russian people a tribute both in money and in natural resources of Russia, and territorial concessions as well. We will tell this to the Russian people as well as to

the toiling masses of other countries, and the absence of a reply from you will serve for us as a silent reply. The Russian people will then understand that the demands of your government and of the governments of your Allies are so severe and vast that you do not even want to communicate them to the Russian Government.

*Chicherin, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs*

# Britain's Reactionary Role in India

## *A Thesis of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India--Fourth International*

India, the largest, the longest dominated and exploited of British conquests, Britain's richest field of investment, its source of incalculable plunder and profit, its base of Asiatic expansion, the inexhaustible reservoir of material and human resources for British wars, the focus of all British strategic aims, the pivot of the Empire, and the bulwark of British world domination, after 200 years of subjection offers the most complete demonstration of the workings and results of the colonial system of modern imperialism.

Every European colonising power directed its first efforts towards India, and the bitterest struggles for the glittering prize were fought on the battlefields of Europe and India alike. The success of Britain in defeating both her continental rivals and the native rulers of India paved the way for her subsequent world supremacy. The plunder of India was a main source of the primitive accumulation of capital which made possible the English industrial revolution. The exploitation of the Indian market and of Indian raw materials provided the basis of British industrial expansion in the 19th Century. Today India provides a field of investment for a quarter of British overseas capital holding, and sends to Britain roughly £150 millions annually, as tribute in various forms.

After 200 years of imperialist rule, India presents a picture of poverty and misery of the masses which is without equal in the world—the more striking because up to the 18th Century the economic condition of India was relatively advanced, and Indian methods of production and of industrial and commercial organization could compare with those of any part of the world; and because of the vast natural wealth and resources of the country, which cannot be utilized and developed under the imperialist system.

European capitalist penetration of India began with the Portuguese establishment of their factory in Calicut. The British (1600), Dutch (1602) and the French (1664) formed their trading companies in the course of the 17th Century.

### **Capitalist Destruction of Indian Economy**

The British conquest of India, carried out piecemeal and in the most ruthless, vindictive, and deceitful manner, differed from every previous conquest of India in that, while earlier foreign conquerors left untouched the traditional economy, British imperialism broke down the whole framework of Indian society.

The first steps of this destruction were carried out by (a) the East India Company's colossal direct plunder, (b) the British neglect of irrigation and public works, (c) the wrecking of the Indian land system and its replacement by a system of landlordism and individual landholding, (d) direct

prohibition and heavy duties on the export of Indian manufactures to Europe and to England.

But it was the operations of the 19th Century British industrial capitalism, and the governmental policies initiated by it in India, that decisively broke up the Indian economic structure. The industrial capitalists of Britain had a clear-cut aim in India—to reduce it to an agricultural colony of British capitalism, supplying raw materials and absorbing its manufactured goods.

Britain captured and developed the Indian market for her industrial goods on the basis of the technical superiority of English machine industry (for which the Indian plunder had provided the accumulated capital), while deliberately utilizing the state power to block the export of Indian goods to Europe and permit the free entry of British goods to India. The destruction and collapse of Indian manufacturers in this unequal struggle was the inevitable result. The ruin of millions of artisans and craftsmen was not accompanied by any growth of newer forms of industry, and the old urban centres of Indian manufactures (Dacca, Murchibad, Surat) were depopulated and laid waste.

The work of destruction was not confined to the towns. The handloom and the spinning wheel were the pivots of the structure of Indian society which was based on the domestic union of agricultural and manufacturing pursuits. British steam and science uprooted the union between agriculture and manufacturing industry. The British intruder thus broke up the Indian handloom and destroyed the spinning wheel, struck at the roots of the Indian society, and destroyed the balance of the village economy.

To consolidate the conquest of India and to develop the Indian resources for exploitation by the British capitalist class as a whole, the East India Company was replaced in 1858 by direct governmental administration. After a century of neglect of the most elementary functions of government, the British inaugurated a process of the active development of the country by (a) building a network of railroads, (b) the development of roads, (c) the introduction of the electric telegraph and of a uniform postal system, (d) giving the benefits of Western education to a limited class of Indians, and (e) the introduction of the European banking system into India. While opening up India for commercial penetration and supplying a market for British iron, steel and engineering industries, this process of development—especially the construction of railways—laid the foundations of a new stage—the development of British capital investments in India.

The last decades of the 19th Century and the first of the 20th were marked by the imperialist export of finance capital from the countries of Western Europe and North America to every corner of the globe, and by conquest and exploitation

of all the backward countries through the colonial system. Between 1880 and 1914 the major European powers and the United States had carved up the whole world into colonies and spheres of exploitation.

## The Rule of Finance-Capital

This period of modern imperialist expansion was marked in India by an intensification of British exploitation, and a corresponding change in its character, wherein the finance-capitalist exploitation of India came to dominate all other methods. Nevertheless, the new basis of exploitation did not replace the already established forms of plunder and industrial and trading exploitation, but was auxiliary and parallel to these processes.

British capitalist investment in India developed at a rapid pace in the second half of the 19th Century, with the expansion of railway construction, and also with the establishment of tea, coffee and rubber plantations, and other minor enterprises.

The holdings of British capital in India developed not on the basis of the export of British capital, but rather through the plunder of the Indian people, which was reinvested in India, as a rich source of interest. The sterling debt of the Indian government, which included more than one-third of the total holdings of British capital, has been manipulated to include the cost of every British imperialist undertaking (including wars for the subjection of India, and other colonial wars) which could conceivably be charged to India. The colossal amount of this debt bears no relation to the costs of the public works schemes carried out. At the same time, the almost continuous excess of the value of Indian exports to Britain over that of imports, has left no room for a real export of capital to India. Nevertheless, the volume of British holdings in India today exceeds £1,000 millions.

With the post-war weakening of Britain's share of the Indian market (Britain's share of Indian imports dropped from 63 per cent to 29 per cent between 1913 and 1937), in the face of foreign competition and the rise of Indian—especially cotton—industry, British imperialism has consolidated its financial stranglehold on the Indian economy as its chief source of profit in India. The proportion of Britain's total overseas investment which has been placed in India has risen from 11 per cent in 1911 to 25 per cent in 1937. Despite this, there has been since 1927 (with the collapse of the post-war boom and the general crisis), a sharp drop in the actual volume of British capital newly invested in India, which reflects the general stagnation of the economic development in India.

The capital investments of Britain in India have never led to the industrialization of India on a scale proportionate to their volume. The colossal waste involved in the railway construction in the last century, and the unproductive expenditure which swelled India's public debt, created a glaring disproportion between the size of British investments and the slow economic development of the country. Up to 1914, 97 per cent of British capital invested in India was devoted to purposes of government (i.e. wars, the heavy costs of bureaucratic administration, levies for costly durbars, etc.), to transport, plantations, and finance. These investments served as auxiliaries to the commercial penetration of India and its exploitation as a source of raw materials and a market for British goods, and did not lead to the development of modern industry in India on any commensurable scale.

The industrial development of India which has taken place in recent times bears no relation to Indian needs. The

vast resources of India have never been tapped. The rate of industrial advance, far lower than that of other large non-European countries, has not, even in modern times, kept pace with the decline of Indian handicrafts—with the result that from 1911 to 1931 there has been a reduction in the proportion of the population dependent on industry (including domestic industry).

The growth of Indian industry has been greatly impeded by British imperialism, for fear of competition with home industries, by administrative neglect, by a hostile tariff policy, and by unfavorable currency manipulations. Until 1914 this policy of opposition to industrial development in India was openly followed, particularly by the removal of import duties on competing British goods. The brief and half-hearted reversal of policy after 1914 and during the period when British capital flowed in to share in the profits of the post-war boom, was nullified by the later raising of the exchange rates, which disastrously hit Indian exports.

## British Fetters on Production

Under these conditions, the development of modern industry in India has taken place at a very slow rate, and in lopsided fashion, chiefly in light industry. The basis necessary for real industrial development—heavy industry—has never been laid. Until 1914, large organized production in India was represented chiefly by the cotton, jute and coal-mining industries, and by the tea, rubber and coffee plantations. The post-war period, when foreign competition was reduced, was marked by a short and feverish boom which led to the development of other industries, including steel and iron, cement, manganese, and other minor types. This period was utilized by British capital, which during the years 1921 to 1923 flowed in at an average annual rate of over £23 millions. But the brief post-war boom was followed by a period of stagnation and decline, prolonged by the currency policy of the government, and finally intensified by the world crisis of 1929-1931 which signified the entry of world capitalism into a period of decline. Indian industry shows even today no indication of recovery. The scope of the industrialization undertaken for war purposes during the present imperialist war, is not meant to include an all-sided development of Indian industry, but will be restricted to the strategic needs of British imperialism. Such an all-sided development of industry is excluded by the hostility of the government to Indian industrial development, by the determination of Britain to maintain its share of the Indian market, and above all by the insoluble problems of the home market caused by the extreme impoverishment of the agricultural population under imperialism. The industrialization of India, on which her future depends, cannot be carried out without the overthrow of imperialism and a sweeping transformation of agrarian relations.

Despite the hostility of imperialism to the industrialization of India, it is British and not Indian capital that has always held the dominant place in Indian industry, not only through the decisively greater volume of its investments in industry, but also through its financial stranglehold on the whole Indian economy. The Indian capitalist class, whose growth was mainly connected with the development of the cotton industry, has never been able to shake off the controlling power of British finance capital.

Despite the advance of Indian capital, British capital remains in effectively monopolist domination in banking, commerce, exchange and insurance, in shipping, in the tea, coffee, and rubber plantations, and in the jute industry. In iron

and steel, Indian capital has been forced to come to terms with British capital, and even in the cotton industry, the home of Indian capital, the control of British capital, through the managing agency system, is very great. Already in 1928, (before the economic crisis), English managing agents controlled the actual majority of the capital of cotton companies (50.3 per cent). The economic depression which affected Indian industry after 1924 (and especially after 1929), and the bankruptcy, liquidations and difficulties of many Indian firms which had arisen in the post-war period, were utilized by British capital to strengthen its hold on Indian industry.

Most decisive for the controlling power of British finance capital is the role of the foreign banking system, working in conjunction with the government's financial and exchange policies. Financial power remains monopolized in British hands, through the Reserve Bank of India, the Imperial Bank, and the big Exchange Banks. The Indian joint-stock banks hold less than one-third of bank deposits in India, and are themselves being invaded by British capital.

The Indian capitalist class, therefore, despite its growth in recent times, remains essentially dependent upon, and an agency of British finance capital, performing a subsidiary role in the exploitation of India. Despite its dreams of industrialization, and of a broadened base of exploitation for itself, the Indian bourgeoisie shackled as it is to imperialism cannot play the historic role of the earlier West European bourgeoisie in liberating and developing the productive forces. The industrial advance of India demands absolutely the overthrow of imperialism, with which Indian bourgeois interests are indissolubly bound, and the overthrow of which they will be bound to resist.

Nevertheless, the rising productive forces in India are straining against the fetters of imperialism and of the obsolete economic structure which it maintains and protects. This conflict finds its expression not only in the industrial stagnation, but in a much sharper way in the agrarian crisis, which is the index of the bankruptcy of imperialist economy, and the main driving force towards revolution.

### The Permanent Agrarian Crisis

Britain relegated to India the role of an agricultural appendage to imperialism. The ravages of Indian industries carried out in the 19th Century drove the population of the ruined industrial centers back to the land and at the same time ruined the livelihood of millions of artisans in the villages. The overcrowding of agriculture which has reached a stage today where three-fourths of the entire Indian population are solely dependent on the land, and where the proportion of land available for cultivation has fallen to less than  $1\frac{1}{4}$  acre per head of the agrarian population. The effect of this exaggerated disequilibrium in the economy is further aggravated by the stagnation and deterioration of agriculture itself, for which the British are also directly responsible through their disruption of the village economy, their iniquitous exactions of land revenue, their expropriation of the peasantry, their creation of parasitic landlordism, and their notorious neglect of public works on the land, which have been from time immemorial the function of the government and without which in India the cultivation of the soil cannot be carried on.

The criminal indifference of the government and the suffocating parasitism of the landlords are responsible for the incredibly low productivity and exhaustion of the soil (of which 35 per cent is left waste in India and Burma), and the

recent actual shrinkage in the area under cultivation while the population is on the increase. These conditions, which have depressed the vast majority of the rural population to a level of unspeakable poverty and chronic semi-starvation, and have led to a state of permanent agricultural crisis, are inevitably paving the way for a sweeping revolution as their only outcome and solution.

The characteristic process of imperialism, the expropriation of the colonial population from ownership of the land, was carried out by the British under cover of legal forms, which in effect transformed the "eternal" land system of the Indian village commune into an inextricable amalgam of feudal and semi-feudal rights and tenures. The British introduced into India private property in land. In Bengal they created a caricature of English landed property on a large scale; in South Eastern India a caricature of small allotment property; in the North West they did their utmost to transform the Indian commune with common ownership of the land into a caricature of itself.

The aims which guided the British transformation of the Indian land system were twofold—firstly to guarantee the effective collection of their extortionate land revenues, which rose steeply from the time of the Conquest (from £4 millions in 1800 to £15 millions in 1857 to £23 millions in 1936-1937); and in the second place to create Indian landed interests deeply interested in the continuance of British domination. It is above all the still unbroken alliance between British imperialism and Indian landlordism that links up the overthrow of imperialism with the agrarian revolution in India.

Landlordism was created and fostered by the British not only in the provinces of temporary and permanent *zamindari* (landlords)—Bengal, United Province, Bihar, Punjab, but also in the Ryotwari areas in which the processes of mortgaging and subletting have been carried to fantastic lengths, so that the cultivator of the soil is despoiled by an increasing army of functionless intermediaries in addition to the big parasites and the government itself. A great proportion of the real cultivators of the soil are without rights of any kind and remain unaffected even by the temporary legislation by which the government has sought to stave off the impending crisis. Even in the Ryotwari areas, where settlement was originally made with the cultivators themselves, they have been dispossessed to a great extent by moneylenders and others.

From the beginning, landlordism under British rule has been parasitic in character, since landlords neither supply agricultural capital nor control farming operations. Today landlordism, taken in conjunction with its superstructure of sub-infeudation and sub-letting, is the most effective barrier to the development of modern large scale agriculture.

The penetration of finance-capital in the agrarian field, which characterizes the recent period, far from freeing the productive forces from the incubus of feudalism or introducing modern productive technique, has taken place for the most part within the framework of feudal and semi-feudal relations and has become enmeshed with feudal forms of exploitation. The net result has been to add to the burdens of the peasantry by decisively accelerating their expropriation from the land and by crushing them under a load of debt, which amounted in 1937 to £1,350 millions. The moneylender's exactions and confiscations, together with the payments demanded by the government and the landlord's extortions, forms for the peasantry a triple scourge which has reduced the greater proportion of cultivators in India to the status of unprotected tenants, *shārcroppers* and landless wage-laborers. Capitalist inroads have sharply accelerated the

differentiation of classes within rural society, increasing the numbers of parasitic rent-receivers on one hand and of propertyless elements on the other.

The particularly rapid growth of parasitic landlordism in recent times, as well as the sharp rise in rural debt (from £400 millions in 1921 to £1,350 in 1937) is really the reflection of the invasion of moneyed interests, big and small, in the agrarian field, having failed to find effective outlets for investment in productive industry. Thus the direct plunder of the peasantry of the early British period has given place to a network of forms of exploitation by modern finance-capital, with its host of subsidiary parasites in the Indian economy. The Indian capitalist class, no less than the British Government and the semi-feudal landlords, are tied to the existing order of rural society and are interested in its perpetuation.

The abolition of landlordism in all its forms, in defiance of all these vested interests, the abolition of rural debt, and the unencumbered transfer of the land to the cultivators

themselves, is the basic social task of the Indian revolution and the absolute prerequisite of agricultural advance in India.

British imperialism in the epoch of declining world capitalism has become the most powerful reactionary force in India, in turn buttressing all other forms of reaction. Its failure to develop the industrial forces in India through industrialization, and the chronic stagnation and decay of agriculture under its rule, make its continued existence incompatible with the advancement of India and render its overthrow an historical inevitability. To maintain its rule in India, in the face of the rising tide of mass revolt, British imperialism uses all the weapons of bureaucratic and military repression with increasing viciousness. Nevertheless, the day of reckoning cannot be long postponed. The solution of the terrible problems of the toiling millions of India demand the overthrow and elimination of British imperialism, which is the foremost task of the coming Indian revolution.

*Adopted 1941.*

## *Franz Mehring on the Method of Marxism*

We have the right to assert that historical materialism already has a firm and unshakable foundation. But we do not mean to say by this that all of the results we have hitherto achieved on the basis of historical materialism no longer require to be defended. Nor do we mean to say by this that the theory of historical materialism is already definitively completed and that there is nothing more to be done in this sphere.

Cases can be cited of the abuse of historical materialism along with other cases of reducing it to banalities—and this has led to distortions as does every banality in the study of history. And even in cases where the theory of historical materialism is applied correctly as a method of analyzing history, a great deal depends on the measure of talent and training at the disposal of those who take this method as their guide; a great deal likewise depends on the quantity and nature of material at their disposal. This is, in the nature of things, self-evident; because in the field of historical sciences a mathematically exact method of proof is impossible of achievement. Whoever looks for proof of the inadequacy of the materialist method of historical analysis in these seeming “contradictions” can very well be left in peace by us: let him amuse himself. Intelligent people can only be spurred by such kind of “contradictions” to occupy themselves with the study: which one of the investigators who contradict one another has done his work more painstakingly and fundamentally. And in this way, precisely thanks to these “con-

tradictions,” our method can only gain in clarity and reliability both in application as well as the results gained.

There still remains a vast amount of labor for historical materialism to perform in clarifying the history of mankind in its manifold branches. However, on the soil of bourgeois society, historical materialism is not destined to unfold all of its power inasmuch as its ever growing strength runs directly counter to this society. It is of course a pleasant thing to recognize that the most conscientious bourgeois historians feel themselves to a certain extent influenced by historical materialism. . . . However this influence has its limits. So long as the bourgeoisie continues to exist as a class it cannot possibly renounce bourgeois ideology. Even Lamprecht, the most prominent representative of the so-called “economic-historical” school, begins his “History of Germany” not with an exposition of German economy but with a description of “German national consciousness.” Historical idealism in its various theological, rationalistic and naturalistic ramifications constitutes the historical method of the bourgeoisie, whereas historical materialism represents the historical outlook of the working class. Historical materialism will attain its full flowering only with the emancipation of the proletariat; only then will history become a science in the strict sense of the term; only then will history become what it has always striven to be but has never been: the guide and instructor of mankind.—Franz Mehring, *On Historical Materialism*.

## **Cripps: Too Little and too Late**

**By LARISSA REED**

STAFFORD CRIPPS, by Eric Estorick. John Day Co. 273 pages. \$2.50.

The apology most frequently used for Anglo-American defeats in the present war is that their aid has been “too little and too late.” The same words describe Sir Stafford Cripps.

Estorick, the authorized biographer of Cripps, performs one useful function in his otherwise flabby biography—he presents a few facts about the life and career of this hitherto little known English politician.

Estorick cannot explain how to weak and colorless a figure as Cripps has suddenly leaped into prominence. Such types often appear at critical junctures in the unfolding of great social catastrophes and reflect, in their neutral personalities and in their glaring contradictions, a temporary deadlock in the struggle which has yet to be resolved by one or the other of the decisive class forces in conflict. Another such figure was Kerensky, who achieved a brief hour in the political sun before the victorious masses

swept him into oblivion. Today Cripps aspires to play the leading role in the crisis of the British Empire. If he possessed clear thoughts and a strong will, he would be completely unfit for his current prominence.

### *Christ and the Cripps*

Cripps was born in 1889; his ancestors were well-to-do merchants and manufacturers. These “cultured Christian gentlemen,” remarks Estorick, performed small deeds of charity on their landed estates and spread the Christian gospel, while at the same time “the conditions of the workers in their factories” were “no better than the standards prevailing at the time—about the worst

in English history." Christianity served them as a cloak for exploitation.

Cripps, arriving much later in the career of capitalism, came to grief when he tried to halt capitalist disintegration with the Christian gospel. He reached manhood during the first World War which gave birth to the first major capitalist disaster—the Russian revolution. While Wilson and Lloyd George were declaiming about the League of Nations, arbitration, disarmament and peace, Cripps and his father, Lord Parmoor, tried to supplement these efforts through their "World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches." Some centuries too late to be effective, the "World Alliance" soon collapsed.

Cripps writes about himself: "Educated as a chemist and with the prospect of a professional career at the Bar before me . . . I was almost politically unconscious." He was "assistant superintendent of a government explosives factory" during the war. When he parted from chemistry for a career in patent law, he commanded "by far the highest fees in the country" during the 1920's.

### Sir Stafford and Socialism

Although, according to his biographer, the failure of the "World Alliance" after the first World War brought about the political maturity" of Cripps, it was not until the 1929 economic collapse that Cripps was finally propelled into politics. He was then about 40 years of age. Following in the footsteps of his father, who in 1923 had been Lord President of the first Labor-coalition government under the treacherous Ramsay MacDonald, in 1930 Cripps became Solicitor-General in the second MacDonald Labor government. He was "knighted, as is the custom for this position," and a little later won a seat in the House of Commons.

In 1931 MacDonald resigned from the Labor government and together with the Tories set up a National government with himself as Prime Minister. When MacDonald coolly announced to his erstwhile collaborators that "he was in and they were out," Cripps came to the fore in the succeeding elections as a spokesman for the "Lefts" in the Labor Party. "No more patching up of Capitalism but only a drastic Socialist policy," Cripps demanded; Labor should take over the Bank of England and nationalize the basic industries and the land.

During the next crisis-years Cripps conducted a polemic against the Tories concerning the best methods for preserving the British Empire. He was opposed to their domestic policy. In a pamphlet, "National Fascism in Britain," written in 1934, he declared: "The worker (in England) is being and has been disciplined, not viciously and ruthlessly as in Germany and Italy, but gently and firmly as one would expect from a country-gentleman Fascism in England. Colored shirts are not necessary and are embarrassingly obvious; a special constable is much cheaper and attracts less attention. But do not let us be deluded

because the signs are less obvious in this than in other countries, as to the direction Britain is following, politically and economically.

Cripps warned the Tories that as a consequence of the British betrayals of Abyssinia, Spain, China, Munich, "the world will get tired of 'perfidious Albion' and we shall be set upon one day and left an isolated carcass to be picked by the new imperialist vultures . . . we shall indeed be the victims of a most unhappy end." He could not understand that the serious capitalist rulers were pursuing the only course open to them under the circumstances to escape this "unhappy end." Compelled to pay a heavy price—at the expense of other nations—each time the Tories temporarily save the British Empire.

In a pamphlet "Can Socialism Come by Constitutional Methods?" Cripps tried to prove that socialism could be achieved without overstepping the limits of capitalism. Again Cripps was lagging in the rear of history; the social reformism he was advocating was already being crushed in Europe under the Fascist boot.

Cripps is a nephew of Beatrice Potter Webb, in whom he found a sympathetic admirer of his political abilities. As late as 1923 Beatrice and Sidney Webb saw no great difference between Bolshevism and Czarism; a decade later they regarded the Russian revolution as quite respectable under Stalin's bureaucracy. Cripps drifted along after his aunt toward the Popular Front movement promoted by Stalinism. His "Unity Campaign" in 1937, initiated by a manifesto to raise the embargo on Spain, was signed by the Socialist League (Cripps), the I.L.P. and the Communist Party. By 1939, when Popular Front movements had already led to the smashing of the labor movement in both France and Spain, Cripps, writes his biographer, was an "ardent supporter of a People's Front which should include any elements—Liberal, Imperialist, Conservative, etc." Cripps called upon everyone to combine against the pro-fascist Tory government in England. Once more he arrived too late. Cripps succeeded only in being expelled from the Labor Party as a result of these activities.

## Anglo-American Plans for Italy

By JACK RANGER

THE REMAKING OF ITALY, by Pentad. Penguin Books, England. September, 1941. 287 pages. 25c.

This work merits our attention because it claims to present "a definite program for the Italian reconstruction which must follow an Allied victory." The five anonymous authors, "who write the Italian language programs broadcast from England," include four native Italians exiled in Britain and an English officer. In short, here are the plans of Churchill-Roosevelt *vis-à-vis* Italy.

In 1939 the dilemma of the Tory ruling class, uncertain whether to make another deal with or go to war against Hitler, was decided by Hitler himself, when he signed his pact with Stalin and proceeded to invade Poland. Again Cripps lumbered up late; this time to set aside socialism in favor of "democracy"—at the very moment that France, one of the last remaining bourgeois "democracies," was demonstrating its inner impotence. In his last book, "Democracy Up-to-Date," says Estorick, "the solution, as Sir Stafford conceives it, consists in streamlining the democratic process so that it will truly serve as an instrument of democratic change."

Cripps wholeheartedly supported the war when it was declared, even though it was conducted by the same Tory government he had been opposing. Estorick writes: "Cripps retired from the Bar immediately . . . and offered to the Government his *technical services only* since he was out of sympathy with its politics. It will be remembered that he was the head of a munitions factory during the First World War. His offer was not accepted."

Rejected by the Tories, ejected by the Laborites, the wealthy Cripps set off for a half-year jaunt around the world, visiting India, Burma, China, Russia, Japan and the United States, writing letters from afar to the weekly *Tribune*, a "socialist" paper of which he was editor.

A sudden shift in the international political arena raised him again to prominence. Hitler's attack upon his erstwhile ally drove Stalin into the arms of the British imperialists while Cripps was in Moscow. He had gone without ambassadorial rank, as little more than an observer for Britain; but the higher-ups would not talk to him unless he was given official rank; so he was appointed Ambassador; Hitler's onslaught then made Cripps. He returned to England as the obvious candidate to succeed Churchill.

In its desperation, the Churchill government has seized upon Cripps to try to stem the onrushing revolutionary tide in India. Unlike his earlier tour, this time he is armed with his prized portfolio.

In the matter of subduing the Indian revolution, however, Sir Stafford will be once again—"too little and too late!"

In the introduction the quintet claims the book is written in the faith ". . . that Great Britain has always been the true friend, and Germany the real enemy of Italy . . . that the war in which Italy now finds herself on the wrong side gives Italians an opportunity to shake off the tyranny under which they have languished, restore good relations with the Anglo-Saxon democracies and clear Italy's name from dishonor."

The book is divided into five parts, of which the first four present a history of Italy and of the rise of fascism written

from an Anglicized, idealized, social-democratic and antiseptic viewpoint that grates raspily on one's sensibilities. The sugary prose recalls Engels' criticism of the Italian bourgeois revolutionists for their "poverty of ideas and wealth of phrases."

It is Part Five of the book—Italy After Fascism—which really interests us. Here in 23 pages is set forth the program of the United Nations and of the Italian bourgeoisie for their "rebirth" of Italy.

### A "Substitute" for Socialism

From beginning to end the program is a vain and sorry swindle. Like Mussolini's original program of March, 1919, it abounds in radical phrases; and like Mussolini's program, it bears the stigmata of reaction and insincerity in every line. The program is demagogic and evasive precisely because it is a bourgeois program, the program of terrified people who realize that once Mussolini's dictatorship has fallen, "the social problems of our century will return and will break out once again in full strength, clamoring for solution." The authors want to decoy the Italian workers and peasants away from the only genuine path for the masses, the Leninist path of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The authors hasten to assure their readers that "we must wipe out from the beginning the plague of class struggle, ruinous alike to the interests of production, to spiritual interests, and to Christian brotherhood."

It is necessary to examine and analyze carefully the types of demagoguery which the "democratic" capitalists are preparing in an effort to head off the proletarian revolutions in Europe.

How is Mussolini to be overthrown, according to the Italians who work with the Churchill government? Not by the Italian masses, but by Allied bayonets, of course.

Then what? "Reform will begin with the restoration of freedom of association, freedom of professional organization, and freedom of the press, and with the substitution of a republican guard (police) for the Fascist militia and police." These "revolutionists" call for life-time tenure for judges, elimination of the monarchy and of "certain sections of the Catholic Church," a legislative assembly "elected by universal suffrage and secret ballot" which "would keep up the character and the functions of a democratic Parliament on the English model."

### Painless "Socialization"

Foreseeing that such a program will hardly enlist the sympathies of the Italian masses who were tricked by that sort of a regime once before, Churchill's propagandists proceed to play a stream of radical phrases around the "demand" that the ownership of the factories and the land should pass into the hands of the workers and peasants. No less than thirteen formulations are presented for this, and the numerous modulations reveal that the authors have no intention of carrying out such a demand.

On page 265 it is categorically asserted that "there is no other road but the one which the working classes want: to give the land to those who till it . . . to give the factories to the workers." Knowing very well that possession of the factories and the land can only be retained by the masses through a workers' state, Pentad says: "The solution we propose envisages the transfer of the means of production to the workers (not to the State) and a system of non-bureaucratic planning" (p. 268). This is socialism-plus-coupon-clippers and their banks: "The expropriation of the land and the factories will be subject to a compensation in favor of the owners" (p. 269). This one would mean competing producers' co-operatives: "The solution can be found only by giving the ownership of the means of production to the workers, through the medium of self-controlled private enterprise" (p. 273). The agrarian revolution evaporates into a purchase-plan: "The peasants of Italy . . . should get the land in one blow, at the moment when the dictatorship falls" (p. 275). But "the *metayer*, the small tenant farmer, the part-proprietor, the lease-holder, and in general all who cultivate the land by their own labor, and that of their families, will acquire ownership of the land they cultivate, with the obligation of paying the former owners a reasonable rate of compensation" (p. 276). "In view of the preponderance of the smaller industries in the Italian industrial structure, general socialization would provoke a terrible disorganization of production, a very serious reduction in the standard of living of the population, and an enormous amount of unemployment" (p. 278). And so on.

Praying for small peasant proprietors as a counterweight to the proletariat—the classic wish of all would-be Bonapartists, they suggest that the land be divided "into small holdings"—because this "accords with the real wishes of the cultivator," and also—here is a really brazen invention—"corresponds with the most recent developments in agriculture—contrary to what has been found in industry, where the law of concentration prevails."

### A League--And Colonies

In place of world socialism, the bourgeois democrats endorse the plan of Hugh Dalton for a new League of Nations and for the reaffirmation of the Kellogg Pact outlawing war—that is, Churchill and his Italian counterparts dare to dangle yet again before the people the same ragged devices that failed to prevent the first and second World Wars.

Instead of pressing for the freedom of the colonial peoples, these Italians propose that "The resources of the African continent, excluding the Union of South Africa, the United Provinces, and Egypt [that is, excluding England's colonies], should be open to all the European nations and developed in common, according to the ability and capacity of each, but with financial resources accessible to all, so that the econo-

mic interests of the European nations, linked in the great work of colonization, would strengthen the spiritual and political ties between all the nations of our continent."

The Italian bourgeoisie don't want VERY MUCH—just the natives of Africa to exploit, and capital with which to do it!

Do our forward-looking authors propose to outlaw members of Mussolini's bloody fascist regime? Not at all. While it is true that "if the Italian people wish to restore good relations with England . . . they must overthrow the Fascist regime at the earliest opportunity, this does not mean that every Italian whose name has been inscribed on the roll of the Fascist party is forever barred from public life. Prudence is one of the cardinal virtues as well as courage, and there are many degrees of subscription to Fascist doctrines."

The authors mercifully forget Winston Churchill's proclamation to the Italian Fascists in January, 1927, that "If I had been an Italian, I am sure I should have been entirely with you from the beginning to the end of your victorious struggle against the bestial appetites and passions of Leninism."

Words, words, words—slippery, evasive, empty, calculated only to conceal their desire to maintain the privileges and profits of the bourgeoisie—that is all that Churchill and his Italian co-thinkers have to offer the coming Italian revolution. Likewise Mussolini, in an effort to divert the masses and to combat Churchill's propaganda, has himself inaugurated a campaign to return to the earlier radical demagoguery of Fascism, according to Professor Lingelbach writing in the December, 1941, *Current History*.

### The Italian Revolution

But the future of Italy lies not in Mussolini's hands, nor in Hitler's, nor in Churchill's, nor in the hands of the Italian bourgeoisie. The Italian masses will not be satisfied with words.

It was Trotsky's hypothesis that the anti-Fascist revolution in Italy, after beginning from one or another sectional clash, will inevitably go through the stage of the general strike. Only in this way, he thought, will the present disjointed Italian proletariat once again feel itself as a united class and match the strength of the enemy's resistance. It is certain that once the workers of Italy reassemble in their own organizations they will make short work of Mussolini and the dictatorship of Big Business. In their march to liberation they will not stop at bourgeois "democracy," that democracy which betrayed them so savagely in the early 1920's.

Churchill and the Italian bourgeoisie, fearful of the awful upheaval that is stirring in the depths of Italy, invoke the name of the phrase-monger Mazzini. The Italian masses will march under the banner of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, to the socialist revolution.

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