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Theoretical Organ of the
International Contact Commission

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

VOLUME 2

NUMBER 10

Theoretical Organ of the

International Contact Commission

for the New Communist (4th) International.

Central Committee of the Red Front of
Greater Germany

Leninist League, Scotland

Revolutionary Workers League, U. S.

Printed in the United States

Voluntary Labor

Address: International News

1904 W. Division Street

Chicago, Ill.

The Balkans and the Near East

Central Europe under capitalism has ever been an "insane" conglomeration of small nations, zig-zagging and criss-crossing with little economic rhyme or reason, subject only to the political whims of the large imperialist powers to the West and East of it. Nothing is so indicative of the anarchy of capitalism as this jumble of nations with ever-changing borders.

The main imperialist culprit in this state of affairs has always been Great Britain. The establishment of a strong state, reaching from the Kattegat to the Mediterranean would be the death knell of the British life-line, which goes through the Suez Canal into the Red Sea. Consequently Downing Street has always insisted on the "independence" of these many small countries; and conversely the dream of Empire of the German Imperialists ever since Bismarck has always had as its first step the establishment of a German "Mittle-Europa".

AXIS MOVES FOR BOOTY

The quick victory over France now gives Germany its opportunity. The rich booty of the present conflict lies to the East. The bloodbath in Europe is only the prologue; the four imperialists in this one continent are "getting their own house in order" before they can strike out for the rich melons in the oil, tin, rubber, potash, and immeasurable wealth of the Near and Far East. The Axis powers, who no doubt have banked on a lull in hostilities with Britain in winter time, do not intend to lie idle. Here is their golden opportunity to prepare the way for the next step of the war and for the eventual conflict with the strongest of imperialist powers, the United States. Consolidation of the Balkans and invasion of Egypt (possible Syria, Palestine and Arabia) are therefore inevitable.

But the Balkans and Near East are a powder keg — not only in the social dynamite that lies in poor countries where the oppression of the working masses and oppressed nationalities is often intolerable — but in the imperialist antagonisms as well.

BRITISH — AXIS CONFLICT

First of all, of course, there is the major imperialist conflict for mastery of the Balkans between the Axis powers, on the one hand, and Great Britain, on the other. Ever since "Munich", British influence has been constantly on the wane. The recent steps against British oil firms in Rumania, the cooling of Greek and Turkish "friendship" to the Empire, are the latest developments in a struggle which in the last three years has been one-sided.

GERMAN—ITALIAN QUARREL

But the Balkan problem is much more involved than this simplification might indicate. Behind diplomatic doors a vicious struggle goes on between the "allies" — Germany and Italy for hegemony over this area. This struggle must not be underestimated. Imperialist "friendships" are based not on mutual harmony and trust, but on the basis of the "least distrust". In other words momentarily the Italian conflict with Great Britain — on an economic and political scale, — is more pronounced and basic than the antagonism with Germany; but the fact that the two nations are "allies" does not mean that their antagonism is erased. In fact, it is absolutely inevitable that if Germany and Italy win this war (after defeating Britain, America and the Soviet Union, as well as the world revolution (see September "International News") — a hypothesis which we believe has only one possibility of becoming real in a million) then a war between Germany and Italy would be as inevitable as the sunrise.

Germany's great strength has permitted her so far to seize the great bulk of "Mittle-Europe" for herself. She gained Austria — much against the wishes of Italy — which now has the Reichswehr on its borders — Czechoslovakia and Poland. Now she is about to put Rumania under her military thumb as a step both of aggrandizement and military preparation for an invasion of the Soviet Union.

IMPERIALISTS AND WORKERS STATE

And that is another one of the great antagonisms of the Balkan area. Despite the Stalin-Hitler pact the struggle between the two powers goes on, and in fact grows sharper. No matter what Stalin wishes in the near future, a struggle between Germany and the Soviet Union will take place. The "March Towards the East" lies — in one of its great spearheads — through the fertile fields of the Ukraine and the tremendous resources of Baku, Azerbaijan, etc., into the Khybber Pass and the gigantic wealth of India.

(We might say parenthetically that the conquest of the Soviet Union DESPITE STALINISM will be infinitely more difficult than the conquest of France, or even the conquest of Britain, if it occurs. The social dynamics of the first Workers State still represents the most powerful political factor in the present war. The soldiers of no invading nation will escape unscathed by that revolutionary fervor. And each revolutionary development ANYWHERE — even in far-off Siam — will immeasurably strengthen the Workers State.)

Added to all these antagonisms in the Balkans — the Axis-British conflict, the Italo-German disagreements, the German-Russian struggle — there are, of course, the various squabbles and unceasing conflicts between the Balkan powers themselves; and underlying the whole powder keg is the danger of proletarian revolution in this area.

In order to protect her Black Sea ports — especially the oil that flows from Baku, — the Soviet Union is angling for control of the strategic Dardanelles. Should Italy strike into Greece and take over control of the Aegean Sea this would be a serious blow to the Soviets, and to Turkey. Even if the Soviet Union itself did not immediately declare war, it is more than likely that Turkey — which follows a pro-Russian policy — will do so, and Stalin will act through Turkey to defend his interests. If Italy has not yet invaded Greece it is only because the axis wishes to choose its own moment for the attack on Russia.

The stationing of German troops on the Bessarabian border would also be a powerful blow against the Soviet Union. German troops would face Russian workers in the Red Army on a line reaching from the Baltic almost to the Mediterranean, hundreds and hundreds of

miles long. Furthermore it would be a serious check to any Soviet attempts to gain a Mediterranean seaport.

OTHER TOOLS OF IMPERIALISTS

If the struggle amongst these powers does not come directly into the open, nevertheless it will go on unabated in a hundred different forms. For instance, in Rumania the Nazis have been using the Iron Guards to push their policy of German aggression. Undoubtedly Stalinism has been giving material aid to anti-cessionist forces in Rumania, groups possibly such as the Maniu Peasants Party, and others. Italy uses the same methods. (Everyone remembers how Mussolini put Dolfus into power in Austria precisely in order to check German penetration).

This sort of struggle — the development of forces within the desired nations to push the policy of one or another imperialist power (and on occasions, Stalinism) — is even more pronounced in the Near East. The struggle between various Arabian factions has been a happy hunting ground for all the powers, including the United States. During and after the last war Britain gained the upper hand in this area — pushed her own Arabian puppets into control and dominated this vital area.

As an additional safeguard, and of extremely great strategical importance, she has successfully used the Jewish movement and its Zionist forces as a British "policing" agent for the Near East. The half a million Jewish emigrants who have settled Palestine in the last quarter of a century have effectively built up British defenses and have been an exceedingly valuable counter-club against any Arabian nationalist moves. British strategy has consisted in using this poor impoverished land, (the size of Haiti, only one-fortieth the size of Egypt,) in order to play it off against Arabian nationalist moves. It has leaned its weight now one way, now another in order to keep "order" in Arabia. That is the only purpose in Britain's policy in Palestine. It plays both ends against the middle.

The Nazis have countered British moves in the Near East by playing up Anti-Semitism, thus increasing their influence with certain Arabian groups. The American Imperialists, on the other hand, have attempted to utilize a section of the Zionist movement and then to

gain control of this movement, on the grounds that Britain "is not a true friend of the Jew", whereas Roosevelt is.

SHOW-DOWN IMMINENT

Another important political factor to be reckoned with in the Near East is the DeGaulle French movement. Should England hold out or should German pressure against the Petain government increase, it is very likely that other forces — in Syria and Morocco — will come over to the DeGaulle camp and the British, and will seriously jeopardize Italian operations in the Near East.

But all these political intrigues are merely auxiliary to the military conflict and the economic conflict of the great imperialists. With the intensification of the military battle for control of the Balkans and the Near East there can be little doubt that the political intrigues, too, will increase. A showdown between the various puppets of rival capitalist forces is imminent.

SUMMARY OF ANTAGONISMS

To sum up the political and military situation in the Balkans and Near East, we can say:

1—This will be the new major locale of the war in the winter months.

2—The antagonisms are more far-reaching than merely an Anglo-Axis struggle; the powers of the Rome-Berlin axis, plus Moscow, have their own intense struggles behind the scenes and through puppet political forces in these areas.

3—The various political movements of one sort or another, including the World Zionist movement and the DeGaulle forces, will be (and are being) used as pawns by each power to further its ends. They will play an increasingly important role as military invasions occur.

4—Military struggles are imminent over the control of the Suez, Dardanelles and Red Sea. The Italian campaign to invade Egypt is a first step in this direction.

MASS FERMENT SEETHING

Along with all these political and military factors, however, far more significant and basic developments are occurring. Lashed by eco-

nomical discontent as a result of the discommoding of national economies through war preparations, the masses in the Balkans are in ferment. As a manifestation of this sentiment there was the demonstration of thousands of workers and peasants in Rumania against the cession of part of Transylvania to Hungary. The bourgeois press, of course, played this up as a purely political matter. But the reality was far different. The peasants and workers of the Balkans know what to expect when a cession of territory occurs; they know of the restrictions on their work, savings, the nationalist measures in employment, etc. They were rebelling because of their general disgust with their economic plight and fear of things even worse to come.

The fact that their struggle appears on the surface as merely a political move by the head of the Peasant Party, Maniu, is misleading. The Russian Revolution in March 1917 also appeared merely as a change of regime from Czar to Professor Miliukov, from the incompetent Royal entourage to the competent professor who promised to prosecute the war on Britain's side more efficiently. Marxists must be able to look behind these political effects to see the economic causes — in the case of the Balkans: quickly maturing revolutionary situations.

The same observations can be made in regard to the revolting French colonies now going over to DeGaulle. Now that the home government in France is greatly weakened the natives in the colonies are stirring — the prelude to revolution; but bourgeois generals like Catroux are taking advantage of native uprisings to channelize them into safe bourgeois territory. It is significant that the only place in French Equatorial Africa that didn't go over to DeGaulle was the part where the revolt was limited strictly to whites. In the other places it was the SOCIAL ferment of the natives which permitted DeGaulle to gain his victory.

BEGINNING OF PRE-REVOLUTIONARY SITUATIONS

But these "victories" will be shortlived. The same tempest which breeds revolts of the Antonescu, Maniu, Catroux, DeGaulle type, is part of the typhoon which is about to engulf capitalism as a whole. In other words this is only the first part of the revolutionary strug-

gle. It is the beginning of pre-revolutionary situations — there can be no question of that. Just as the Vienna and Berlin strikes of 1916 were the preludes to the Soviet of 1918, after the revolt at Kiel, and the revolution of 1919, so the present revolts in the French colonies and the Balkans are the beginnings of things far more significant.

The capitalist masters—of both Germany and Britain, of America and Japan — may sit smugly perusing their military strength and patting their fat bellies while their greedy

hands reach forth for superprofits. But the small but ineradicable letters in the uprising in Transylvania, Chad, Cameroons, etc., The two currents go in opposite directions — war and revolution. The war seems the most sensational today, but the rumblings of revolution will be far more enduring.

That and that alone can be the guiding thought to the masses of the Balkans and the Near East as the hour of Capitalist barbarism descends upon them.

Sept. 13, 1940

Mexico, War, and the Workers

Although the results of the Mexican presidential elections have as yet not been made public, the victory of the official party's candidate, Alvilva Camacho is almost an established fact. The Camachists claim that he had the overwhelming support of the nation in spite of the demonstrations of Almazan's followers. To conclude from this, however, that Mexico's political problems have been settled would be a gross error; in fact, they are just beginning to boil. Elections are not decisive even in circumstances in which the social relations are relatively stable, that is, the economic, the political, the social antagonisms are not acute.

This is far from being the case in Mexico. In our previous articles we attempted to point out that the entire life of Mexico is in a state of seething, if as yet subdued, conflict. We insisted that with the passing of every day, the moment draws closer when the class relations in Mexico will enter the stage of open warfare. The European war has temporarily slowed down the process; perhaps it might alter its form, but in the long run it can only aggravate the situation.

In the next two articles we intend to analyze the various factors that play determining roles in the political situation of Mexico. These factors can in the main be grouped under

three headings. First, the effect of the European war on the economy of Mexico must be noted. Second, the recently concluded election should be analyzed and its significance on the future course of Mexico determined. Third, and perhaps of primary importance, the bearing of U.S.-Mexican relationships upon the situation.

Of the six year plan of Cardenas regime, it must be said that although it has failed to solve Mexico's basic problems — which are incapable of being solved in a capitalist framework — it must be considered one of the most ambitious programs ever initiated in any country. None of the powerful Socialist parties of pre-Hitler Europe could boast of anything that even approached it in scope. Marxists can readily understand that this fact must be attributed to the delicate class relationships, the acute contradictions in the life of Mexico. Just as the backwardness of Czarist Russia was responsible for the October revolution, so in a similar vein the backwardness of Mexico is responsible for the six year plan. The undeveloped character, or more correctly, the unevenly developed character of the Mexican social structure in its relationship with highly advanced capitalist countries, has thrown to the surface many conflicting tendencies; it has created a hodgepodge of class relations, as

was true of Czarist Russia. The six year plan is a dam designed by the ruling bourgeoisie to hold back the proletarian revolutionary flood, and to lesser extent, to hold in check the reactionary feudal elements.

METHOD OF CONCESSIONS LIMITED

But it must be remembered that because bourgeois democracy is incapable of solving the basic problems of society, the reformist method of checking proletarian revolution is effective only up to a certain point. Sooner or later in every capitalist country the method of concessions to the working class is replaced by the method of force. Sooner or later in every capitalist country the democratic bourgeoisie give way willingly or otherwise to the fascist bourgeoisie. The entire history of Europe since the first world war demonstrates this truth most effectively, France being the latest sad example. Unless the workers in Mexico have learned this lesson from the experience of their comrades in Europe, they will learn it by personal experience.

In the process of serving to stifle the revolutionary ferment, the six year plan has necessarily had to throw concessions to the masses, which has served to improve the lot of a section of the Mexican toilers, especially in the spheres of education and social services. But such temporary gains, thrown as scraps by the bourgeoisie, in no way negate the basic misery and exploitation of the Mexican toilers which only the proletarian revolution can alter. When that time comes, the "gains" of the six year plan will be shown to be insignificant compared with the tremendous social services which a Workers Council Government will institute for the masses it represents.

THE SIX YEAR PLAN

The six year plan has also dislocated the economy of the nation. Mexico, as all backward nations, has essentially an agricultural economy. The well-being of its masses, its national prosperity under capitalism, to a large degree depends upon agriculture, the occupation of the overwhelming majority of its population. (Of course, this prosperity in the long run depends upon the well-being of the industrial sectors). A few statistics in this connection will demonstrate the dislocation of the basic sphere of economy.

Given the agricultural production index at 100 in 1931, in 1939 it stood at 89.11. The full significance of this decline can only be appreciated if we take into consideration the increase of population between 1931-1939. Various conflicting reasons are advanced by the critics and the friends of the six year plan for this fact. Be that as it may, the fact that the agricultural production has declined remains. As a result, the prices of the agricultural commodities have gone up. If we take the index of agricultural commodity prices in 1931 as 100, we find that in 1934 it dropped to 74, but in 1939 it went up to 147. The consequence of this is the fact that the wage increases that the strongly organized workers have won, have to a large extent been wiped out, their buying power has been diminished. As for the Mexican peon, their conditions as we have pointed out in our previous articles have only been slightly bettered in an economic sense. Now the European war has come along to aggravate the situation.

WAR HURTS ECONOMY

The first world war brought innumerable economic advantages to Mexico; it gave an impetus to the expansion of its economy. The reverse is true today. The European war is intensifying the economic ills and weaknesses of Mexico. Mexico, as every other Latin American country, has been cut off from valuable markets. Latin America has always been an important source of primary products and basic raw materials for European countries. In fact, the economy of Latin America and that of certain European countries have been and still are complimentary. This is by no means the case in their relations with the U.S. The export of silver, gold, zinc, copper, lead and oil altogether make up 70% of Mexico's total exports. The war has knocked the bottom out of European markets for these commodities. We will first consider the position of silver on the world market.

Although Europe has not been a market for Mexican silver for a good many years, the U.S. takes practically all the silver Mexico produces, and in this respect, the war has not altered the situation; still the silver problem is of such importance in the entire scheme that any analysis of Mexico's foreign trade or her economic conditions generally did not begin with the silver question, would be incorrect.

In 1938 silver exports constituted 20.4% of the country's total exports. 98.5% of the silver went to the U. S. This purchase of silver by the U.S. is not only a source of revenue for the Mexican government but what is far more important, it stabilizes the value of the peso. Mexico is one of the few remaining countries still on the silver standard.

In effect the U.S. holds a club over the head of the Mexican government, for the discontinuance of the silver purchases would knock the entire Mexican economy into a cocked hat. Especially is this true today, for the U.S.-Mexican trade balance has been adverse for Mexico since 1937. An illustration will demonstrate the power of the American silver policy. In the first few months of 1938 the Mexican government boosted the import duties on certain American commodities. The U.S. congress immediately retaliated by discontinuing silver purchases. Needless to say, the Cardenas regime backed down quickly and the import duties were reduced. Congress still purchases silver but on the open market at prices not so favorable for Mexico as in the past. Every time a U.S. congressman attacks Roosevelt's silver policy, the Mexican economy breaks out in a cold sweat.

DECREASE IN MINE PRODUCTION

The other commodities that we have enumerated are of prime importance to the prosecution of a war. During the first world war, Mexico profited from this fact for the allies constituted a ready market for these commodities. Since the last war, however, the British Empire has tremendously increased its production of copper, zinc and lead. The copper yield of the British mines could be increased if necessary to 700,000 tons annually, whereas the needs of both Britain and France did not exceed 450,000 tons annually. In 1914, the British Empire produced 300,000 tons of lead annually. In 1938 this production has been more than doubled, with a 650,000 ton annual production. The same holds true in the case of zinc. In 1914, the British Empire produced 250,000 tons annually, in 1938 — 600,000 tons. As far as oil is concerned, Great Britain still clings to the boycott of Mexican oil it initiated when the Cardenas government took over the British and American oil properties.

These facts have had a most marked effect on the production of the economic condition of the Mexican mines. In comparing the period of Sept., Oct., Nov. of last year with the previous June, July, August period, we find that there was a decrease of 3,000 tons in the production of copper, 9,000 tons in the production of lead, 7,500 tons in the production of zinc. Silver production in the same period declined 120,000 kilograms and gold production 3,000 kilograms. The total value of the decline of the metal production in this period amounted to 50,000,000 Mexican dollars. Add to this the following statistics on export for the two periods:

1st period — \$183,737,480
2nd period — 128,441,610

and the effect of the war upon the Mexican economy becomes obvious. It is interesting in this connection to note the trend of the past few years in Mexico's foreign trade. We quote the following statistics which are arrived at when the fluctuations of the Mexican currency are considered:

Exports	Imports
1937 — 247.8	170.4
1938 — 185.5	109.3
1939 — 172.3	119.7

The drop will be much more marked in 1940: If not for the British blockade, Mexico could dispose of her products in Germany and Italy. Prior to the outbreak of the war and after the U.S. and British oil companies declared a boycott on Mexican oil, Germany and Italy took nearly two-thirds of Mexico's oil production. In fact, these countries have not as yet paid Mexico for past deliveries. In short, the boom that Mexico had expected because of the war has not only failed to materialize, but Mexico's foreign trade is in a much weaker position today than it has perhaps ever been. (What Mexico can expect in the event of a German victory we will not consider now.)

WORKERS' CONDITIONS WORSENE

It is in place here to consider the effects of the economic situation engendered by the war upon the working class of Mexico. We pointed out that the cost of living has been rising even prior to the outbreak of the war. The war is accelerating this tendency. Because of the uncertain outlook, prices are rising, purchasing consequently diminishing. The Na-

tional Bank of Mexico has this to say about the situation in the textile industry: "In spite of good harvests, in spite of high grain prices, the demand for cheap fabrics has not increased. (i. e., on the part of the predominant peasant population). The pace of the cotton industry is uncertain."

Woolen textile mills sold in Dec., 1939, 25% less than in the same period in 1938. Sales of shoe factories recently registered a 30-40% decline. The Bank of Mexico makes the following statement in this connection: "They (shoe factories) do not sell as much as they should since they make articles of second importance and those of first necessity are so high in price that little is left for what can be done without." One of these first necessities for the workers in the cities is apartments; rents are constantly rising. Due to the low buying power of the Mexican masses, business men of Mexico resorted to the American practice of installment sales. Because of the critical economic situation, merchants are cutting down the credits formerly advanced to the buyers.

GOVERNMENT CUTS WAGES

The economic situation of Mexico today is sharply reflected in the fact that the workers of the Government-owned railroads have been given a wage cut, and that the oil industry is to be reorganized which will mean wage cuts and reduction in social expenditures. As in every other bourgeois-democratic country, the gains the workers won yesterday, today must be revoked. Thus far the measures taken by the Mexican government have not evoked great protests. But as the economic situation worsens, these measures will become sharper, the protests of the working class and peasants more audible. It will be necessary for the bourgeoisie to smash the organizations of the peasants and workers because, in spite of the fact that they are reformist, government, controlled organs, they are still a menace to the bourgeoisie. It will be necessary to deprive the masses of their democratic rights. Reformism will give way to Fascism unless the proletariat and peasantry of Mexico establish a dictatorship of the proletariat.

August 19, 1940.

Notes On The Funeral Of Leon Trotsky

Editor's Note: We publish excerpts from a letter from comrade William Stricker, a representative of ours who was in Mexico City, at the time of the murder of Leon Trotsky. The FIGHTING WORKER, organ of the Revolutionary Workers League, U. S., carried an editorial in the September 1st issue condemning the Stalinist GPU murder of Trotsky.

This editorial pointed out that the entire revolutionary movement must duly recognize Trotsky as an outstanding revolutionary fighter. Despite the fact that he left the path of Marxism over six years ago, Trotsky devoted himself unceasingly to the cause of the work-

ing class for over forty-four years. Our political differences with Trotsky were and remain fundamental; but they were waged within a principled framework.

We vigorously condemn the Stalinist murder-machine which seeks to eliminate political opponents by gun and dagger. That is why, despite the fact that he was no longer a Marxist, we can pay due respects to Trotsky, as a revolutionary.

Here we present some factual material on the politicalization of the funeral and a political analysis:

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Cardenas and his regime were quick to take full advantage for their own political capital.

Trotsky's coffin was donated by General J. Manuel Nunez, Chief of Police of the Federal District. (This is stated everywhere, but I have not seen his formal corroboration in the press). Cardenas, the Police Department, various police and government officials, sent wreaths. A guard of honor was formed by five aides of Cardenas, Police Chief Nunez and other police captains. Upon the statement of Nunez that he could not wait long, a group of revolutionary workers (non-Trotskyites) were supplanted by the Trotskyite representatives in charge, so that Nunez and the police captains might stand guard.

Cardenas used Trotsky's blood to cleanse the tarnish of lies and corruption and misery from his "socialist" regime. A few dollars for a wreath was a cheap price for the world publicity to the "revolutionary government", and for such an opportune weapon in the internal political intrigues against Toledano, the Stalinists and others.

The country is rotten with corruption and intrigue. The government and bourgeois forces have been driving hard against the Stalinists and Toledano in the unions, etc., and this provides a golden opportunity to sharpen the attack.

The recent elections showed that Toledano's power over the workers was waning. In spite of the unions heralding the workers in truckloads to the polls, a great many stayed away, and many even voted for Almazan. The aim is to discredit and replace Toledano or at least drive a wedge between him and the Stalinists.

TROTSKYITES PLAYED INTO THEIR HANDS

The disgrace and shame is that the Trotskyites played completely into their hands. Every published statement of the Trotskyists expressed its gratitude to the Cardenas regime. I have already mentioned the incident about the guard of honor. Goldman, speaking at the cemetery to the world press, opened his talk with a pious obeisance to the Cardenas regime: "Justice demands that the country which gave him asylum when all the others shut their door shall be where the remains

of Trotsky rest, as an honor to the Mexican people and to the government of President Cardenas, who gave him asylum." Goldman directed his whole talk against Stalin, "the murderer on his throne", and against Hitler and the "tyrants" of the world, but said not a word against capitalist democracy, etc.

ONE-SIDED PRAISE TO CARDENAS

Theoretically, Goldman was not in a position to attack the Cardenas regime, but in the present situation in Mexico when the masses are so desperately striving to clear their heads of the fumes of Cardenas fake socialism, it is criminal that "revolutionists" should give such one-sided praise to Cardenas, strengthening his lies, and nowhere, neither here nor anywhere else, exposing the hypocritical motives behind Cardenas' hospitality.

The same can be said of the Trotskyists for putting up as a second speaker at the funeral ceremonies, a man like Garcia Trevino, an ex-Trotskyite, speaking as representative of the Mexican "Intellectuals", supported Cardenas, and attacked Toledano and the Stalinists from the right.

ACTIONS IN U.S. EVEN WORSE

(We may add that the actions of the American Trotskyites are even worse. Here, where they are under no kind of obligation whatsoever to the Cardenas regime, their eulogies of the Mexican government are clearly reformist.

The memorial meetings which the Socialist Workers Party organized in the various cities were instructed by the National Secretary, Cannon, to adopt the following type of resolution to Cardenas:

"The Cleveland memorial meeting in honor of Leon Trotsky recognizes the refuge and respect given to him by you, and express the conviction that these acts will forever redound to the honor of the Mexican Republic and your Administration." (our emphasis)

This is reformist praise of the Mexican governmental regime precisely at a time when it is intensifying its attacks against the workers, and moving further under the aegis of American Imperialism. The Trotskyites do not understand, as comrade Stricker explains, that Cardenas acts in regard to Trotsky are for his own narrow bourgeois ends to mislead the workers.

Such action as this by the Trotskyites clearly indicates how fast they will flounder farther to the right now that their one theoretician has fallen victim of the GPU. — The Editors.)

As a political force the Trotskyists made a miserable showing. Trotsky's loss to them was an incalculable blow, but aside from a few feeble attempts, instead of rising to the occasion, they succumbed. Inside the funeral parlor, over the coffin of Trotsky there hung the red banner of the "Liga Comunista Internacionalista". Aside from this, nothing. No leaflets, no papers, no literature of any sort was sold or distributed. Not even a public meeting has been arranged.

NO POLITICALIZATION AT CEMETERY

Similarly, at the funeral ceremony, there was not a single red flag, not even the Trotskyist banner. Nothing. Before emerging from the funeral parlor, and during the procession towards the cemetery, Trotskyist slogans were shouted and the Internationale was sung, but in the cemetery itself it was "overlooked". The speeches were ended, the body removed, the assemblage dispersed; and the Internationale was not sung. It was heartbreaking.

The general effect on the public, of the assassination, was one of shocked horror among the more political-minded, and of arising wrath against Stalinism.

OUT SOON -- GERMAN «INTERNATIONAL NEWS»

As stated in the article **Our Press** (volume 1, number 1), at the time of the formation of the INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION, the INTERNATIONAL NEWS would be published regularly in English, with French, Spanish and German supplements to the extent that political and technical forces permitted.

We are glad to report that a German issue of the INTERNATIONAL NEWS will be published regularly by the I.C.C., mainly through the action of the **Red Front** and its Foreign Bureau. We are also glad to report, that, in addition to the **Revolutionary Communists of Germany**, leading comrades, now resident in America, have also endorsed the Fourteen Points. On the basis of such political agreement with the I.C.C., organizational concurrence has been reached whereby these

TROTSKYIST GROUPS FACE DISINTEGRATION

The Stalinist sympathizers have been deeply shaken — I have no information on the effects upon their members. The Trotskyists, as I have pointed out, were almost paralyzed. They claimed 15 members on paper in the official group. As a group they have been for the past 2 years almost non-existent; their only activity was to issue their magazine, "The Clave" (The Key) every two or three months, financed largely by Trotsky himself. They have no strong or predominant leader here, and will most likely crumble in the next months. (A revealing incident of their condition is the fact that for over a year the official Trotskyist group has called itself the "Patido Obrera Internacionalista", and for two years a split-off group has called itself the "Liga Comunista Internacionalista", but since the official group retained the old banner, and had no new banner with its new name,— not having used a banner in all that time,— it used the old banner!)

Indicative of the general sentiment were the wreaths and red flags and banners representing trade unions and political organizations in the funeral chapel. The "C.C.C., Casa del Pueblo", the Revolutionary Workers and Peasants Party, CTM, etc. Beside the Police Chiefs, many others served as watchers: Otto Ruhle, Gorkin, Pivert, etc.

comrades will co-operate politically and technically in helping to publish the German edition for the I.C.C.

OUT WITHIN SIX WEEKS

The first issue of the INTERNATIONALE NACHRICHTEN will be published within six weeks. It will contain: **The Fourteen Point Programmatic Declaration. If Germany Wins — Then What?. Can France Avert Revolution?. and an analysis of the coming German Revolution.**

INTERNATIONALE NACHRICHTEN will be circulated internationally and will undoubtedly be of great aid to further the work of the international Marxist tendency, especially for the comrades of Greater Germany and their emigre groups throughout the world.

Developments In India

Seldom has there been a more spectacular exemplification of the international nature of the class struggle than is seen in the recent events in India. It seems a far cry from the blitzkrieg against France and the threatened blitzkrieg against England to the development of a prerevolutionary situation in India and yet the connection is inescapable. Readers of the International News are already familiar with the analysis of Indian events given by the Marxists. There has been no fundamental change in this analysis, but there have been developments that have sharpened the struggles and are rapidly leading to all the objective conditions for revolution in India. Let's summarize them briefly:

MASSES PRESSURE PUSHES NEHRU "LEFT"

1. The overwhelming onslaught against France by the Nazis and in connection therewith pouncing of the British Expeditionary Force, led to the defeat in the Nationalist Congress of the Gandhi group. This has been foretold in previous issues of the International News, but was greatly accelerated by the triumph of the Nazi elements. Gandhism, in view of its nature as an integral part of the British imperialist machinery, was weakened by the Anglo-French defeat. The pressure of the masses, acting indirectly on the Congress, compelled the Nehru group to stiffen in its attitude towards British Imperialism and temporarily sealed the defeat of Gandhi.

It should still be observed, however, that there is no essential class difference between these two groupings and that the seemingly more radical is permeated with the spirit of Gandhism, and has been groomed and is trotted forward only as a substitute for the waning Gandhism. These changes at the top are only indicative of the outside pressure of the masses, and, left alone, can have no fundamental social significance. This should never be forgotten.

NEW TACTICS BY BRITISH IMPERIALISM

2. Faced with the temporary defeat of Gandhism, its chief mass basis in India, British Imperialism was compelled to adopt new tactics.

Suddenly, to a startled world of liberals, who are always being startled in such matters, Britain seemed to issue a manifesto promising dominion status after the war. But it was only seeming. Britain cannot at this stage of decay afford even to make unequivocal promises of dominion status. Not that the piratical descendants of Clive and Hastings would not hesitate to lie as much as they have in the past, but simply that they cannot even afford to make real verbal concessions regarding the crown jewel of the British Empire, for fear of inciting social struggles.

When examined, therefore, the so-called promise of dominion status is hedged around with reference to state conditions and to dominion status being approved by "substantial and important" elements of the population. By these British Imperialism means, and its meaning is well understood by those concerned, the princes, and the reactionary Mohammedan, Hindu, and untouchable mass leaders. It is impossible to conceive of these gentry ever being "persuaded" of the necessity of the dominion status.

So Britain tries both to have her cake and eat it; it gives empty promises on the one hand and retains everything essential on the other. But even this shadow of a concession has been forced by the defeat of France, the threatened invasion of Britain, and the Japanese advances towards Indo-China, with a longing glance at India.

CONTINUES NON-VIOLENCE POLICY

3. What was the reaction of the dominant Nehru group in the Nationalist Congress? Forced by the pressure of the petit bourgeoisie beneath them in the Congress, and still more faced with the necessity of pretending to be a real foe of Gandhism, the Congress majority was compelled to decline Britain's offer after several days of silence. However, this same majority, by continuing the policy of non-violence, shows its fundamental affinity with Gandhism. The real test of the sincerity of any organization in India claiming to fight for Indian independence is whether it will decisively break with the sullifying doctrine of non-violence. This, of course, does not exhaust

the differences in class viewpoint in India, but it is impossible, as previously pointed out to march together with elements which are not marching at all, and there can be no march of any sort without the theoretical and practical overthrow of passivism.

IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITY

4. England's extremity remains India's opportunity. The work of the chiefs at the top in the Nationalist Congress can amount to nothing except holding back the masses, unless there is the immediate formation of an Indian Marxist party proceeding to establish Soviets and advocating the immediate seizure of the land by the peasants and the driving of the English and the princes into the Indian Ocean. This is not just a general perspective. It is an immediate opportunity.

The plight of Britain, the confusion of the British ruling class as to methods of keeping India in subjection, the threatened blitzkrieg in London, the perspective of transfer of the center of British Imperialism overseas, the strain of war economy on the workers and peasants, the ferment in the urban petit bourgeoisie, all these are creating, and creating rapidly an immediate perspective of armed insurrection for India. Only the party is lacking.

But this is the most decisive lack. The Stalinists and the Royists who combined for all practical purposes, at the last Nationalist Congress will strive to repeat the experiences of China.

During the Revolution of 1925-1927, the Stalinist theory of "the bloc of four classes" and its participation in the Kuo-Min-Tang which was completely dominated by the comprador-bourgeoisie, led to the defeat of the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry.

A CORRECTION

Owing to a technical oversight, the last four issues of the INTERNATIONAL NEWS have been incorrectly numbered. For example the last, September issue should have been

Such a policy of class collaboration, instead of independent working class action, is no less dangerous in the development of a national phase of the revolution than in a proletarian revolution in an advanced capitalist country.

The precondition for the successful development of the Indian revolution is the complete rejection of such Stalinist, Royist and other opportunist proposals for **subordination** to **any** section of the bourgeois forces, and the advancement of the independent action of the workers in alliance with the peasantry.

BUILD THE MARXIST PARTY

But from the experiences of the past, and from the ranks of the textile workers and the other urban proletarians of India there can be gathered together a cadre party that will overcome these tendencies and lead the Indian masses to successful revolt. And after India has a successful revolution the effect upon the world cannot be overestimated. Small as are the conscious numbers of Marxists in India it still remains true as in 1917 that the main thing is to build a real Marxist party and the masses will flock to its leadership. The objective conditions are rapidly becoming rotten ripe.

It is up to the Marxists in all countries to realize the importance of India and to assist theoretically and practically in the building of an Indian Party, no matter how small. Routine, dragging methods no longer suffice in this period. The blitzkrieg tactics of imperialism must be met, and at once by "blitzkrieg" organization on our part. This, of course, does not mean putschism. But that is not the main danger now. The Indian revolution demands speedy organization of the subjective forces.

September 2, 1940.

numbered vol. 2; number 9.

This present issue is correctly, volume 2, number 10. The December issue will carry an index of all published issues from vol. 1, no. 1.

R.W.L. Convention Position On the Czech Question

EDITORS' NOTE: The following position on one aspect of the National Question was adopted by the Fourth Convention of the Revolutionary Workers League, U.S. and is now presented to the readers of the INTERNATIONAL NEWS as the League's position on this question.

The document on the National Question previously published by the INTERNATIONAL NEWS (March, 1940, vol. 2, no. 4) has also been endorsed by the League as our fundamental position on this question.

In the oppressed capitalist nation, where the question is not a national revolution, but where the proletarian revolution is in the order of the day, such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, etc.*** (where most often these countries also have oppressed national minorities), the workers do not carry out a policy of marching separately and striking together with their own bourgeoisie against the invaders; but instead carry through a policy of revolutionary defeatism, the same as the workers in the oppressor nation who work for the defeat of their exploiters.

In propaganda work in their respective countries, the workers carry on different emphasis in their day-to-day action toward the proletarian revolution. In the oppressor nation the workers, in order to burn out any signs of social patriotism, advocate the right of self-determination of the oppressed nation and the right of separation. On the other hand, the workers in the oppressed nation, in order to separate themselves from their own exploiters, emphasize **unity** with the workers of the oppressing nation. The class relation between workers and oppressors of national minorities, and workers and oppressed national minorities demand this Leninist position.

STRATEGICAL DIFFERENCES

The workers in a backward country, where there are unfulfilled agrarian and democratic carryovers, and the workers in an oppressed capitalist nation, base their strategical

application toward the proletarian revolution on this different class relation, which is determined by a different economic base. One thing is clear in both of these variants: that the aim and object of the class is the proletarian revolution. But the proletarian revolution in the oppressed capitalist nation proceeds in its fundamental aspects (regardless of secondary carryovers) at the beginning as a **proletarian** revolution; while the revolution in the backward countries starts either as a **national** revolution, or a proletarian revolution with a **national first phase** or stage. Therein lies the heart of the strategical difference, even though the laws of the permanent revolution canalizes these social forces in the same channel toward the same end.

In considering the line of march in the oppressed capitalist nation, Czechoslovakia to be exact, the R.W.L., at the time of the Munich affair, erred in its position on the strategical aspects of the question.

We spoke of "marching separately and striking together" against Fascism. Our fundamental line of class demarcation and our demand for absolute class independence was clear, but we confused the question of an oppressed backward nation with an oppressed developed capitalist country. We herewith present a correction of this, and welcome the material of our German comrades of the INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION on this question, which was of the greatest help in clarifying us.

NOTE OF THE R.W.L. EDITORS

R.W.L. EDITOR'S NOTE: The opening paragraph of the document above presenting the R.W.L. Fourth Convention position deals with the question of a "proletarian revolution on the order of the day" in Czechoslovakia and Poland, which were small European capitalist countries, oppressed by the powerful imperialists; in contrast to colonial and semi-colonial countries such as India, China, etc. History has passed beyond a national revolution or a phase of the national revolution in such countries as Czechoslovakia; but not in such countries as India. The proletarian revolution being on the "order of the day" refers therefore to the fact that **historically** in small capitalist countries such as Czechoslovakia, the revolution will not be **national** (as it will be in the first phase in India) but **proletarian** from the outset.

At the Eight Plenum when this document was presented, the question of a revolutionary situation in Czecho-Slovakia at the time German Imperialism invaded, was not taken up. But at the Convention this aspect of the question was considered, and a document presenting the concept that there existed a **revolutionary situation** was voted down. The comrades who voted down this concept maintained that it was only a pre-revolutionary situation. Therefore, the formula "the proletarian revolution is on the order of the day" refers to the historical aspect and not to any prognosis that a revolutionary situation existed at the moment. In the **historical** sense a proletarian revolution is on the order of the day in all the advanced capitalist nations; while in the backward links of world economy the national revolution or a phase of the national revolution (in the process of the "permanent revolution") is on the order of the day.