
September 1942

Fourth International

India's Fight for Freedom:

1. The Working Class of India . . . *Editorial Comment*
2. The Truth About Cripps . . . *by Felix Morrow*
3. American Labor on India . . . *A Critical Survey*
4. Petty-Bourgeois Radicalism on India's Struggle

The Auto Workers: A Step Forward

by E. R. Frank

- The National Question in Europe . . . *by Marc Loris*
Geopolitics: An Imperialist Myth . . . *by James Cadman*

From the Arsenal of Marxism:

- The Second World War *by Leon Trotsky*

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Twenty Cents

Manager's Column

Our agents have responded very well to a letter requesting back copies of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** for 1940 and 1941. However, we are still in need of copies of the following issue: December, 1940. We have sold out all bound volumes for 1940-41 and cannot have additional volumes bound until we succeed in getting a sufficient number of this issue. Meanwhile orders for bound volumes are piling up.

Just as a reminder — we still have in stock bound volumes of the **NEW INTERNATIONAL** for 1938 and 1939 (\$2.50 a volume). For the newcomer to the ranks of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** readers, these volumes are indispensable.

* * *

H. A. of Stanmore, England, writes:

"This is a fine issue (April, 1942), particularly the contributions by Felix Morrow and John G. Wright. This, of course, without any aspersions on the other articles.

"We particularly appreciate the Indian and Ceylonese material which you are publishing. It is both edifying and inspiring and of tremendous importance to the British movement at the present time. You will be interested to know that we will have a pamphlet out this week-end on India. It states our position together with the manifesto of the Indian section of the Fourth International.

"We are continuing to make headway here and feel that for the first time our tendency has a national basis. This is true in industry as you will gather from our press."

* * *

There has been a goodly amount of activity in the subscription field this month.

From a town in Montana comes this note: "Find enclosed a check for \$5.00 out of which take a one-year combination sub to **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and *The Militant* and give the balance to the Civil Rights Defense Committee. Here's hoping the Indian masses set the spark for a move for world freedom."

And from a town in Minnesota comes another \$5.00 check to pay for a one-year combination sub to the magazine and *The Militant*, accompanied by the words: "Please forward the balance to

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Editor FELIX MORROW

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Comment	259
The Auto Workers: A Step Forward <i>By E. R. Frank</i>	261
The National Question in Europe.. <i>By Marc Loris</i>	264
The Truth About the Cripps Mission.....	
	<i>By Felix Morrow</i> 268
Geopolitics: An Imperialist Myth <i>By James Cadman</i>	273
American Labor on India	276
Petty-Bourgeois Radicalism on the Struggle in India	
	<i>By F. M.</i> 280
<i>From the Arsenal of Marxism:</i>	
The Second World War.... <i>By Leon Trotsky</i>	282
International Notes	286
 214	Manager's Column <i>Inside Front Cover</i>

Civil Rights Defense Committee to protect our civil rights."

D. P. of Youngstown writes in regard to his expired subscription: "I just received your letter about my subscription ending for the **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and I feel sorry I cannot send you any money right now because the department in which I work has gone from bad to worse for a long time and especially in the last three months. They have replaced the chippers with a few scarfers and now they are sending steel to England without being finished

in order to save money in case the ship gets sunk and also to finish in England because the English workers get less than we do over here.

"But, I am going to try my best, in the next few weeks to send you the price for the subscription to the **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and also *The Militant*. Please continue to send both of them."

We were only too glad to continue his subscriptions as requested and we have since received \$3.00 from this friend. *A. S. of Seattle* requested that

we send him a complete list of all subscriptions, active and expired, in that vicinity. This was done and a week or so later we received the following letter from him:

"I am hammering on one idea here and that is a contact is no contact who is not a regular reader of our paper, which means a subscriber. I expect we'll have a few going in regularly from now on. I am also making up a list of names to recommend for trial subs. Keep us up on expired subs and we'll chase 'em down."

* * *

Some time ago, we inquired of Los Angeles how they dispose of the very large bundle of **FOURTH INTERNATIONALS** they get every month, to which they replied:

"You asked how we sell the **F.I.** Mostly to friends and contacts through the branches, but quite a few on the newsstands where they sell pretty fast. It's really not so much the push we give it, but the interest everyone has for the contents."

* * *

D. O. of a city in the South writes: "The **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and *The Militant* are both written very well now and can be read, enjoyed and understood by the very poorly educated workers. The wives of colored workers to whom we have been distributing the paper and magazine have shown an increasing interest in them lately, which is very helpful in cases where only one member of the family can read and I believe (although I have not the knowledge of enough cases to be sure) that most of the time it is the woman who does the reading for the family. I know that it is generally the woman who finds most time to read.

"Our average reader here reads very slowly and reads our paper more carefully than other papers — often takes several weeks to read a paper."

* * *

While we have not received particular comments from others of our agents throughout the country, still we know that they are active in selling **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** because in addition to new subscriptions we have received full payment on account from them. Still, we'd like to hear from those few agents who have been silent during the past period.

WANTED URGENT

WE NEED COPIES IMMEDIATELY FOR
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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME III

SEPTEMBER 1942

NO. 9

Editorial Comment:

The Industrial Proletariat of India Enters the Struggle—Its Concentrated Economic Power and Political Experience—Why the Program of the Congress Cannot Be the Program of the Workers—The Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India

A great wave of political strikes of the industrial proletariat is sweeping India. Most of the details are suppressed by the totalitarian British censorship and the American press and radio which are closely collaborating with the British. But the essential facts are now known and, as a matter of fact, are beginning to seep out through some of the press commentators. Thus Louis Fischer reports that the 50,000 workers of the greatest industrial enterprise in India, the famous Tata steel and munitions works, launched a political strike on August 21, demanding the release of the imprisoned Congress leaders. Fischer adds:

"The strike wave in India is spreading. The most disturbed areas are the vital mining and factory regions of Behar, Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Province and the Bombay Presidency. In many places the tearing up of rails has completely disrupted railroad traffic. Telegraph service is frequently discontinued and always quite unreliable. Riots and sabotage throughout India are on a much larger scale than the British government in India had anticipated, the semi-official daily *Statesman* of New Delhi admits." (*The Nation*, September 5.)

Raymond Clapper adds the following details:

"India has dropped out of the news, but it is an artificial silence. Lack of news from India is caused by the tight censorship. . . . War production there is seriously crippled by strikes. Steel works, tinplate mills, cotton mills and other establishments have been affected. Railroad traffic was interrupted on one main line, forcing an attempt to move vital strategic material out of India by airplane. One important industrial center was cut off from all communication by railroad, telephone and telegraph for four days. . . . In other words, the real test between the Gandhi forces and the government evidently is still to come." (*N. Y. World-Telegram*, September 5.)

A Young But Seasoned Proletariat

The Indian proletariat is very young. Only in the last two decades has it emerged permanently from the peasantry, and many proletarians still have direct ties with the villages. The first real impetus for modern industry came in 1914-18, when wartime necessities relaxed the British policy of preventing the growth of factories in India; manufacturing for Britain's armies, and for the home market hitherto flooded with English-produced goods brought forth the Indian proletariat. Despite Britain's renewed discouragement of Indian industry after the war, and the narrow domestic market due to the impoverishment of the peasantry, a poverty which fell to starvation levels after 1929, industry (including mining and transportation) developed so that by 1935 there were five mil-

lion Indian workers in modern plants. Since then war preparations have brought expansion—the extent is concealed by Britain as a military secret—which has undoubtedly added several millions to the industrial proletariat. The specific weight of this class is enormously increased by the fact that the industrial plants, established so late in the development of capitalism, are generally large-scale enterprises, so that the workers are concentrated into relatively few production units.

Despite its youth, this proletariat has had a rich political experience. From its first struggle for higher wages, it learned that behind the employer, whether British or Indian, stands the government with its indefinite detention without trial, *lathi*-wielding police, troops and bombing planes. From the formation of the All-India Trade Union Congress in 1920, it has been the arena of fundamental political discussion. The workers condemned Gandhi in 1922 for calling off the civil disobedience campaign. Avowedly Marxist programs are familiar to the workers, the "pure and simple" trade unionism of America is alien to them. From the proletariat emerged Marxist parties which, in turn, were the principal leaven in creating the organized peasant movement, the All-India Kisan Sabha (founded in 1936). In 1937-39, during the period of the Congress Ministries in seven of the eleven provinces of British India, when the dominating right wing of the Congress sponsored anti-labor legislation and crushed strikes, the proletariat began to learn the most important lesson of all: the bourgeois character of the Congress. In the bitter conflicts of the unions and peasant sabhas with the Congress bourgeoisie, the Indian proletariat came of age. Since 1937 it has consciously pressed for mass struggle against British imperialism and against the indecision and cowardice of the Congress leadership. The workers forced the Congress Ministries to resign at the beginning of the war in protest against the involvement of India without its consent. Without their pressure the Congress would never have embarked on its present campaign. The workers, with sure instinct, are supporting every Congress step against British rule, but they do so with considerable awareness of the limitations of the Congress leadership and methods.

The Real Role of the General Strike

Since the Lahore Congress of 1929, where Nehru proposed it, the Congress has included in its program of struggle the General Strike. But, as the whole history of the labor movement has demonstrated, an effective General Strike can mean only: (1) a strike called for a specifically limited period of a few days, as a political protest for some limited demand

or (2) a strike called without any time limit, with the perspective of paralyzing industry and transportation *in order* to follow it up with the conquest of state power. The first form of General Strike, appropriate for a limited demand, is obviously inappropriate for the achievement of independence. It has its place today—to demand the release of the imprisoned independence fighters—as a preliminary skirmish which mobilizes the masses. But to win independence, only the second form of General Strike can serve. The Congress leadership, however, has no plan or perspective for following up a General Strike with the seizure of power and establishment of a provisional government. Neither the pacifist wing of Gandhi nor the “left” Nehru wing thinks in such terms. Both are united in seeking what they call “a complete deadlock”—sufficient paralysis of governmental and economic activity to dictate to the British a resolution of the “deadlock” by *reopening negotiations* on the basis of the demand for independence. In the final analysis, they seek Britain’s *agreement* to independence.

This Congress program, it is obvious, is altogether inappropriate for the industrial proletariat. Not only in the sense that revolutionary workers understand that such methods cannot overthrow the British. But also the indubitable fact that the workers cannot carry on strikes indefinitely. The peasant struggles—refusal to pay taxes and rents, etc.—still leave the peasant with the miserable living he wrests from his tiny plot of land. The *hartals* of the small shopkeepers can go on for a long time while the petty bourgeoisie manages to live off its tiny capital. But the industrial proletariat has neither land nor capital and starves in long strikes. It cannot strike for a year or two of civil disobedience. Moreover, the main weight of British repressions are undoubtedly directed against the workers, for the British can stand the peasant struggles and shopkeepers’ *hartals* far longer than they can endure the shutdown of the war industries. Every factor, therefore, compels the proletariat to link its strikes with an immediate perspective of overthrowing the British. Life itself drives the working class beyond the “deadlock” program of the Congress.

Can the Workers Take the Helm?

Can the proletariat assume the leadership of the revolution? Is it sufficiently strong and politically mature? We have already indicated its strength and political experience. Russia too was a predominantly agricultural country and yet the industrial proletariat led the October Revolution. Trotsky tells us that the Russian industrial working class, exclusive of railwaymen and miners, amounted to 1½ millions in 1905 and two millions in 1917. The comparable figures for British India are (roughly) as of 1935: two millions in power-driven factories, one million plantation workers (European-owned factory farms), 400,000 transport workers apart from railwaymen. With the undoubtedly considerable increase since 1935, one can say that the Indian proletariat compares in specific weight to the Russian proletariat of 1917. It is bigger and stronger than the Chinese proletariat of three millions which was prevented from assuming the leadership of the Chinese revolution in 1927 only by the false policy of the Communist Party.

The power of the proletariat is sufficient to enable it to lead the Indian revolution. What it lacks in numbers it can more than make up for by the great masses of the peasantry, whom only the proletariat can offer a program of expropriating the landlords and usurers. The decisive question, however,

in India today as throughout the world since the degeneration of the Communist International, is that of the *leadership* of the working class itself. Will it push forward a firm revolutionary leadership, impervious to bourgeois influences, understanding the full implications of a struggle to the end against imperialism?

In these last weeks the workers have shown that they know how to push aside misleaders. The Communist Party and the Democratic Party of the renegade M. N. Roy are vainly exhorting the workers to refrain from strikes, repudiate the civil disobedience campaign and cooperate with the British for the sake of the “war for democracy.” At the meeting of the All-India Trade Union Congress leadership in February, the Stalinist pro-war resolution had garnered 40 per cent of the votes. It was to be feared that a bloc of the Stalinists and the extreme right wing would be strong enough to keep the trade unions on the sidelines—as the Stalinists had done under ultra-radical formulas during the civil disobedience campaign of 1930-31—and disgrace the unions in the eyes of the nationalist movement. Fortunately, the Stalinists have been swept aside, at least for the present.

Much more complex today is the relation of the workers to the Congress Socialist Party, founded in 1934 by Congress left wingers, and to those leaders of the Congress like Nehru who call themselves socialists. Today these leaders are urging the workers on to struggle. But at every critical point in the past they have capitulated to the Congress bourgeoisie. The threat of the bourgeoisie to split the Congress at the 1939 session drove the “left” to surrender control into the hands of the right wing, although the workers’ and peasants’ delegations gave the “left” a majority of the Congress. Tomorrow, too, under the pressure of the Congress bourgeoisie, the “left” will hold back the workers.

The Bolshevick-Leninist Party

The best of the Congress Socialists and former Stalinists have drawn the necessary conclusions and have joined the Bolshevick-Leninist Party of India, section of the Fourth International. The heroic battle of its sister section of Ceylon, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, against outlawry by the British and the armed bands of the planters, is known to every advanced worker in India and has turned their attention to the Trotskyist program. Likewise they know of the Indo-China section of the Fourth International, and its long struggle against French imperialism. Our Ceylonese and Indo-Chinese comrades have given the advanced workers of India shining examples of mass struggles led irreconcilably against imperialism. Under their inspiration the Bolshevick-Leninist Party of India was formed in 1941.

It is a young party which is today winning its spurs in battle. It represents the real hope for the future of the Indian revolution. Without the leadership of such a revolutionary party, the greatest conceivable upsurge of the masses can be dashed to pieces, as happened in China in 1925-27. The Congress will no more lead the struggle to the very end than did its Chinese twin, the Kuomintang. Will our comrades find their way to the leadership of the Indian revolution? We are confident that they will, and that when they do, the revolution will go forward irresistibly. We know that they are wholeheartedly supporting and participating in the present struggle, learning from it, and forging in it unbreakable links between them and the worker and peasant masses. How

rapidly they will come forward, it is given to no man to say. We must recognize that they are a young party and that their most heroic efforts cannot substitute for the irreducible minimum of time and experience which are necessary to shape and harden a party into the really Bolshevik core of a suc-

cessful revolution. But they have the program of Bolshevism and the iron will. Their fate will be the fate of the revolution. Only under the leadership of such a party can the Indian revolution succeed in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism.

The Auto Workers: A Step Forward

By E. R. FRANK

The Seventh Convention of the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers, just concluded in Chicago, was the most significant since the historic Milwaukee convention of 1937, when the tempestuous union of the auto workers elbowed its way forward and gave notice that it had taken up its position in the front ranks of American labor.

The auto workers gathered in Chicago demonstrated that, although only eight months have elapsed since the United States entered the "shooting war," they have already overcome to a considerable extent the apathy and confusion that seized the men in the shops in the months immediately following "Pearl Harbor."

The magnificent revolt during the debate on overtime pay was nothing less than the lightning flash of the mood of exasperation with the auto barons and their dollar-a-year War Production Board. In the language of the English Parliament, it was a vote of "no confidence." It established conclusively that the war has not cowed the ranks of the auto union, and that the auto workers retain their exemplary militancy, their courage, their fighting qualities and their sound class instinct.

For four solid days the delegates roared their disapproval, they howled down their elected leaders, they hurled contemptuous taunts at their officials, they refused to let an Executive Board member speak. At one point they demanded the removal of all organizers from the convention floor. They voted down almost every important recommendation of the main convention committees.

Yet they concluded the convention sessions by reelecting to office, with a few insignificant changes, the whole top leadership of the union.

How explain this extraordinary behavior?

There is no question but that the leadership was the democratic choice of the delegates, for the convention successfully preserved its high authority and democracy continues to reign in the auto union as in no other international union.

Several of the bourgeois reporters, in attempting to explain the contradiction, made the cynical suggestion that this opposition really amounted to very little, that the delegates were merely interested in letting off steam before reelecting their officers. But this puerile and superficial estimate is rejected even by the responsible bourgeois editors. No! The great roar of protest that rose from the ballroom of the Sherman Hotel carried all the way to Capitol Hill and the White House, and its meaning was too clear to be misunderstood.

The contradiction between the conduct of the convention and the reelection of the old leadership, when analyzed, provides the key to understanding the development and the dynamics of the auto union, and the future course of the whole of American labor.

The American workers have now gone through nine

months of "shooting war" and, previous to that, two years of "national defense." They accepted the war as previously they had accepted "national defense." But their acceptance was purely formal; based not on a thorough understanding of what modern capitalist war means, but simply on naivete and political inexperience. Catering two years ago to this prevailing mood, Roosevelt proclaimed a program of providing the American people with the guns and the butter too. But modern total war, under conditions of moribund capitalism, cannot be conducted without reducing the mass of the people and above all the workers to a regime of overwork, poverty, hunger and disease. Thus the auto workers accepted the war on the false premise that they would not have to accept any of its consequences.

Now that the reel is beginning to unfold before their own eyes, the auto workers are balking. The convention thus presents the bizarre picture of a majority of its delegates bitter against Henderson and the OPA, bitter against Nelson and the WPB, scornful of the "15 per cent formula" of the War Labor Board, dead set against any proposal to freeze wages, mocking at the 44-cent increase received by the steel union, and yet continuing solemnly to declare that they stand four-square behind President Roosevelt and his war program. How can you be for and against the same thing at the same time? *It is this contradictory thinking that explains the contradictory actions of the convention.*

The Chicago delegates had come to the convention fresh from the shops. They were frightened that the "sacrifice program" was leading to the destruction of their union. They complained bitterly of mountains of unsettled grievances, of the nervousness and the dissatisfaction in the rank and file, the growing arrogance of the corporation managements, the firing of increasing numbers of union militants, the red tape and hopeless delays involved in negotiating their demands through the War Labor Board, the helplessness of the union now that it had given up its right to strike. Therefore, they hurled their bitterness and their exasperation at the heads of their leadership and demanded "action." What kind of action did they want? What alternatives did the opposition present to the convention? In truth, none. They had not yet thought their opposition through to the end. They did not possess a clear-cut alternative program. The opposition was still seeking some middle of the road course, some half-way house. But there is no half-way house; consequently the delegates could not find it.

The Only Alternative: Our Program

Any genuine alternative program could have been patterned only after the one presented by *The Militant*, which had been widely distributed among the delegates. On Wednesday, at the height of the controversy over the union's war

policy, the opposition was challenged on this very point by the ex-Stalinist, pro-administration chairman of the Constitution Committee, Lindahl.

He declared: "The opponents of this resolution fail entirely to present to this body any reasonable alternative. . . . There is no alternative except to act through governmental bodies." Then he indicated whither the arguments of the opposition were inevitably leading them. "Is it coincidental, my friends," Lindahl asked, "that the arguments used to strike down the resolution yesterday on the 'Victory Through Equality of Sacrifice,' is it coincidental the arguments were contained in a Trotskyite sheet passed out at the gates of the hall? Is it coincidental?" At this point the speaker was interrupted by boos expressing the displeasure of the oppositional delegates. After this interruption, Lindahl concluded: "Let me urge this, let us not be betrayed by Trotskyite councils, let us follow the path of patriotism in the leadership of Roosevelt that we set our feet upon months ago."

Thus the spokesman of the administration pointed out to the opposition the logical goal of their struggle. But the opposition was not yet ready to take more than the first few faltering steps.

The program of the leadership rests on its alliance with Roosevelt and its support of his war program. The immediate steps which have placed the labor movement in the war strait-jacket are the surrender of the right to strike and the approval of the War Labor Board as the super-arbiter of the class struggle in America. As a minimum program for the UAW to regain its freedom, therefore, stands the necessity of reasserting its right to strike. But the top leadership stands panic-stricken before this demand. For the right to strike means the blowing up of the War Labor Board and what will then happen to the alliance with Roosevelt? The UAW top leadership, in common with Philip Murray and the rest of the CIO bureaucracy, is convinced that the labor movement will never survive if it must stand on its own two feet and rely on its own resources and solidarity.

The delegates comprising the opposition were likewise hypnotized by this same CIO program and did not yet dare suggest the alternative, the only alternative program. One delegate did speak on the convention floor about the union's necessity to regain its right to strike, but the proposal found no response among the delegates.

That is why the convention criticism of the war policies of its leadership, although bitter and hostile to the extreme, constituted for all that no more than a protest. That is why the delegates, returning to the War Policy Committee its proposal on overtime pay, after a savagely conducted full-day debate, adopted virtually the identical proposal the following day. The delegates had no alternative. They could find no half-way house. That is why, for all the ferocity of its criticism, the convention adopted as its positive proposal the demand on Roosevelt to set up regional boards of the War Labor Board in order to eliminate delays! And that is why the convention, because the union has already freed itself, largely, of clique combinations and clique politics, could not create any alternative leadership and was forced to reelect the old leadership to office.

The Gap Between Leaders and Workers

The convention made clear that the auto workers still hold the illusion that they can retain their economic gains and living standards in this period of devastating war on the basis of a coalition of labor with the Roosevelt war government. And here becomes obvious the great difference and the coming

source of cleavage between the rank and file workers and the leadership of the union.

The top leadership already understands that the economic gains of the workers are due to be swept away. Their speeches about improving economic conditions are sheer hypocrisy. As a matter of fact, they have already given up these things as a sacrificial offering to Roosevelt in return for the guarantee that they will continue to be recognized as the spokesmen for American labor. They gave up the right to strike, they gave up the independence of the union movement, and in return Roosevelt provided them with a mongrel closed shop: "maintenance of union membership." The bargain is similar to that of the Dakota farmer who traded off his house and farm for a half-interest in the city hall.

The program of the UAW leadership: support of the war, coalition with the Roosevelt war government, elevation of the War Labor Board as super-arbiter, surrender of the independence of the labor movement—this program the membership accepts at the present juncture of affairs. But the inevitable consequences of this program are the weakening of the union, the demoralization of the membership, inability to organize the new unorganized war industries, general stagnation and decay, the worsening of working conditions and the lowering of wages and living standards. *The leadership has already reconciled itself to these consequences, but the membership is determined to resist them.*

The top UAW leadership, ground between two millstones, growing increasingly panicky between Roosevelt who demands that they make good on their promises and the increasing resistance of the membership, was inexorably forced into its attempt to destroy the democracy of the auto union. It is impossible for a pro-Roosevelt union leadership to balance itself in this war period, if it must continually answer for its deeds to an aroused, militant, alert and vocal rank and file.

The Defeats of the Leadership

And here the top leadership suffered a cruel blow at the hands of the convention. In contrast to the dilemma of the delegates over the political program, the convention displayed full ability to understand the organizational aspect of the union. The delegates easily defeated the campaign to rush the convention through in a few days on the ostensible ground that the men were needed back at work in the plants. The delegates now were on sure ground. They knew what they wanted and what they did not want. The debate was incisive and to the point. Boos and jeers greeted the Stalinist Levine of Plymouth Local when he began whining that "this convention will hold up these workers that are here, that are vital to the war effort. I am a welder and I weld on the M-4 tank, and I know my services are needed back at that plant." The delegates shouted at him: "If you're needed back at the plant, get your grips packed and get out of here."

The same self-assured conduct was displayed on the proposal to delay the next convention to May 1944. The leadership threw all their heavy artillery into the debate on this question. All the Stalinist hacks took the floor and argued that it would virtually constitute sabotage for 2,000 people to use up precious railroad space when they were needed back in the shops on the production line. George F. Addes who, unlike the Stalinists, still has some credit left with the delegates, recited figures and facts to prove how much money could be saved by both the International and local unions if the convention period

were extended. But all to no avail. The proposal was rejected as decisively as the delegates had rejected it the previous year at Buffalo. And so on down the line the delegates rejected the attempts to increase the dues, to cut down the size of the convention delegations, and anything else that smacked of the design to cut down the rights of the membership and increase the authority of the top Executive Board. The Chicago convention succeeded in preserving the democracy of the union.

Here it becomes doubly clear that the political program of the union leadership was put over at the convention not primarily through slick maneuvers or sleight of hand, but because of the political immaturity of the convention. The delegates proved to the hilt that they knew how to deal with parliamentary trickery when the subject matter involved was thoroughly understood by them.

The Progress Since Buffalo

The basic issues that were dealt with at the Chicago convention: the independence of the union movement, the democratic rights of the membership, Roosevelt and the war—all arose at the Buffalo convention a year ago. As a matter of fact, the formal program adopted in Chicago was not basically different from the program provided by the Buffalo convention. And yet, how obvious it is that the auto workers have taken a great step forward in the intervening year.

The Chicago convention was truly significant because the delegates revealed that, in spite of their support of the war, they have retained their excellent class instinct and have in reality not succumbed to the chauvinist wave. They passed several resolutions to the effect that winning the war was the No. 1 job of the convention, etc., etc., but they really belied these resolutions by their conduct. This was illustrated in many different ways. The debate on the Second Front, built up as the great publicity spotlight for the convention, proved a wash-out. The debate was perfunctory; no rank and filer was interested enough to take the floor. Debate was almost immediately closed, the resolution was adopted, out of the way, and that was that. The same half-hearted response was accorded to Captain Cecil Charles Poole, Labor member of the British Parliament, who attempted to get the convention excited about the war. The polite applause granted Captain Poole and others turned into downright annoyance at having the convention's time wasted when two days later Irving Abramson, president of the New Jersey CIO, was introduced to appeal to the convention on behalf of the National Allied War Relief Committee. The confusion and noise was so bad that Thomas was forced to interrupt to lecture the delegates and plead with them to hear Abramson out. After passing high sounding resolutions on the war, the delegates apparently didn't want to be bothered any more about it.

The growing cleavage between the auto union membership and the top officialdom was indicated even last year at the Buffalo convention. But it was expressed in a distorted and corrupted form then. As in all previous conventions of the auto union, the factional battle at Buffalo occurred between and through two sets of people of the top administration; the militants worked exclusively through Addes and his Executive Board supporters and that is what confused and distorted the whole struggle; Addes and his supporters had no principled differences with the Reuther faction. On all questions of policy and program they saw eye to eye and voted together. At the Buffalo convention they both condemned the North Ameri-

can aircraft strikers but launched a furious debate as to whether Michener, west-coast regional director, should be allowed to continue in office. A gigantic struggle likewise was waged on whether Frankenstein should be elected as vice-president. And the high point of the whole faction fight was reached when Leonard ran against Addes for the post of secretary-treasurer. Thus the desire of the militants for a more audacious union policy was frustrated and sidetracked by Addes into a struggle for posts at Buffalo.

The New Alignment

The war thoroughly cleansed the factional situation in the auto union. The war made it impossible to play at opposition. The alliance with Roosevelt is not a platonic one. Roosevelt demands payment on every single promissory note issued by the top UAW leadership. "Pearl Harbor" finished the comedy of the factional fight between the Addes and Reuther groups on the International Executive Board. They united organizationally as they had previously been united on principle and program.

At Chicago, therefore, the militants grouped around the leadership of the Buick, Dodge and Hudson locals could not rely any more upon their friend Addes or any other would-be progressive of the International Executive Board. For the first time in their experience, the militants were forced to rely solely upon their own strength, their own organization and their own program. This is a new development and it signifies an enormous step forward. Its beneficial results are apparent by contrasting the Chicago and the Buffalo conventions.

The key differences at the Buffalo convention were sidetracked in favor of the struggle for posts. The key differences at the Chicago convention were debated openly and squarely, on the level of political understanding of the delegates, without any consideration for unprincipled clique alliances or horse-trading of votes. The Chicago convention thus records the great achievement that at last, in the midst of the Second World War, the militants have cut loose from the unprincipled politics and intrigues of the UAW officialdom and have formed, at least potentially, an opposition group that rests upon adherence to principle.

The War Drives Them Forward

The war is already increasing the cost of living with terrifying rapidity. The Chicago convention has served notice that the war has not erased the militancy of the auto workers or their determination to resist the practical steps of the Roosevelt war program. The top leadership, on the contrary, is being forced to take on, more and more, the role of policeman crushing resistance. The coming repressions and terror, which Roosevelt will inevitably be forced to employ against individual local unions and groups of workers who defy him will further embitter the auto membership against the government and widen immeasurably the present cleavage between the membership and its top leadership.

The Chicago convention took the first step in the organization of a clear-cut opposition. The experiences of the coming period will push the auto workers to the left, will develop their social thinking, will increase the present dissatisfaction and must perforce lead to the adoption of a clear-cut militant opposition program.

The National Question in Europe

By MARC LORIS

With the American Civil War, the Italian wars of unification, Prussia's wars against Austria and France, the third quarter of the Nineteenth Century marks the end of the epoch of the formation of the great bourgeois states. This does not mean that national questions ceased to preoccupy humanity. Far from it. The uneven development of capitalism appears in this realm as in others.

A Glance into the Past

The national problem was sharply posed then for a number of peoples in central and southeastern Europe. Leaving aside the Irish struggle, the Alsatian problem of Germany, the Catalan and Basque questions in Spain, there were the oppressed nationalities of the two great semi-feudal empires, Austria-Hungary and Russia, as well as those that came out of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. The national problem in Europe thus appeared essentially as a vestige of the great historical task of emancipation which had been created by the transition from feudalism to capitalism but which the latter had been unable to resolve completely.

The development of imperialism soon raised the national question in another group of countries, the colonial countries (or semi-colonial such as China and Persia). While liberals of all kinds were able to comfort themselves by thinking that the national problem in Europe was merely a historical lag which would catch up more or less quickly, the formation of the colonial empires soon demonstrated that the national question arose inevitably from the *most modern* phase of capitalism, finance imperialism. However, the colonial developments could also be interpreted as part of the historical lag, representing a historical rise toward the national state, evoked by the development of the productive forces in the colonies under the impact of capitalism.

Shaking the great multi-national empires, crushing the small nations between the large, the first imperialist world war revived the national problem in Europe, giving it a new acuteness in the countries where it had not been settled (Austria-Hungary, Russia), or reviving it in the countries where history had long ago disposed of it (occupied Belgium). Against those who, under various pretexts, denied or minimized the importance of the national questions in our epoch (Luxemburg, Radek, Bukharin, Piatakov), Lenin wrote many times during the last war: "Imperialism is the epoch of the oppression of nations *on a new historical basis*. . . . Imperialism renews the old slogan of self-determination."

Lenin's basic idea was that, contrary to the expectations of the liberals, capitalist development exacerbated national oppression. In the revolutionary ranks there were many people who tried to ignore the problems of national freedom, at least in Europe, under the pretext that imperialism made all national freedoms a Utopia and an illusion. To Bukharin, who denied the possibility of European national movements, Lenin replied that, as far as the national question is concerned, Bukharin "has not proved and will not prove the distinction between colonies and oppressed nations in Europe." Of course, Lenin, better than anyone else, knew how to show the opposition between imperialist Europe and the oppressed colonial

world. But he denied the *absolute* character of that opposition. He showed that the imperialist epoch not only revived the unresolved national problems in Europe, but was even able to give birth to new ones. For example, in a polemic against the Polish partisans of Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin mentioned hypothetically, in 1916, the possibility of occupied Belgium rising against Germany for its emancipation. At the same time Trotsky wrote: "The independence of the Belgians, Serbians, Poles, Armenians and others . . . belongs to the program of the fight of the international proletariat against imperialism." He did not hesitate to place a crushed imperialist nation of western Europe on the same plane as the colonial peoples of the Orient.

For Lenin, the intensification of the national problem in Europe proper was not the fortuitous result of some military accident such as the superiority of the German armies. It had a much deeper cause. It sprang from the very nature of imperialism. Kautsky had attempted to explain imperialism by the need of industrial countries to combine with agrarian countries—a theory which obscured the violent and reactionary character of imperialism by presenting it as some sort of international division of labor. Lenin, refuting Kautsky, wrote in his book on *Imperialism*:

"The characteristic feature of imperialism is precisely that it strives to annex *not only* agricultural regions, but even highly industrialized regions (German appetite for Belgium, French appetite for Lorraine), because (1) the fact that the world is already divided up obliges those contemplating a *new* division to reach out for *any kind* of territory, and (2) because an essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between a number of great powers in the striving for hegemony, i.e., for the conquest of territory, not so much directly for themselves as to weaken the adversary and undermine *his* hegemony (Belgium is chiefly necessary to Germany as a base for operations against England; England needs Bagdad as a base for operations against Germany, etc.)." (Lenin's italics.)

These lines are profoundly true, perhaps even more today than when they were written: 1. They explain the special features of colony-starved German imperialism: "The fact that the world is already divided up obliges those contemplating a *new* division to reach out for *any kind* of territory." 2. They also show that at present all conquest has a strategical-military and economic character at the same time and that it is impossible to establish a clear distinction between the two. 3. Moreover, Lenin did not hesitate to place the occupation of a crushed small imperialist country (Belgium) and the conquest of a colony (Bagdad) on the same plane by showing that they both have the same deep cause, which is "the characteristic feature of imperialism." These three points are all equally important for the understanding of the epoch through which we are passing.

The National Problem in Europe Today

To destroy the absolute character of the assertions of the sectarians, Lenin, in his polemics on the national question, often had to indicate *possibilities* of historical development. These possibilities have today become *realities*. If during the last war the national problem in Europe had a fragmentary

character, today it embraces the whole continent. The second imperialist war is the continuation of the first, but on a much larger scale. Notwithstanding the participation of America and Japan on the side of the Allies, the war of 1914-18 remained essentially a European war. The present war is world-wide in the full sense of the word. Just as for the Kaiser the occupation of Belgium was merely a preparatory operation for the serious struggle against France, so for Hitler the occupation of the European continent was only the prelude to the struggle against the British Empire, against the USSR and especially against America. Now all Europe is an invaded Belgium. Germany's sensational victories caused all land fronts in western or southeastern Europe to disappear. Not counting some of Germany's allies whose situation is not very different from that of a conquered territory, nearly 250 million non-Germans are now under the Nazi boot. An enormous quantitative difference from the last war! But there is also a qualitative difference. In the last war occupied Belgium was emptied of the most active part of her population, who went to France. Few remained in the country but aged men, women and children. Today the entire population of a dozen countries must live, work and suffer under the Hitlerian satraps.

The Europe of 1939 was no longer the Europe of 1914. It had been considerably impoverished. In the impasse of bourgeois society, all the social and national antagonisms had become exacerbated to an unprecedented degree. On the other hand, the war is now conducted on a world-wide scale. The absence of a historical way out on a capitalist basis, the sharpness of a struggle whose stakes are all or nothing, the reactionary political nature of Nazism—all this has led German imperialism to subject the invaded countries to a brutal exploitation and a barbarous oppression never before seen in the history of modern Europe. And this has also driven the peoples onto the road of resistance and revolt.

It is no longer a question of theoretically deducing the possibility of a national problem in Europe which had resolved the greater part of this problem long ago. One has only to open one's eyes to ascertain the existence of national movements, moreover on a scale never before equalled in Europe. Fascism, "imperialism in its chemically pure form," concentrates and combines all forms of national oppression which have been observed up to the present in the colonies: forced labor, huge transfers of workers and farmers, mass evictions, privileges for members of the dominating nation (special courts, more abundant food rations, etc.), villages razed by punitive expeditions, etc. In the face of this reality, only an incurable pedant could deny the possibility of the existence of a national movement in Europe under the pretense that we are now in the epoch of imperialism. Actually, such reasoning reveals only a total lack of comprehension of imperialism, of its violent, reactionary and self-destructive character. Under a mask of radicalism, this argument betrays an inertia of thought inherited from liberalism. Similar reasoning, current among all types of liberals, denied some years ago the possibility of fascism in Germany: A highly industrialized country, just imagine! Fascist reaction is only possible in peripheral countries, little developed, semi-agrarian. . . . Such mentality betrays a complete lack of understanding of our epoch. In reality, we are no longer in the period of the rise, nor even at the apogee of the capitalist system, but in its decline. All bourgeois society is decomposing, putrefying, and this disintegration brings us many new things, "even in Europe." Fascism came. Now it is the national op-

pression of 250 millions in countries where history had, for most of them, long ago solved this problem.

The problem raised today by German imperialism can tomorrow be raised by American imperialism. In case of a German defeat, and delay of the proletarian revolution, American domination over Europe, as it deepens, will take new forms. Instead of the previous method of financial preponderance, it will seek political supremacy supported by military means. The "second front" can become the prelude to the occupation of the continent by American troops. Blackmail by means of food and credits will be completed by the establishment of a Yankee police power. If the proletarian revolution does not conquer shortly, the national problem will be installed in a ruined Europe for many years to come.

Thus the national movement in Europe is not merely the product of an accidental military episode, but flows from the whole imperialist decline. And it assumes great historical significance. If Hitler had been able to unify Europe, the proletarian revolution would have appeared much more remote. The abolition of the frontiers would have opened the way, on the basis of capitalism, to a new development of the productive forces on the European continent. But Hitler could not accomplish for Europe what Bismarck once accomplished for Germany. It is precisely this present movement of resistance that clearly shows the historical impasse in which Nazism, the most advanced political form of imperialism, finds itself. Thus in a certain sense, the movement of resistance of the oppressed peoples represents the historical interests of the development of mankind. It is the harbinger and the guarantee of a new march forward.

To confirm the existence of a European national movement does not mean to identify in every respect this present national problem with the national questions of the past in Europe or even of the present in the colonies. Germany's occupation of Europe has raised a national problem *sui generis*, it is the movement of resistance of the peoples in those imperialist nations crushed by a more powerful imperialism in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism.

We must note here, in order to try to understand what is going on in Europe, that the Nazi administration in the conquered countries greatly differs from a traditional military occupation (for example, the Prussians in France in 1871). Certain territories have been incorporated formally into Germany; others (General Gouvernement of Poland, Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia) have a colonial status, with no promise of future liberation. But even in the countries which are formally merely under military administration (Belgium, Occupied France), the Nazis have taken a great number of economic, political and social measures which surpass by far the requirements of a simple military occupation (for instance the measures against the Jews)

The Slogan of National Freedom

Any national struggle is also, to varying degrees, a social struggle. This is particularly true of the present movement of resistance in Europe. Under the weight of oppression, the hatred, the rage and the despair accumulated in the conquered countries have poured out in the most diverse forms of revolt, and representatives of the most varied social circles are swept along in the movement. But if one considers the whole, it appears clearly that the focus of the resistance is in the laboring masses, the workers and, in central and south-eastern Europe, the peasants. The Nazis have, in general,

easily found a common language with the big industrial and financial bourgeoisie, which is terrorized by its fear of communism and is looking for a way to save what it can of its profits and privileges. The most typical case is France. With the middle and petty bourgeoisie of the towns the Nazis have had much less success; they have, however, found political collaborators, fascist adventurers and, above all, functionaries of the former regime who stay at the side of the representatives of "order." Around the Nazis also have gravitated a certain number of go-betweens, profiteers, black market speculators and *nouveaux riches*. But the more deeply one penetrates the popular masses, the more one feels the fierce hatred for the invader, the more universal is the opposition to Nazism.

It is interesting to note, in this connection, the recent statement of André Philip, former French Deputy who escaped from Lyons some weeks ago and who, upon his arrival in London, was appointed by De Gaulle a member of the Fighting French National Committee. Philip's testimony is important first because he is a Gaullist, thus our political adversary, also because he just recently left France where he was in close contact with the resistance movement, and finally because he is, in general, an honest observer. On his arrival in London he declared:

"The great mass of resistance is constituted by the workers. The peasants are hostile to Vichy but they are still dispersed. Traitors and collaborators have been recruited only among big businessmen and the wealthier class. The middle class and the representatives of the small and medium industries are generally favorable to us: they do what they can, at grips with tremendous difficulties."

The last sentence sounds like an excuse for the lack of activity on the part of these middle class circles. Are we witnessing a struggle of the bourgeoisie in the midst of the indifference of the masses? No, it is exactly the contrary. Even the workers' opposition to the native bourgeoisie, which does not hesitate to collaborate when it sees some profit in it, is part of the national struggle. National sentiment, long monopolized by the ruling class to better assure its domination and extend its rapine, is now a revolutionary ferment which is stirring up the masses against the existing order.

The social character of the movement is also particularly clear in Poland. There, in the towns at least, resistance to the German oppression is led by socialist workers' groups who have only hate for the pre-war regime and only contempt for the government-in-exile at London. This feature of the movement does not prevent it, however, from unfolding under the slogan of independence of the country. And with reason! In all the invaded countries all the political and even the economic questions gravitate around the central problem: the presence of a foreign master. All the democratic tasks, so important at the present moment, take on an abstract and unreal character if they are not crowned with the demand for national freedom. The economic struggles likewise raise the problem of the independence of the country: even in unoccupied France the population well knows that the lack of food is due to German plundering.

The elementary duty of Marxists is to write into their program the demand for national freedom which, although it had long lost all content for most of the European countries, has now been given a new reality by the catastrophes of the death agony of capitalism. For us it is not merely a question of a "trick" in order to "take advantage" of the present aspirations of the masses, but of sincerely and honestly recognizing an elementary principle of democratic rights. The Marxist

proposes to fight for its realization in the same way that he solves all tasks, by revolutionary methods, and not by allying himself with one of the imperialist camps. To have a negative attitude toward the independence of a country is to abandon the working masses and the laboring people in general to the dangers of reactionary nationalist demagogy.

Europe is not on the eve of a new wave of national bourgeois revolutions, but of socialist proletarian revolutions. But such is the dialectic of history that the capitalist system is revealing its bankruptcy to a number of peoples in the form of a new national oppression. Toward the present movement of resistance three attitudes are possible. The first is to see in it a sort of reactionary Vendée, menacing the Nazi work of "unification" of Europe. Only Hitler's lackeys take such a position which amounts to according fascism some progressive features. The second attitude is indifference—the present situation is "temporary" and besides, very complex; let's wait for better times. Needless to say, this has nothing in common with Bolshevism. The third is to recognize the explosive character of a popular national movement in the present-day Europe. Independently of the present consciousness of the movement, objectively, it opens the way to the proletarian revolution. "The dialectics of history is such," wrote Lenin in 1916, "that small nations, powerless as an *independent* factor in the struggle against imperialism, play a part as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which help the real power against imperialism to come on the scene, namely, the socialist proletariat."

And, certain people may object, the imperialist war? Can we support the demand for national freedom in Europe while the present war is going on? Doesn't this mean adhering to one of the imperialist camps? If, after the conclusion of the peace, the state of oppression would continue for some European countries then, doubtless, we would have to inscribe on our flag national freedom for those peoples. But can we do it now without participating *ipso facto* in the imperialist war?

The situation certainly would be much more simple if there were national oppression in Europe without imperialist war. But unfortunately our epoch is far from being simple and it is precisely the imperialist war that revives national oppression. The reasoning that would make us wait for the end of the war suffers from a fatal formalism. This is clearly shown if we take the example of Czechoslovakia. The non-German territories of Bohemia and Moravia became a German "protectorate" before the present war broke out. We would then have had to stand for the national freedom of the Czechs, to abandon this demand at the moment of the declaration of war and to take it up again at the conclusion of the peace. But that is not all. An imperialist peace would be hardly distinguishable from the war. We are in an epoch of convulsion where the line between war and peace will become more and more faint. The present war can be and doubtless will be succeeded by other military operations: intra-European, colonial, among the former allies, against new proletarian powers, etc. Exactly when will the formalists "authorize" us to take up again the demand for national freedom?

All this formalism comes from a lack of understanding of the nature of the present national movements and of our support. In spite of its great importance at this hour, national independence remains a democratic demand. As such, we fight for its realization, *but with our own methods*, and we integrate it into our program of socialist revolution. If tomorrow Hitler attacks Sweden or Switzerland, we would give no

support to the Swedish or Swiss bourgeois governments, just as we have not supported the Norwegian, Yugoslav or Greek governments, for such support can gain absolutely nothing for socialism or even for democracy. But if, in case of military defeat, when the bourgeois state is crushed, a popular national movement of resistance to German oppression springs up, we would support it, for such a movement, objectively, clears the road to the revolution. Our support does not depend upon the formal question of the moment—during or after the imperialist war—but on the political and social nature of the movement. As long as it is a real movement of revolt of the masses against oppression, it is our elementary duty to support it and, of course, this support can in no way signify political participation in the imperialist war.

The "second front" may be adduced against our slogan. It is quite likely that some day or other the United Nations will land in Europe. In this case, as long as a country is divided by a military front, the slogan of national freedom loses all revolutionary content. But to confuse the reality of today with the possibility of tomorrow is a serious fault in revolutionary tactics.

But, after all, cannot the cry of national freedom be used as an instrument in the hands of Anglo-American imperialism and its satellites to chain the peoples to the imperialist war? Undoubtedly! But is there *one* democratic demand that has never been utilized by the bourgeoisie to camouflage its aims and deceive the masses? Not a single one! The task of Marxists is not to abandon the democratic demands because the bourgeoisie tries to hide its foul face behind them, but to defend them by revolutionary means and to integrate them into the socialist reconstruction of society, as long as these demands correspond to the aspirations and the revolutionary interests of the great mass of people.

To reveal the falsity of the argument, one merely has to turn it around: if the demand for national freedom plays into the hands of Anglo-American imperialism, then, inversely, ignoring or underestimating the national problem in Europe plays into the hands of German imperialism. All across Europe the Nazis and their lackeys console the starved and terrorized people with the picture of a unified Europe. Hurry to integrate yourself into this unity in order to receive all its benefits! An end to these puerile reactions of reactionary nationalism, today outmoded by the necessities of modern economy! This propaganda has not been without effect on quite a large number of pacifists, socialists and communists, who now greet Nazism as the realization of the socialist unification of Europe.

But isn't "national freedom" the return to the *status quo ante*, that is, to the bourgeois regime? Lenin long ago ridiculed this argument when he answered those partisans of Rosa Luxemburg who opposed, according to his own words, a "national rebellion in annexed Belgium, Serbia, Galicia, Armenia":

"... our Polish comrades are *opposed* to such a rebellion on the ground that there is *also* a bourgeoisie in the annexed countries, and this bourgeoisie *also* oppresses other nations, or rather, it *may* oppress them, since the only point under discussion is '*right to oppress*.' It appears, then, that the criterion of a given war, or a given rebellion, is not its real social content (the struggle of an oppressed nation against the oppressor for liberation), but the possibility of the now oppressed bourgeoisie exercising its '*right to oppress*.'" (Lenin's italics.)

But doesn't the slogan of national liberation destroy proletarian internationalism? In particular, doesn't it hinder all fraternization of workers in conquered territories with the German soldiers and workers, without whose action any revo-

lution in Europe is unthinkable? The cry of freedom of the peoples has nothing in common with the thirst for imperialist revenge. How can a German soldier free himself from the ideological hold of Nazism if he has not recognized honestly and without equivocation the right of the oppressed peoples to their freedom? The most elementary duty, not only of a German socialist worker or soldier, but of a sincere democrat (if this variety still exists) is to desire, to hail and to help the revolt of the oppressed peoples.

National Freedom and Socialism

The slogan of national liberation in no way implies a program of restoration of a divided Europe. It means purely and simply that each people must be free to determine its own destiny and that the revolutionary party supports the struggle for this elementary freedom. The oppression of the peoples of Europe by German imperialism is a barbarous and reactionary undertaking. Resistance to the enslavement of the nations is at present a great progressive factor which, objectively, opens the way to the proletarian revolution. The revolutionary party must support and guide the painful efforts of the European peoples to tear themselves free from German domination. Such is the content of the slogan of national liberation. It is the simple expression of the struggle against oppression.

But, after the collapse of the Hitlerian empire, Europe must unite if it wishes to live. If this fundamental task is not accomplished, there will be new wars and new oppressions. Europe's only hope is the economic unification of the continent, combined with freedom of national development for each people. And only the proletariat is capable of undertaking such a task. The proletariat will accomplish this by establishing the Socialist United States of Europe. However, only free peoples can unite. The first condition of a federation of European nations is their independence from the foreign yoke. If the national problems of Europe can only be resolved in a socialist federation, then inversely, this federation can only be achieved among free and equal nations. Far from being in opposition to each other, the two slogans, National Liberation and Socialist United States of Europe, are closely connected.

At the present time, when the Nazis are trying to justify their crimes in the name of "European unity," it is especially important not to counterpose the federation against the nation, but to present it for what it really will be, a form of organization and of guarantee of national freedom. Those who oppose to the slogan of national liberation the "purely socialist" formula of United States of Europe fail to notice that this formula is itself a compromise, a compromise between the centralizing necessities of a planned economy and the centrifugal tendencies inherited from past centuries, which cannot be erased in a few months or a few years. The United States implies states. The complete economic and political unification of the continent will not be made in a day, but will be the product of a whole historical epoch and will largely depend, moreover, on what happens in the rest of the world. At what tempo and in what precise forms will this development be effected? Experience will tell. The slogan of Socialist United States of Europe merely gives the general algebraic formula. Moreover, let us note in passing, the disappearance of the borders between the different states will go hand in hand with the withering away of each state.

The clearest example of federation which led to an almost complete unity is the United States of America. But the building up of the federal power was a long process and it took

a rather serious civil war to consolidate it definitively. Of course, socialism will have other methods than capitalism. However, the example of the United States shows us how artificial would have been any opposition between the slogans of the liberation of the thirteen colonies and the United States of America!

Whatever the transitional forms of organization, the realization of the *socialist* United States of Europe implies the freedom of each nation which enters the federation. But the only real guarantee of its freedom is the right to say yes or no. Any "guarantee" of free cultural development, etc., is an illusion if the nation does not have the right to withdraw from the union. After the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, we do not wish to march to socialism by violence, but by patiently convincing the peoples of the superiority of centralization. Just as, in the agrarian problem, we are not partisans of "forced collectivization," but we want to demonstrate to the peasant, by his own experience, the advantages of large collective enterprise over small property, so in the national question we are against any "forced unification" and the only real, not fictitious, guarantee is the right of secession.

Where is the assurance that the historical evolution will lead to complete unification? Not in violence, but in the development of the productive forces. Why was the rising bourgeoisie able to dissolve the feudal provinces in the unity of the great modern nations? Because its rise corresponded to a prodigious increase of the productive forces. Why cannot Hitler, who does not spare violence, unify the European "provinces"? Because he represents the decline of capitalism.

A socialist federation, European or world-wide, by no means excludes, but implies the right of each nationality to determine its own destiny. However, we are still far from the socialist federation. Today's reality is the general oppression of the peoples of Europe by German imperialism. If under socialism it would be theoretically false to counterpose national freedom to the principle of federation, how absurd, pedantic and empty is such opposition in face of the present condition of Europe!

(In the next issue a second article will examine the question of our relations with the various underground groups, the nature of the war in Serbia, the slogan of a Constituent Assembly, and the problems of terrorism and sabotage.)

The Truth About the Cripps Mission

By FELIX MORROW

The policy of the British government toward India is the policy of Prime Minister Churchill. "I should not be able to serve in any Administration about whose Indian policy I was not reassured," Churchill declared in a speech on February 23, 1931, "I would far rather be a loyal private member of the Conservative Party than bear official responsibility for actions and events which might involve a mortal injury to the greatness and cohesion of our empire." In the same speech he said: "India is one of those supreme issues which come upon us from time to time. When they arise the men and women who faithfully guard the life of Britain and her Empire feel the same vibration. They felt it August 4, 1914. They felt it in the General Strike. They feel it now." The policy which must prevail in any government he would participate in Churchill expressed succinctly in January 1930: "Sooner or later you will have to crush Gandhi and the Indian Congress and all they stand for."

When Churchill became Prime Minister, the news was greeted with dismay throughout India where, of course, his views were well known. Whatever slight restraint there might have been previously placed on the totalitarian powers of the Viceroy was now removed. By July 1, 1941, by British official figures there were 12,129 political prisoners, including 28 former provincial ministers and 290 members of provincial legislatures. The reign of terror was concealed from the outside world by censorship of press dispatches, private telegrams and letters. As in 1924 and 1930-32 (during the two Labour governments), the British Labour Party's participation in the government in no way lightened the oppression, but did serve to conceal it: only when the Labour Party is in opposition do its press and members of Parliament reveal a little of what is happening in India. That Churchill's policy was prevailing was obscured for many by the coalition form of the government; short memories did not recall that it was a Labour government that brutally suppressed the civil disobedience campaign of 1930-32, and that Ramsay MacDonald's

"India is not a party question" has always been the guiding line of the labor lieutenants of British imperialism.

On September 9, 1941, Churchill told the House of Commons that the provisions of the Atlantic Charter do not apply to "India, Burma or other parts of the British Empire." Japan's victories in the Far East could not and did not change this fundamental attitude of the British ruling class and its labor agents. If Japan successfully invaded India, Britain might eventually drive out the invader and reestablish the *status quo ante*; whereas a free India would be lost forever to British exploitation. But the fact that the native populations of Malaya, Singapore, the East Indies and Burma either aided the Japanese or did not lift a finger to aid the British, had a powerful effect on Britain's laboring masses. They did not want to see the same thing repeated in India. In the United States, too, mass public opinion favored freedom for India. Without changing its fundamental policy, the British ruling class had to take notice of this widespread demand. After Pearl Harbor, Nehru and other Congress leaders were let out of prison to negotiate.

The comedy required a new leading man. Churchill could scarcely play it; nor Lord Halifax who, as Lord Irwin, had been the Viceroy who crushed the Indian Congress in 1930-32; nor Amery, the hated Secretary of State for India; nor Labourite leader Clement Attlee who had been a member of the notorious Simon Commission which had been boycotted by all India and whose recommendations had been too reactionary even for Baldwin's Conservative government; nor even such a "left" Labourite as Harold Laski, who had justified the Indian repressions of the two Labour governments. Cripps was the ideal actor for the part: having been expelled from the Labour Party for Popular Front agitation in 1938, he is still formally a non-party figure, hence not identified with the India policies of the Conservative and Labour Parties.

Since March, the spotlight has been on Cripps. Churchill and Viceroy Linlithgow and the rest have retired to the wings,

while Cripps speaks the lines. With the help of the British and American press and radio Cripps is presented as though he inaugurated a new epoch in British relations with India, which Gandhi and Nehru insanely rejected. As if the puppet has displaced his master Churchill! It is a preposterous masquerade. But night and day every agency of propaganda pounds it into our ears, presses it into our eyes, beats it into our brains. The most elementary facts about the Cripps Mission are unknown in Britain and America. A Himalayan range of lies has been erected to conceal the truism that British imperialism will not relinquish its totalitarian grip on the 400 million people of India.

The Dictatorship of the Viceroy

The first thing to understand about India and the Cripps Mission is the enormous scope of the powers wielded by the Viceroy on behalf of the British government. Under the Government of India Act of 1935, the following powers are "reserved" to the Viceroy.

1. He can, against the vote of the entire Executive Council as well as the Central Legislature, decree laws in the name of the Government of India, and set aside any decision of the Legislature, Council or government departments (which are headed by the members of the Council). He chooses and dismisses all members of his Executive Council and presides over it as Prime Minister.

2. He and the British government have exclusive control over the "Indian" Army; the Executive Council and the Central Legislature are specifically excluded from participating in any decisions connected with it.

3. Whenever, in *his* opinion, the civil authorities are unable to cope with "disorder," he can send troops into any province to put an end to it.

4. One of his "special responsibilities" under the 1935 Act is the "safeguarding" of the rights of the personnel of the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police, both at the center and in the provinces. This means that neither the Home Member of the Executive Council (who formally runs the central police department) nor the Central or provincial legislatures can dismiss policemen or other civil service functionaries without the consent of the Viceroy. In short, the Viceroy is the real controller of the police and civil service.

5. The supreme power of taxation belongs to the Viceroy. He can impose whatever taxation he deems necessary to provide the funds for financing his "reserved" powers. Thus he alone can dictate what is to be spent and how it is to be raised. Under this power the Viceroy guarantees payment of dividends on government loans and bonds, railway debentures and numerous other British investments. What this means is indicated by the fact that in 1937 about 80 per cent of the Central Budget was earmarked for various payments guaranteed by the Viceroy. The burden was borne chiefly by the "independent" peasantry who, despite the catastrophic fall of agricultural prices after 1929, were compelled by the Viceroy to pay the same (45-50 per cent of their annual product) or higher taxes.

6. The Viceroy has and exercises the powers which make India a paradise for capitalists and landlords, both the British and their native satellites. His troops crush strikes and terrorize peasants into paying fantastic rents and taxes. Peasants and workers' leaders are *detenues*—held indefinitely without charges or trial. Every proposal of

the International Labor Office for international agreement to raise wages, cut hours, curtail employment of women in mines, limit child labor, has been rejected by the Viceroy. Health and unemployment insurance are non-existent; the budget for education of natives is among the lowest per capita in the world, and illiteracy is among the highest—about 90 per cent. British profits from Indian enterprises are the classical example of colonial bloodsucking: the plantations, for example, have paid dividends up to 225 per cent in recent years; coal mines have paid between 10-50 per cent; manganese mines 100 per cent; jute mills 20-40 per cent, etc.

Not to mention still others, these are among the powers of the Viceroy under the Government of India Act of 1935. They keep India "the brightest jewel in the British crown." One person out of five in England, Churchill and others have computed, lives off the rich booty from India. The lion's share of course goes to the British capitalist class; but the jackal's share has been sufficient to bribe the British Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy not to make India "a party question."

Once it is clearly understood what the political and economic powers of the Viceroy are, one has the decisive criterion by which to judge any British "offer" to India: does it surrender these powers into the hands of the Indian people? By this criterion—and there can be no other—must be judged the British War Cabinet "offer" which Cripps took to India.

That "offer" refused to surrender a single one of these powers of the Viceroy. That is why it was rejected by the Congress leaders. Were this simple fact widely known and understood, the great masses of America and Britain would stand with the Indian people against Churchill-Cripps. But the entire British and American press and radio and movies have been mobilized to cover up this simple fact.

The Cripps Negotiations

Cripps' discussions with the Congress leaders went on intermittently from March 23 until April 10. So far as the so-called "independence" proposal for after the war, the discussion was over very quickly; by April 2, Cripps received the Congress resolution rejecting it. That they were completely justified in doing so will be established later. The important point to note is that, had Cripps proposed nothing else, the negotiations would have been over the first day. The principal content of the discussions throughout was Cripps' proposal for an "interim government" to be established immediately. "So far as the proposals relate to the future," declared the Congress leaders, they must be put aside; but we are "anxious to assume responsibility for India's Government and defense in this hour of danger." On this basis most of the discussions took place.

On the question of "interim government," the Draft Declaration of the British Cabinet was extremely vague. It merely stated:

"His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth, and of the United Nations. Thus they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India." (*White Paper*, Cmd. 6350.)

What, precisely, did this mean? It appeared to be clarified publicly by Cripps' radio broadcast in New Delhi on

March 30, when he stated: "It contains one essential reservation": Commander-in-Chief Wavell would remain in control of the armed forces. Even this reservation, however, was presumably modified by what Cripps went on to say:

"This reservation does not mean that the Governor-General and the Executive Council will, or indeed could be, excluded from taking an effective share in the council for the defense of India. In this wide-flung war defense cannot be localized in a single country and its preparation must permeate the activities of every department of government and must demand from every department the fullest cooperation." (*White Paper*.)

The clear implication was that, apart from this one partial "reservation"—the usual British legal term referring to powers reserved to the Viceroy and the British government—all other powers would be vested in the interim government as a whole. That is, they would no longer be in the hands of the Viceroy.

This is what Cripps told the Congress leaders when the negotiations began, they say. Their claim is substantiated by the fact that Cripps, in his letter of April 7 to Maulana Azad, the Moslem scholar and president of the Congress, expresses the hope that it will be possible "to embark forthwith upon the task of forming the new National Government in consultation with the leaders of Indian opinion." (*White Paper*.)

As Maulana Azad wrote to Cripps:

"You had referred both privately and in the course of public statements to a National Government and a Cabinet consisting of Ministers. These words have a certain significance and we had imagined that the new government would function with full powers as a Cabinet with the Viceroy acting as a constitutional head. . . ." (Letter of April 10, *White Paper*.)

A Gigantic Fraud

It was not until April 10—after two and a half weeks of negotiations—that Cripps, in an answering letter, stated:

"You suggest 'a truly National Government' be formed which must be 'Cabinet Government with full power.' Without constitutional changes of a most complicated character and on a very large scale this would not be possible." (*White Paper*.)

Whereupon, in a final letter breaking off negotiations, Maulana Azad wrote:

"I have just received your letter of April 10 and I must confess that my colleagues and I were considerably surprised to read it. . . ."

"It seems that there has been a progressive deterioration in the British government's attitude as our negotiations proceeded. What we were told in our very first talk with you is now denied or explained away. You told me then that there would be a National Government which would function as a Cabinet and that the position of the Viceroy would be analogous to that of The King in England vis-a-vis his Cabinet. . . . The whole of this picture which you sketched before us has now been completely shattered by what you told us during our last interview." (Letter of April 11, *White Paper*.)

On this decisive question we also have the testimony of Nehru, who told a press conference on April 11:

"Before the last interview with Sir Stafford Cripps on the night of April 10 there was a seventy-five per cent chance of settlement. Sir Stafford had talked about a National Government. He had said that the Viceroy would act like a constitutional monarch. His language had led us to conclude that the new government would function as a cabinet and that the Viceroy would not intervene."

If Azad and Nehru are correct, that Cripps first offered a National Government on the British Cabinet model, and then withdrew the offer, then the whole Cripps Mission

was nothing but a gigantic fraud, designed to mollify and confuse British and American public opinion rather than actually reach a settlement with India. Azad and Nehru are men whose word has never been challenged by a British spokesman; and they could scarcely have made a graver charge. *Yet Cripps has never denied it. Nor has anyone else.* Professor R. Coupland, a member of the Cripps Mission, has written a semi-official account, *The Cripps Mission* (Oxford, 1942). Since this charge looms so large in the Congress documents, he is compelled to write:

"As to the character of the National Government, Maulana Azad directly charged Sir Stafford with shifting his ground. 'What we were told in our very first talk with you is now denied or explained away.' The Maulana had understood 'that there would be a National Government which would function as a Cabinet and that the position of the Viceroy would be analogous to that of the King of England vis-a-vis his Cabinet.' . . ."

"To this attack Sir Stafford made no rejoinder. The breach was obviously past mending, and he reserved what he had still to say for a wider audience than the Congress Working Committee. On the morning of April 11, after explaining the course and upshot of the discussions to the Executive Council, he held his last Press Conference." (*The Cripps Mission*, pp. 74-75.)

Professor Coupland leaves the implication that at the press conference Cripps did answer the charge made by Maulana Azad. But Cripps made *no* answer, neither in that conference, nor in his broadcast immediately following, nor in his April 28 speech to the House of Commons, nor anywhere else!

The charge stands without denial. It brands the Cripps Mission as one of the biggest frauds in history, a fraud without which there would never have been any negotiations with the Congress—negotiations which the British now point to as proof of their willingness to make a reasonable settlement and hence a justification for their present massacres of the Indian workers and peasants.

Had the final Cripps offer been accepted, the Congress leaders and the other Indian parties would have found themselves in an Executive Council in which their decisions would have been overruled by the Viceroy, and his individual decisions promulgated in the name of the government as a whole. As Professor Coupland is constrained to explain:

"Whereas a Provincial Governor is bound as a rule to accept his Ministers' advice, the Viceroy, apart from certain special matters on which he is required to act entirely on his own responsibility, is specifically entitled by the Act to dissent from the majority opinion of his Council as to any measure 'whereby the safety, tranquillity, or interest of British India or any part thereof are or may be' in his judgment 'essentially affected.' (Act of 1935.) Thus, if a Governor of a province cannot legally concede full power to his Council, still less can the Viceroy. In either case, an undertaking not to use the overriding power would be a breach of the law. The conversion of a quasi-Cabinet into a real Cabinet would necessitate a new Act of Parliament. It would presumably have to be a long and complicated Act, and it would certainly effect a 'major constitutional change.' The most, therefore, that the Viceroy could do was to say that he would make it a custom to deal with his Council, as far as possible as if it were a Cabinet." (*The Cripps Mission*, p. 79.)

"As far as possible," Professor Coupland makes clear, would not have gone very far. Among the powers which the Viceroy and Wavell would have to continue reserving, he lists: (1) The use of troops to quell rioting, "unhappily a frequent incident of Indian administration. More than one case occurred in the two or three months preceding the arrival of the Mission." (2) Safeguarding the rights of the Indian

Civil Service and the Indian Police, "for it had been their duty under the old regime from time to time to take part in the repression of Congress agitation. That they bore the strain was mainly due to the knowledge that the Governors were charged with their protection" against Congress Ministries. (3) "One of the Viceroy's responsibilities is to protect the Princes from violent subversive agitation on the part of British Indian politicians." The Viceroy could not do this "unless in the last resort he could have his way in a Cabinet in which Congressmen were sitting."

"The crux of the matter was the organization of national defense on a popular mass basis, but this is possible only under a free national government," declared Nehru. Had the Congress leaders entered the Executive Council, they would have been powerless to do anything except serve as a fig-leaf for a continuation of the imperialist methods of the "Indian" Army: recruiting Indians only from the few parts of provinces which are considered to produce "loyal" soldiers; keeping all the strategic arms—tank, artillery and plane—in the hands of Britishers so that any possible revolt would be limited to infantry and menials; limiting Indian officers to a relative handful in the less-important services; using the troops to crush the workers and peasants, etc.

In short, the only terms on which the British government wanted a settlement was a complete capitulation by the Congress to continued British domination. The Viceroy would have remained dictator. The Congress and other Indian members in the Executive Council would have been his puppets. Fortunately, whatever temptations may have been felt by any of the Indian politicians, they were under irresistible pressure from the Indian masses not to accept anything but an actual surrender of the Viceroy's powers to an All-India government.

Cripps' Communal Smokescreen

Since the breakdown of the negotiations, Cripps has made press statements, speeches and broadcasts—especially for American consumption—reiterating and reiterating that the breakdown came because of the "communal question" of Hindu-Moslem conflict. The latest of Cripps' statements is a special article for the *New York Times* of August 23, in which he says:

"A temporary compromise was necessary. . . . When I speak of compromise I do not refer only or mainly to the agreement between the British government and the various Indian parties, but to accommodation among the Indians themselves."

The *Times* obligingly underlines this alibi with a headline: "Cripps explains the complexity of India's problem in terms of the diversity of the Indian people." As we have seen, this alibi is a deliberate falsehood. The negotiations never got to the stage of the actual composition of the government—how many Ministers for each group—because the British would not agree to curbing the Viceroy's powers. If the government was conceded real power and composed of Indians, the Congress leaders were ready if necessary to accept a minority of the seats in it.

The falsehood that Hindu-Moslem friction made formation of a government impossible is refuted by Cripps' own companion, Professor Coupland, who writes:

"The decisive factor, as has been seen, was the clash between Congress and British views as to the character of the proposed National Government. If agreement had been achieved on that point, *not only Congress, but most, if not all,*

the other parties—with protests and reservations, no doubt, as to the future—*would have come in.*" (*The Cripps Mission*, p. 77. Our emphasis.)

We have, in addition, the admissions of Cripps himself in his speech and answers to questions in the House of Commons on April 28, reporting on his mission. Cripps can lie without fear of exposure in his articles and broadcasts to America; but in the House he ran the risk of being confronted by one or two dissident Labourites (there were exactly two). So he had to say:

"Let me now come to the difficulties that arose. These were mostly concentrated into my discussions and correspondence with Congress leaders. *The Moslem League did not deliver to me their objections until after they knew the results of my negotiations with Congress.*"

"The question as to the formation of a new Government, how the members of the Viceroy's Executive should be treated and how the business should be conducted, were, of course, essential matters for the Viceroy, who had to carry on the Government of India and not for me as a member of the War Cabinet on a visit to India. I therefore told the Congress leaders that the exact nature of the Government's operation could only be decided as a result of discussions with the Viceroy. . . . *I was not prepared to bind the Viceroy to accept any particular arrangement for the conduct of his Executive.* It was on this issue that the final break followed." (*House of Commons Debates*, April 28, 1942. Our emphasis.)

These words of Cripps give the lie to everything he has said since. One dissident Member, Mr. Cove, said when Cripps concluded in the House:

"I must say that it does not appear to me that the Lord Privy Seal had anything concrete to take out with him. There is no democratic substance or meaning in the Cabinet's proposal." And Cripps made no attempt to refute him. The other dissident, Mr. Sorensen, angered at the stream of Conservative Party speeches which repeated the usual Moslem-Hindu friction alibi, got up and read a cablegram from Nehru, which stated:

"At no stage during the talks did any communal or minority difficulty occur. . . ."

"Since that time Cripps has been emphasizing the communal issue in the old Amery manner and has been endeavoring to divert attention from the real issue."

Sorensen demanded an answer from Cripps, and Cripps had to give it:

"It is quite true that I did not discuss the minority (Moslem) question with Congress." (*House of Commons Debates*, April 28.)

The truth is as Maulana Azad stated in a letter to Cripps during the negotiations:

"The National Government must be a Cabinet Government with full power, and must not merely be a continuation of the Viceroy's Executive Council. . . ."

"We would point out to you that the suggestions we have put forward are not ours only but may be considered to be the unanimous demand of the Indian people. On these matters there is no difference of opinion among various groups and parties and the difference is as between the Indian people as a whole and the British Government. Such differences as exist in India relate to constitutional changes in the future. It would be a tragedy that even when there is this unanimity of opinion in India the British Government should prevent a free National Government from functioning. . . ." (Letter of April 10, *White Paper*.)

The fact is that *in India* the issue concerning the powers of the interim government was so clear, and the Congress position so popular, that even the reactionary so-called Mos-

lem League, in its reply to the Cripps proposal after the negotiations broke down, did not dare to dissociate itself from the Congress on this question.

But suppose it had? What is this Moslem League? Cripps now warmly refers to it as the leader of the Moslems, although it is repudiated by the Moslem Premiers of two of the principal Moslem areas, Sind and Punjab provinces, and by numerous Moslem organizations, including the great Mohan community. However, Cripps cannot wipe out what he said about the Moslem League in June 1940—two years ago!—when he returned from a visit to India; his admiring biographer quotes Cripps' statement at that time:

"The controllers of the Moslem League are drawn almost entirely from the professional, landlord or industrialist class of well-to-do Moslems, whose interests are quite different from that of the Moslem masses. By aggravating religious passions these leaders can bring in behind them a large bulk of the 80 millions of Moslems who inhabit India. The Moslem League would like to see the return of the Moslem domination of India, to which they look back with pride and longing, but as this is impossible they have regarded the continuation of British rule as on the whole the lesser of two evil alternatives. The other is the government of India by the peasants and workers through adult suffrage and a democratic Indian constitution. The Moslem League fear this alternative even more than they dislike British rule. It is for this reason that they have refused to support the demands of Congress.

"We must ask ourselves whether the 250 million Hindus are to be denied self-government in a United India because 80 million Moslems either are afraid of it or put forward an impractical suggestion for the division of India in order to prevent the Indian peasants and workers from obtaining the control of their own country.

"In truth, if the 80 million Moslems were left to make their own political decision without any injection of communal animosity, the great majority of them would support the Congress Party's program. In fact, many of them do today. Actually the President of the Congress is himself a Moslem and there are many Moslem organizations which oppose the Moslem League and support Congress in its demands.

"The attitude that is being adopted today by the British Government is that they can and will do nothing further until the Hindus and the Moslems settle their differences. This gives the reactionary leaders of the Moslem League the power to prevent the people of India getting self-government almost indefinitely.

"It is this attitude that the British Government is in fact encouraging, whether consciously or unconsciously." (*Stafford Cripps: Prophetic Rebel*, 1941, by Erick Estorick.)

Nothing has changed since Cripps thus accurately analyzed the real situation in India—except that Cripps has entered the British Cabinet and is carrying out its policy "to prevent the people of India getting self-government almost indefinitely."

That is why Cripps was so warmly praised in the House of Commons (as Mr. Sorensen then tauntingly pointed out to him) by the most ultra-reactionary Conservatives who utilized the occasion to boast that India would remain indefinitely in the British Empire. That is why the organ of British financial interests in India in the following terms praised the deliberate confusion he had spread:

"To speak of the Cripps Mission to India as a failure would be a sorry blunder. . . . In the broader sense Sir Stafford Cripps has had success. He has fixed the eyes of the world upon the realities of the Indian problem. He has enlightened the American people, who in the past have been woefully misled as to British policy, actions and intentions in India. He has

compelled the leader writers of a Left group of English newspapers to accept the truth that the obstacles to India's political advance are wholly centered in India itself. . . . These are great achievements." (*Great Britain and the East*, April 18, 1942.)

Pie in the Sky By and By

India's only road to independence was for Congress to accept the Cripps offer, say American spokesmen. In his speech of July 23, Secretary of State Hull scoldingly told India that only peoples who are "willing to accept the responsibilities of liberty are entitled to its enjoyment." Earlier, the *New York Times* warned India (March 31): "British rule in India, if only India herself so wills it, has come to an end. . . . If the Indians refuse this gift of freedom they will lose the offer of American comradeship that is now theirs for the asking." India is thus being told by erstwhile "friends" to labor seven years in bondage in order to become free. Such "advice" is refuted by the fact that no nation in history ever won its freedom that way. Where is the nation that was granted its freedom by its oppressor?

Nobody in India believes the post-war promises of Britain. India remembers the similar promises made during the First World War, in return for which the "pacifist" Gandhi helped the British recruit soldiers and raise war loans in India. A member of the Canadian Administration accurately describes this British formula:

"Twenty-five years ago, Mr. Edward Montagu, the Secretary of State for India in Mr. Lloyd George's Government, devised the formula for dealing with agitation for Indian independence. This formula consisted of two tactical parts: a generous promise of future action, and a resolute retention in the immediate present of all essential controls in the hands of the Viceroy. The Cripps' declaration did not represent a departure from this formula. . . . Promises are suspect in India. Regardless of whether or not the British have been sincere in their past promises, the fact is that even the best promises have never had any meaning satisfactory to the authentically Indian politician. Promises made at the present time are particularly open to suspicion because the future is something which Britain alone has not the power to shape. . . . The Indian leaders know this, and they rightly suspect any declaration of which such promises are essential substance." ("India Since Cripps," August 1942 *Free World*, by Henry Stanley [pseudonym].)

Just as after the First World War, so after this, British imperialism would find any number of pretexts, not to relax its totalitarian grip on India.

To make absolutely certain of this, the Cripps offer itself included sufficient safeguards to keep India shackled. Let us list them:

1. Britain's rule, including control over the armed forces in India, would not end with the conclusion of the war, but would continue until such time as a constitution is drawn up and goes into operation. Thus, on the pretext of preserving order during the elections and constitutional deliberations, the British could attempt to crush the Congress and, even more important, the growing workers' organizations. It is an axiom of politics that the class which controls a country can largely determine the outcome of an election. The British and the civil service and police openly interfered against the Congress in the provincial elections of 1937, when the stake was merely the extremely limited provincial governments. One can imagine what the British will do when the stake is the constitution of India!

2. The election of delegates from the eleven provinces of British India to the constitution-making body would be

conducted under the anti-democratic provisions for provincial elections of the Government of India Act of 1935. These, by property and educational limits to the franchise, permit only about 13 per cent of the population to vote. Of the 300 millions of British India, only 36 millions were eligible to vote in the 1937 elections. It is estimated that over half the population is over 20 years of age, so that adult suffrage (to which the Congress is committed) would create an electorate of about 150 millions. But the British would permit less than one out of four adults to vote for the provincial legislatures which in turn would elect the constitutional delegates. The disfranchised 76 per cent of the adult population are of course peasants and workers. In the small minority permitted to vote, the landlords, rent-collectors and capitalists—Britain's native allies and agents—carry great weight. Cripps' electoral proposal, as the Labourite H. N. Brailsford said of the 1935 Act, "ignores the village and emancipates its owner."

3. No elections at all would be held for constitutional delegates for the 93 million people of the Indian States, who would be appointed by the Princes. Thus about 25 per cent of the constitution-making body would go automatically to what Indians aptly call Britain's Fifth Column. In his House of Commons report, Cripps coolly justified this as follows:

"Unfortunately, in my view, representative institutions have not yet developed in the great majority of Indian States, which must be dealt with as they are to be brought into the Constitution-making authority."

British troops, as Cripps knows very well, have been the main force backing the Princes in preventing the development of "representative institutions."

4. After wielding that bloc of 25 per cent of the votes on behalf of Britain in the constitutional body, the Princes can then reject the constitution and remain outside the Indian Union, continuing their present relation to Britain, i.e., British troops quartered there will, as the Congress told Cripps, be "a perpetual menace to the freedom of the people of the States as well as of the rest of India." The role of British-

controlled Ulster against Ireland will be duplicated on a hundred-times vaster scale.

5. Any province of British India may reject the constitution and remain outside the Indian Union by the following procedure: (a) Unless the majority favoring the constitution in a provincial legislature is 60 per cent, the question of ratification must then be submitted to the electorate. (b) When thus submitted a bare majority for rejection will keep the province out of the Indian Union. By this "solution" to the communal question, the British hope, with the aid of the Moslem League, to whip up enough religious frenzy to keep strategic Bengal and Punjab provinces out of the Indian Union.

6. The constitution and Indian Union that survive all this, the British government will "accept and implement" "subject only to the signing of a Treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body. This Treaty will cover all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands; it will make provision, in accordance with the undertakings given by His Majesty's Government, for the protection of racial and religious minorities." Put more plainly, whatever safeguards for British holdings in India have not yet been written into the constitution by the Princes, landlords and capitalists, will be exacted in a Treaty. All the methods by which the Viceroy guarantees Britain's rich booty will have to be undertaken by the Indian Union government before the British will let it begin to function.

This is the post-war "independence" promised by Britain, for the sake of which American "liberals" have urged the Indian people to yield to British bondage for the duration of the war.

To their eternal honor, the masses of India have preferred to fight for their freedom rather than fight for their continued bondage.

Geopolitics: An Imperialist Myth

By JAMES CADMAN

Since Hitler's rise to power, we have heard persistent and yet vague talk of an entirely new set of political and economic doctrines, called Geopolitics, which the Nazis have presumably formulated as their guiding principles of action. This theory of Geopolitics has been attributed not merely to Nazi ingenuity but to German thought for the last century or more, an expression of the allegedly age-old German dream of world conquest.

Geopolitics is a theory that history is determined by the struggle of peoples to utilize their geographical environment to the best advantage. In its early development, as a scientific study of the economic significance of geography, it expressed the needs of the rising industrial bourgeoisie for areas of investment and had its adherents in every one of the rising capitalist powers. It was only in the era of monopoly capitalism that Geopolitics was adopted as an all-embracing justification for imperialism. What began with Hugo Grotius, Montesquieu and Immanuel Kant as an attempt at a science of political-economic geography, has been perverted into an eclectic compilation of imperialist apologetics.

The principal "authorities" on Geopolitics in its most virulent and modern form have been Germans. But this is entirely due to the belated economic and political development of Germany, which necessitated a more outspoken expression of its needs than did the earlier and more gradual development of the French and British empires. Germany, economically backward and politically disunited until 1870, made its first bid for economic power and political cohesion at a time when France and Britain were already far along the road of capitalist development and empire-building. What France and Britain were *doing*, the Germans were dreaming and writing about. It was amid the *Sturm und Drang* of striving for national unification that the first real formulators of Geopolitics appeared in Germany. Karl von Clausewitz, military theoretician par excellence, in his theories on "Space" ("*Raum*") and the importance of topography in warfare, provided much of the material which later writers expounded in political form. Frederick List was to the German bourgeoisie what Adam Smith was to Britain. A student of American Federalism and a staunch advocate of the policies of Alexander Hamilton (with whom he collabo-

rated in America), List recognized Germany's need for unification and sought unassailable national frontiers which he thought could alone insure peace. With the Rhine as a permanent barrier between France and Germany, the Alps between France, Italy and Austria (he advocated the return of Lombardy-Venetia to Italy so that the natural frontier would be in the Alps) and the Pyrenees as a bulwark between France and Spain, the status quo could be indefinitely sustained. He hailed the Monroe Doctrine as a great forward step by the United States in creating a political and economic entity.

The British Geopoliticians

However, these musings and speculations of these and other German theoreticians (Fichte, Karl Ritter, Von Treitschke) were meanwhile being substantiated in actuality by the tremendous spurt in colonial and overseas expansion on the part of Britain and France. Thus, while it was a German ideal, Geopolitics was being practiced by the other imperialist powers, which were also producing in this field a literature of their own. The most prolific thinker in the English geopolitical school was Sir Halford Mackinder, Director of the London School of Economics, whose ideas bear a remarkable resemblance to those of the Nazi school of Haushofer and Banse. Mackinder held that all of European history has been predominantly shaped by the struggle of oceanic against non-oceanic powers. Europe and Asia constitute the world's core, the "heartland" as he termed it, and Britain, Australia, Japan and the Western Hemisphere are merely appendages of that core. Hence he advocated an alliance of Britain, the United States and Japan to ward off an impending German-Russo-Chinese combination. Mackinder was here merely expressing the anxiety of Britain at Germany's fast-growing might and at Czarist Russia's potential threat to the Near East, and was desirous of an alliance with the other two newer imperialisms to maintain the status quo.

Another Englishman who went far toward bringing Geopolitics into its modern form was Lord Curzon, one of the most brutal Viceröys of India and Secretary of Foreign Affairs in 1919, who dealt primarily with the problem of frontiers. He held that the growing complexities and intricacies of modern political and economic relations require a more flexible frontier-system, more adaptable to the particular needs of each nation, thus alleviating the necessity for frontier changes through war and conflict. Consequently, spheres of influence and protectorates must be granted to the more important states to allow them economic expansion without having to cope with rigid and inflexible borders. It can easily be seen how this scheme fitted in with Britain's policy of gradual infiltration into the Near, Far and Middle East as the initial step toward direct control. Curzon also advocated creating buffer states between the important continental powers in order to keep them apart, for instance Afghanistan between Britain and Russia. This theory in no way took into account the increasing trend toward domination of smaller states by the larger imperialists and the inability of the smaller ones to maintain any but a nominally independent status—a trend speeded up by Curzon himself when he instigated the 1920 Polish attack on Soviet Russia and attempted to dictate the Curzon Line as the boundary between Poland and Russia. Curzon's attitude toward frontiers is similar to that of the Nazis, who hold that frontiers must be judged only by what is convenient or expedient at any given moment.

We come now to the geopolitical writings of the Nazi

school and primarily to those of Karl Haushofer, head of the Geopolitical Institute in Munich. Paraded as science, the Haushofer school is merely a facade to mask the imperialist aims of the Nazis, a pseudo-theory comprising a conglomeration of falsehoods and distortions, entirely illogical and inconsistent, twisted and polished to justify each new war or seizure.

Haushofer's ideas comprise everything the Nazis have ever put forth to explain their actions. Briefly it runs as follows: The human will creates a group; the group forms a people; this people needs a certain area in which to survive; struggles then ensue among the different "races" for control of the areas of "Lebensraum" (living space), resulting in the survival of the stronger and more virile "races" through the satisfaction of their territorial (geopolitical) needs. The state is the instrument of the people for the furtherance of their legitimate economic needs and as such it must coordinate the entire economy of the nation on a total war footing—this is the Nazi "explanation" for state oppression and suppression. From this basis are built up all the now familiar Nazi slogans and phraseology: the degeneration of the British Empire and Germany's need to inherit Britain's mantle, etc.

The contradictions are voluminous. The world consists of three geopolitical areas—Europe, Asia and the Western Hemisphere—Haushofer originally "proved," and the United States is geopolitically entitled to control South America. Why, then, does the Axis now attempt to contest America's position in the New World? Prior to the Stalin-Hitler pact, Haushofer wrote in his magazine, *Zeitschrift der Geopolitik*, that Russia was nothing but a patchwork of minorities, racially impure, and must eventually fall under German control; after the pact he hailed Russia as one of the great geopolitical units of the world and insisted that Persia, Afghanistan and the entire Middle East must logically belong to it. With each new action the "theory" is altered to meet the new situation. The Nazi geopoliticians enthusiastically greeted such diverse characters as Chiang Kai-shek, Vargas of Brazil and Mohandas K. Gandhi as "fascists" at various times. This however merely corresponded to Nazi foreign policy; whoever took measures against England and America fell into the category of good "fascists."

The Nazis have established schools for the study of "geomedicine" and "geo-physics," "geo-psychology," etc. These are nothing but training grounds for imperialist functionaries who will be sent to conquered countries and colonies.

The opportunism and inconsistencies of this pseudo-theory refute the myth that Geopolitics is a scientific "blueprint" for conquest, a plan which minutely sets forth in great detail every new Nazi operation. Actually, capitalist states are by their very nature incapable of such planning even for conquest; they are driven by the basic contradictions within the capitalist system from one attempted conquest to another, and they must all strive for world domination in order to prolong their existence for another period. Rather than the foreign policy being framed around Geopolitics, it is Geopolitics which is constantly changed to meet each new switch in foreign policy. The lack of honesty in the Nazi statements and claims is not due to the inherent baseness in German character invented by the Churchill-Roosevelt brain trust, but because the Nazis are unable themselves to ascertain beforehand what their next move will be. They are driven onward and onward by the insatiable demands of German capitalism and the pseudo-science of Geo-

politics must serve as their "alibi" to the world and particularly to the German people.

The basic argument on which the entire "theory" rests is that the struggle of peoples to conquer their geography is the main historical determinant. But the geography of the world has changed very little within the last several thousand years. That is, given certain geographical conditions to begin with, man has built up gradually a complex system of productive, social and economic relationships in which the factor of geography has been relegated to minor importance. On the other hand, the class struggle has been of paramount significance in the entire history of world civilization since primitive communism. The part played by geography in any period is decided by the productive advances achieved through the class struggle. For instance, mountains and oceans constituted virtually impassable barriers to world intercourse for ages, until the advent of modern industry through the victory of the bourgeoisie over feudalism. The demonstrable falsity of the "theory" of Geopolitics will not, however, prevent the imperialists from using it—not only the fascists but also the "democrats."

American Geopolitics

A significant example of American imperialist interest in this field is the work of the Sterling Professor of International Relations at Yale, Nicholas John Spykman, who has just published a widely-hailed book, "America's Strategy in World Politics." American foreign policy since the time of Washington, he says, has been divided into two schools, the isolationist and the interventionist or internationalist, each of which has been dominant during certain stages of America's development. This is true enough, but we must seek its real meaning.

The "internationalist" school during the last century comprised the business and commercial groups, which had economic ties with Europe and Asia. On the other hand, the same groups sought a monopoly of the trade of the Western Hemisphere and it was the "isolationist" Monroe Doctrine of 1823 which constituted the first major step to eliminate European competition. The Monroe Doctrine was based on a theory of isolation, justified in geographical terms. It was the expressed opinion of the Founding Fathers that the American continent ought to develop in conformity with its own character and geographical conditions, free from the complications of the European political system. Consequently when the danger of European intervention into South American affairs was imminent, Monroe extended this principle to include all of South America: "It is impossible that the Allied Powers (Holy Alliance) should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness. . . ." This typical "geopolitical" argument unquestionably served a progressive purpose at that time, helping to protect the newly-created South American republics against the invasion by the reactionary Holy Alliance. Again, during the Civil War period, it served to put a stop to the seizure of Mexico by the third Napoleon.

However, with the growth of American monopoly capitalism during the latter part of the 19th Century, and the consequent entry by the American bourgeoisie into the great international struggle for markets, the "isolationist" arguments of the Monroe Doctrine gradually became the facade behind which Yankee imperialism masked its own greedy intentions. This was evidenced during the Spanish-American War and later in the invasion of the Central American states

by United States Marine contingents, when it was maintained that the United States must assume the burden of protecting the Western Hemisphere against foreign tyranny. McKinley's declaration that it was the "God-given responsibility of the United States to Christianize and civilize the 'heathens of the Philippine Islands'" represented the first big step from Western Hemisphere "isolationism" to the global "White Man's Burden" idea of Cecil Rhodes and Rudyard Kipling. American capitalism had now entered the stage where, just as in the case of Germany, Geopolitics became the ideological prop for the needs of the capitalist class.

Before Pearl Harbor, certain sections of the American capitalist class were hesitant to venture irrevocably beyond Western Hemisphere "isolationism" to the "internationalism" advocated by Spykman. But with the war and the huge expansion of America's productive facilities and the weakening of Europe's, it has become evident to even the most rabid "isolationists" that American imperialism must assume the leadership in any post-war attempt to regenerate capitalism on a world scale.

Spykman leaves the idealistic fig-leaves to others and outlines America's role in "geopolitical" terms warmly praised by *Time* magazine as "rigidly realistic." (A Communist renegade, now part of Henry R. Luce's brain trust, proclaims Spykman as a "Leninist of the Right.")

Spykman says America must play the dominant and supreme role in the event the Allies are victorious because her tremendous industrial machine and her secure geographical location entitle her to that role. He believes that it must be "our" purpose to play the other powers against each other, particularly by propping up Germany as a bulwark against possible Soviet expansion, and Japan against a potential Chinese expansion. He writes:

"Strange as it may seem at this moment it is quite conceivable that the British Government would not relish the idea of a Germany so completely defeated that it could not defend itself against the invasion of victorious Russian armies. It is even conceivable that Washington might become convinced of the cogency of the British argument that asks for the continued existence of a powerful Germany. A Russian state from the Urals to the North Sea can be no great improvement over a German state from the North Sea to the Urals. The present war effort is undoubtedly directed against the destruction of Hitler and the National Socialist Party, but this does not necessarily imply that it is directed at the destruction of Germany as a military power. Similar reasoning is applicable to the Far East. The danger of another Japanese conquest of Asia must be removed, but this does not inevitably mean the complete elimination of the military strength of Japan and the surrender of the Western Pacific to China or Russia." (P. 460.)

Thus, by balancing off the various powers against one another and supplying each of them with weapons so that an equality of armaments can be achieved, peace "for a time" can be maintained. Spykman poses no solution for wars in general, stating that any such attempted solution would be utterly utopian and unrealistic. By acknowledging the "legitimate" desires of certain great powers for certain areas (Germany's need for central Europe, for example) and by insuring a certain equality in armament between all, America can play the role of arbiter and judge in any disputes which might arise, at the same time insuring itself of substantial export markets. He terms the "League of Nations" as a "Balance of Power," which failed due to an unfortunate disproportion in the strength of England and France vis-a-vis Germany and Japan.

Spykman's statements concerning the Soviet Union are of vital significance in view of Stalin's policy of harnessing her to the Allied war machine. Not only does Spykman find communism just as "distasteful" as Nazism, but, in proposing that the Allies may possibly have to bolster up Germany at the end of the war in order to ward off a "too powerful Russia," Spykman is already visualizing Allied action against the spread of revolutionary forces, for he knows quite well that the present exertions and losses of the Soviet Union are weakening her even if an Allied victory comes, so that any action by the Red Armies could only be taken in coordination with a widespread European revolutionary movement.

Spykman's attitude toward China is similar, as the following quotation indicates:

"A modern vitalized and militarized China of 450 million people is going to be a threat not only to Japan but also to the position of the Western powers in the Asiatic Mediterranean. . . . If the balance of power in the Far East is to be preserved in the future as well as the present, the United States will have to adopt a protective policy toward Japan." (P. 470.)

Equally revealing is his attitude toward Latin America. The United States must eventually use force against the Latin-American states, he says, because of the economic incompatibility of the two areas; South America is a competitor of the U. S. in international export trade and this country cannot absorb much of South America's products. This divergence of interests, he accurately points out, results in resentment on the part of South Americans at Yankee attempts to dictate their foreign policies. While this resentment can be partially offset by loans, trade concessions and political pressure, the United States will eventually have to resort to naked force to compel submission from certain of the more stubborn South American nations.

During the post-war period, South America must, beyond all shadow of a doubt, fall into the American "geopolitical sphere," says Spykman. South America as a consuming

market must be opened up to U. S. industrial might, while any attempt by South America to develop domestic manufactures of her own, must be "discouraged." He also proposes the seizure by the United States of all the foreign (British, French and Dutch) possessions, strategic bases and outposts in South America: "With the United States in possession of the strategic naval bases, the economic life of the region is internally at the mercy of the Colossus of the North." (P. 278.)

Such are the "geopolitical" conclusions of the Sterling Professor of International Relations at Yale University. He speaks not merely for himself, but for a powerful section of the American ruling class.

Moreover, all this, Spykman says, presupposes far-reaching domestic changes within the United States. Democracy, he says, lacks the fiery appeal of communism or fascism, it has lost its fire, its ability to evoke passionate enthusiasm and fervor in the hearts of its citizens; consequently, without a basic change of its principles and values in a more totalitarian direction, it will be impossible for the American nation to meet the Axis with the same crusading zeal which permeates the Germans and Japanese. Under the guise of an American version of the "science" of Geopolitics, Spykman coldly outlines the future course which American imperialism, just as its European counterparts, must inevitably try to follow, the course toward totalitarianization and fascism.

Geopolitics, it is clear, is not a science but an imperialist myth. Geographical "problems" exist only in the sense that capitalism forces peoples into violent competition with one another in the course of which arguments from geography are used as a means for enslavement and exploitation while raw materials are denied the poverty stricken millions who need them. Under an international socialist economy, geography will no longer constitute a political or economic barrier to world-wide amity and cooperation, and the raw materials of the earth will be utilized for the collective use of mankind.

American Labor on India

There has long been widespread sympathy in the United States for India's struggle for independence. So much so, indeed, that as late as Cripps' arrival, the All-India Congress leaders had high hopes that their demands would be backed by American pressure. This illusion has since been shattered by the viciously pro-British line of the American press and radio, and Secretary of State Hull's speech of July 23, which in essence repeated the British formula, telling the Indian people that they must first support the war and thus "by their acts show themselves worthy" of post-war freedom. Illusions in India about support from American capitalism and its government resulted from a failure to analyze two very different currents in the traditional American sympathy for India. American imperialism wished to end British political control of India in order to replace it by the more subtle but equally imperialist penetration of the dollar; hence the "sympathy" of dollar imperialism for Indian independence. A very different, and genuine sympathy was that of large sections of the American working class and farmers, which has of course been most lively among the 13 million Negroes. The Indian nationalists made the mistake of not distinguishing between these two fundamentally different currents of sympathy. More accurately, the India League

here has largely ignored the American labor movement and sought "friends of India" in Washington and the bourgeois press, and now can only wail as the bourgeois "friends" become enemies.

American imperialist plans for "helping" India have been set aside now for more propitious times; for the present, the British ally must be helped. Hence the gigantic press and radio campaign of lies and slanders against India's present struggle. Among the American masses, however, sympathy for India's struggle is, if anything, livelier than ever before. American Ambassador Winant recently warned a meeting of British businessmen that Britain's colonial policy is the cause of serious "division of opinion" here. The financial weekly *Great Britain and the East* (April 18) especially hoped that the Cripps mission "has enlightened the American people, who in the past have been woefully misled as to British policy in India." But since then Cripps and Amery have felt compelled to make special broadcasts to American audiences. The very strenuousness of the anti-India campaign of the American press and radio indicates that the actual tide of mass public opinion is running the other way.

Yet, so far, working-class sympathy for India's fight for freedom has been expressed very little, and then in dis-

torted forms. Nor is this surprising. The workers can express themselves only through their organizations; and their leaders are locked in "national unity" with the Roosevelt administration. Especially on international questions they echo Washington, instead of declaring the international solidarity of the workers and oppressed peoples. When they are surrendering the rights of American labor, they will scarcely stand up for the rights of the people of India. Their crimes against India are but a reflection of their crimes against the interests of the American workers.

Nevertheless, even the labor lieutenants of the Roosevelt war machine are compelled to take notice of the sympathy for India among the American workers. This will be seen as we survey the stand taken by the various sections of the labor movement. Quite apart from this, such a survey provides, as it were, an international microscope under which to examine the American labor movement.

The Position of the Auto Workers

At the closing session of the UAW-CIO convention on August 9, it adopted a resolution on the struggle in India. The key paragraphs were:

"The aim in this struggle is to secure the independence necessary to make India a full-fledged ally of the United Nations. The claim of the Indian people to their independence is a just and democratic one, fully in accord with the liberating and democratic aim of this war.

"It is the wisest course to come to a mutually satisfactory agreement with the Indian Congress, instead of allowing the conflict to flare into civil war. . . .

"We urge upon President Roosevelt that he request the British government that it take steps necessary to win the support of the Indian people and to avert civil strife in India."

The most notable point is the favorable characterization of the present struggle of India for immediate independence. This was taken by the delegates to be the heart of the resolution, and that is what they voted for primarily. There were no dissenting speeches and very few dissenting votes. It was to be expected, of course, that the union leaders, in drafting the resolution, would put in a boost for "the liberating and democratic aim of the war," and put the fate of India into Roosevelt's hands. Nevertheless, they also had to declare for India's immediate independence. In a word, the resolution reflects the sympathy of the militant auto workers for India's fight, distorted into "respectable" form by the union leadership.

Capitalist lies about the "backwardness" of the Indian masses are refuted by the personal experience of many auto workers. One of the largest communities of immigrants from India in this country is in Detroit, and many of them are auto workers. Though prevented from becoming citizens by the Oriental Exclusion Act, they are among the best citizens of the UAW-CIO. They have proved their loyalty to the working class in the shops and on the picket lines. It was in the spirit of an elementary duty to these union brothers and their people that the convention declared itself for immediate independence for India.

The AFL Resolution

As the auto workers' resolution led the way for the CIO, so the utterly reactionary soul of the AFL bureaucracy was expressed in the resolution adopted August 19 by the New York State Federation of Labor and broadcast by short wave to India.

The resolutions committee recommended rejection of a

proposal to support the demand of the Indian Congress for immediate independence. Instead it brought in a resolution flatly opposing independence now. All it offered, in terms entirely acceptable to the British Tories, was the usual promise of post-war independence:

"We pledge to you that at the hour of our victory, we shall do everything in our power to help you realize your rightful claim to independence."

Until then, the AFL bureaucracy demands that India remain subservient to British imperialism:

"The New York State Federation of Labor, representing 1,500,000 organized workers, sends fraternal greetings to the people of India and urgently appeals to them to abandon the ill-timed and ill-advised civil disobedience campaign, which cannot but injure India's own rightful cause."

And if India does not accept the "fraternal" advice of the AFL bureaucrats? Then, the resolution threatens:

"Today we are at war. India's position is not a question of principle but of geographic and military reality.

". . . There must be no misunderstandings between us. The workers of America, and the American people as a whole, stand solidly behind President Roosevelt in iron determination to fight this war *anywhere and everywhere circumstances should make it necessary*. We are committed to destroy the Axis, and we shall not stop, and *we shall not be stopped* until we have carried this war to a successful conclusion."

The resolution could hardly have said more plainly: We are fully prepared to join in crushing the Indian struggle if our masters give the word. It goes far beyond anything the Roosevelt administration has said; the AFL bureaucracy is like the dog which, sensing the mood of the master, growls threateningly at his opponent while the master is still using fair words.

The AFL resolution is not only brutal. It is also stupid. With a fatuous ignorance exceeding even its impudence, it says precisely the two things which assure the resolution a contemptuous reception in India:

"We are glad, and we are proud, that our brothers in the British Trades Union Congress have taken a stand against imperialism and for an independent India."

"Do not compromise the cause of China and all the peoples of Asia, by indulging in ill-advised obstructionist tactics which can only alienate India's true friends."

Every peasant in India knows what the AFL bureaucrats don't know: (1) that the British trade union bureaucrats have *never* been friends of Indian independence and (2) that all China is wholeheartedly in sympathy with India's present struggle.

It is difficult to believe that the AFL bureaucrats seriously considered that their resolution, broadcast by radio to India, would have any persuasive effect there. The British government will, however, find it useful in England as an international labor endorsement of its colonial massacres.

The Stand of the Negro Workers

The Negro masses have always looked upon the dark-skinned people of India as their racial brothers. They are thrilled by the present struggle; they understand that success in India will be reflected here and everywhere. Walking through the seething streets of Harlem in the first days after the arrest of the Congress leaders, everywhere the talk was of India—and how fiercely partisan was the talk! The Negro delegates at the UAW-CIO convention were one of the main forces pressing the leadership for support of India's struggle, and it will be likewise in all the CIO unions.

So far, the Negro press has but dimly reflected—and distorted—this intense sympathy for India's fight. It is curious to note that *before* the civil disobedience campaign began, the Negro press wrote in detailed and decisive terms in support of the struggle but, since it began, has written relatively little and that in cautious language.

The most significant statement thus far has been that of A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (AFL), on behalf of the March on Washington movement, which is today unquestionably the organization closest to the Negro masses. The statement begins as follows:

"The March on Washington movement hails the militant, noble and persistent struggle of the people of India for freedom and independence from the brutal tyranny of Great Britain.

"Negro people of America, the West Indies and Africa should support this grim, determined and courageous battle for freedom under the gallant, wise and dauntless leadership of Mohandas K. Gandhi for they constitute one of the great oppressed and exploited sections of the darker races of the world, seeking their liberation from ruthless British imperialism."

Having thus expressed the attitude of the Negro masses, Randolph characteristically goes on to distort it. Side by side with correct proposals that Negro organizations demand freedom for India, the release of the Congress leaders, to send expressions of sympathy to India—Randolph asks Negroes to appeal to Churchill for India's independence on the grounds that this would be in the interests of Britain. The "brutal tyranny of Great Britain," the "ruthless British imperialism" of the first two paragraphs of the Randolph statement, turns up at the end as India's potential liberator. Having advised India to continue its struggle, Randolph rushes over to the other side to advise British imperialism. Randolph's attempt to straddle the barricades is the inevitable result of his political support of the "United Nations," including India's oppressor. That Britain is fighting precisely to retain its oppression of India—that Randolph conceals from the Negro workers he misleads. We are confident, however, that these Negro workers will go on to support India completely, dragging Randolph along with them or discarding him.

The Social Democratic Federation

As one could have predicted in advance, the vilest slanders against the Indian struggle came, not from the bourgeois press or the trade union bureaucrats, but from the "socialist" *New Leader* and its parent, the Social Democratic Federation. The senile conservatism of the septuagenarian leadership of the Federation has been combined with the hysterical frenzy of the Social Democratic refugees to make the foulest brew that has ever been labelled "socialism." Here is a sample from the formal statement on India issued by the Federation:

"American Social Democrats deplore and condemn the action of Gandhi-Nehru and their associates in plunging India into turmoil at a moment when such a course plays directly into the hands of the Japanese and German enemies of world peace and freedom. Whether they are actuated by blind fanaticism, by personal ambition or by fifth-column corruption, the results will be the same.

"In the United States as well as in Great Britain, public sympathy with Indian aspirations for independence has been rudely alienated. No one need wonder if the British government and people consider themselves absolved from their promise of self-government after the war.

". . . These demagogues are betraying China in her hour of need. . . .

"Our propaganda against imperialism, as a part of our

whole propaganda for democratic social progress toward a classless society, has everywhere contributed to the gradual and orderly abandonment of imperialistic policies in which Great Britain and the United States have taken a leading part." (*New Leader*, August 15.)

Satire stands defenseless before this preposterous nonsense. Even more vicious, however, because much more plausible to uninformed readers, is an article in the same *New Leader* by an "expert" on India, one Harry Paxton Howard. "He spent 24 years in China and Japan as an educator and editor, returning here two years ago." After reading his article, one would like to know just who employed him during those years in the Orient. With a great show of learning, he pictures the present struggle in India as designed to perpetuate the Hindu caste system, untouchability, child marriage, the oppression of the peasants by landlords and moneylenders. How, then, explain that hundreds of millions of peasants and workers are fighting and dying under the slogans of "Long Live the Revolution" and "Liberty or Death"? Here is the explanation of Howard and the *New Leader*:

"There are, however, scores of millions of lower-caste Hindus, still backward and benighted, who meekly accept the leadership of high-caste Hindus such as Nehru and Gandhi. These are the 'masses' of whom the Congress Party leaders speak. They will starve to death rather than kill a cow. They will, indeed, kill a starving Moslem for killing a cow. They 'purify' themselves with cow's urine. Their girls are married—so far as the British Indian Government has not interfered with this 'quaint' custom—at the age of ten or twelve, since 'every menstruation is a murder' to the orthodox Hindu. They accept and cooperate with the herding of the 'untouchables'—poor proletarians like themselves—into the unspeakable ghettos of Indian towns and cities. They are the most degraded, superstitious, backward mass in the world.

". . . The 'revolutionary mass movement' of which they speak is, simply, race hatred. . . . Hindu landlords and moneylenders, cruelly plundering their peasant victims, are anxious to divert the attention of the latter to their British 'exploiters'—much as Hitler and his Nazis, determined to plunder not only the Germans but all Europe, singled out the minority of Jewish capitalists as 'exploiters.' The 'revolutionary mass movement' led by the Congress Party machine is as unscrupulous and ruthless in its exploitation and cultivation of race hatred as is the anti-Semitism of Adolf Hitler." (*New Leader*, August 15.)

For the United States, this is a new kind of attack on the Indian struggle. In England, however, it is very familiar; it is the old stock in trade of the British Labour Party bureaucrats, who have made an art of attacking the All-India Congress in pseudo-socialist terms. Every one of these statements in the *New Leader* has been conclusively refuted a hundred times by Indian nationalists and revolutionary Marxists; but British apologists go on repeating them. A hundred times it has been established that the Congress has infinitely more following among the Untouchables than the British agents who parade as their leaders; yet Howard and the *New Leader* still write that "Their outstanding leader is B. R. Ambedkar, recently appointed Labor Minister in the Indian Council." The Sarda Act, prohibiting child marriage, was supported by the Congress and other Indian groups, but was long opposed by the British government and its agents for fear it would disrupt the status quo. Precisely at this point of actual struggle against British rule, the landlords and moneylenders—a class created by the British—are supporting the oppressor against the Congress. To characterize as "race hatred" the anti-British sentiments of the oppressed is to repeat the identical language

of the American Bourbons in the South who call every Negro protest "race hatred."

One could go on for pages, refuting the deliberate falsehoods of this *New Leader* slander against the Indian masses. Before we turn away from this foul brew, let us note its political essence. It is as "socialist" as the Feudal Socialism which Marx and Engels analyzed in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848. The aristocracies of France and England, bitter at the new capitalist class which was displacing them, took revenge by exposing what the bourgeoisie was doing to the new proletariat. It did so, not for the sake of the proletariat, but to perpetuate the feudal remnants. So the *New Leader* and the British Labour Party, in the service of the imperialists, denounce the Indian bourgeoisie, only in order to perpetuate imperialist rule in India. And, just as the aristocracy consoled itself by amalgamating with the new capitalist class against the proletariat, so British imperialism and its labor lieutenants have combined with the Indian land-owners and capitalists against the struggle for freedom.

The Norman Thomas "Socialists"

The author of the *New Leader* article cited above, Harry Paxton Howard, appears in the pages of Norman Thomas' *The Call* as "Comrade Harry Paxton Howard," "The Call's expert on Far Eastern affairs" (August 14 issue). The same week, however, *The Call's* expert went to the *New Leader* and, from there, to the Catholic *Commonweal* (August 28 issue) where he is explaining the superiority of the pro-British Moslem League as due to the fact that Moslems are "democratic and anti-caste, recognizing the equality of all men under God." Thus bereft of its expert, *The Call* fell back on the renegade Jim Cork (ex-Lovestoneite) and its own Norman Thomas.

Those who do not read *The Call* learned of Norman Thomas' activities for India when the bourgeois press published a "report given to newspapermen by Norman Thomas immediately after a conference with Secretary of State Cordell Hull. . . . The Socialist leader thought it significant that Secretary Hull had recalled his own long-standing support of independence for the Philippine Islands." (*N.Y. Times*, August 18.)

Mr. Thomas was seeing Hull on behalf of a group of liberals (including ex-Lovestoneite Bertram D. Wolfe) appealing to President Roosevelt to mediate the British-Indian crisis. The letter of the group expressed their satisfaction over the State Department's announcement that no American forces would be used against the Indians, and added:

"It will be even better if you make a similar statement emphasizing the fact that neither directly nor indirectly will American troops or arms be so used. To do less would be to make a mockery of those great ideals in whose behalf you have so eloquently assured us that this war is being fought."

British repressions, Thomas told the reporters, would "be injurious to the war effort of the United States" (*N. Y. Times*, August 18).

In *The Call*, Mr. Thomas added a few details:

"Mr. Hull professed his profound concern over India's problems and his willingness to help. That willingness, many prominent Americans are now urging upon the President, should go to the length of a formal offer of good services, if possible in cooperation with the Chinese and Russians.

". . . Unless this can be done, the question 'where are we going in this war?' will become tragically clouded." (*The Call*, August 28.)

It is, then, as supporters of the war of the United Nations

that Norman Thomas and *The Call* appeal to Roosevelt. The general outlook from which they speak is indicated by the following words in the same article by Thomas reporting his visit to Hull:

"Of course the picture [in Washington] is not all black. There is a great sense of vitality and achievement in Washington, symbolic of the vigor which America is showing. Unquestionably Americans have proved their capacity to produce and to fight. This country is, or is on the way to being, the most powerful single nation in the world. What is not at all clear is whether it is using its power intelligently, or whether any power can accomplish the tasks the President has assumed without a strategy of war and peace not now in evidence."

Since it is "not at all clear" whether the government "is using its power intelligently," Mr. Thomas went to Washington to advise Roosevelt and Hull how to use it in connection with India. Having swallowed the camel of the war, Mr. Thomas scarcely strains at the gnat of advising the imperialists how to conduct their war. *The Call* writes: "The Socialist Party urges readers of *The Call* to write or wire immediately to President Roosevelt urging him to help win a real victory for democracy by mediating with Britain, America's ally, for immediate independence for India." If the government of American finance capitalism can conduct a war for democracy, even easier can it win "a real victory for democracy" in India. Thomas writes of Roosevelt in this connection: "I like to believe that we may expect it from him as a matter of course." He glows with the thought that "our President" can play "a role which might make him hero and spokesman in behalf of the silent peoples of the earth." (*The Call*, August 21.) The iron logic of support of the war is exhibited in the microcosm of the Socialist Party just as much as in the macrocosm of the trade union movement.

The Call may retort: "But the All-India Congress, it is clear, will welcome mediation by Roosevelt. Why, then, shouldn't we urge him to do so?" The fact that mediation will be welcomed by the Congress is irrefutable. That is no reason why people calling themselves socialists should support such mediation. For mediation implies that India can win its independence as a gift at the hands of Churchill and Roosevelt. Whereas the bloody lessons of centuries of British oppression of India, plus the latest lesson of the Cripps mission, is that India will win its independence only with arms in hand, overthrowing the British Raj. This lesson the Congress Party, a movement dominated by the bourgeoisie, does not teach and, indeed, conceals from the Indian masses. It is one thing to support the tiniest step of the Congress against British imperialism; it is entirely wrong to support the Congress in its compromises with British imperialism and its failure to take to the road of revolution. Mediation will be accepted by Britain and offered by Roosevelt only after a prior understanding with the Congress for a compromise. He who supports mediation thereby commits himself to a compromise—i.e., to abandoning the struggle for independence against British imperialism.

Nor is only the question of India involved. In Latin America, Roosevelt plays the same essential role as Churchill: dollar imperialism, supporting the regimes of a Vargas in Brazil, Batista in Cuba, etc., has as bloody hands as British imperialism in India. To paint up the Chief Executive of American imperialism as conceivably playing "a role which might make him hero and spokesman in behalf of the silent peoples of the earth" is to betray Latin America's fight for freedom.

And if Roosevelt can lead the colonial masses to a new life, why not America's sharecroppers and Negroes and workers and farmers? Why, then, does the Socialist Party exist, if a capitalist president can do these things? Why, indeed? Trotsky once said that Norman Thomas calls himself a socialist as the result of a misunderstanding.

The Role of the Stalinists

The Stalinist line is identical with that of the Social Democrats, but is infinitely more dangerous, since unlike the Second International of open labor lieutenants of imperialism, Stalinism has parties in India and the other colonial countries. The Stalinist line ostensibly is that it is for immediate independence and against the present struggle, on the grounds that independence can be secured through mediation by Roosevelt. Even more fundamental to the Stalinist line, however, is unconditional support of the war and, as a corollary, unconditional support of the trade union bureaucracy which supports the war. Thus, for example, at the New York State Federation of Labor convention, the Stalinist delegates voted for the AFL resolution (described above) which *opposes* immediate independence. And the *Daily Worker* whitewashed the reactionary resolution by reporting it as follows:

"A further expression of the convention's war consciousness was the statement it approved for a short-wave broadcast to the people of India, supporting their fight for independence, condemning imperialism, and calling for an end of the civil disobedience movement." (*The Worker*, August 23.)

Embarrassed by the fact that, unlike the Soviet Union, the Chinese press and government circles are supporting, not only the principle of immediate independence for India, but also the *present* struggle for it, the Stalinist press in this country has simply suppressed this news so vital to rallying support for India.

These two examples characterize the real content of the Stalinist line. Infinitely more able and flexible than the doddering Social Democrats, the Stalinists do not print a Harry Paxton Howard. Far more sensitive than the AFL bureaucrats to the actual sentiments of the American workers, the Stalinists sponsor "Win the War, Free India" rallies. The essential difference, however, is between a clumsy and a skillful execution of a political line: the basic line is the same—opposition to India's fight for freedom.

The Stalinists in India are opposed to all strikes—whether for economic demands, for independence or for the release of the imprisoned Congress leaders—as hampering the war effort of the "United Nations." Despite the Stalinists, a great strike wave has broken out. The facts are known, although British censorship and cooperation of the American

press and radio are suppressing the news. Even a Louis Fischer and Raymond Clapper are lifting the veil a little. But not the Stalinist press. Through Soviet and GPU agencies, the Stalinist press has sources of information infinitely superior to the ordinary newspaper, and has often used them when it saw fit. But it has joined the conspiracy of silence against India.

The Stalinist press has concealed the reactionary character of the Cripps proposal. In this it was following the Stalinist line in India where "the Communists urged Congress and the Moslem League to unite in order to achieve a settlement on the basis of the Cripps proposals." (*Daily Worker*, August 4, 1942.) The Stalinists slander the Congress struggle as "playing into the hands of Japan." The Stalinists were the only group in the Congress, except for a few extreme right-wingers, who voted against launching the struggle. "The 13 who voted against the Gandhi non-cooperation proposal were for the most part Indian Communists." (*Daily Worker*, August 9.)

The only road to independence proposed by the Stalinists is independence as a gift from Churchill-Roosevelt. They condemn any refusal to cooperate with the British: "To persist in the policy of non-cooperation with or neutrality toward the government war effort or their defense measures is to betray the sacred cause of the defense of India." (*Daily Worker*, August 5.)

The Stalinists are today the most powerful agency within the American labor movement dragging it away from support of India's struggle for independence. They are doing so with infinitely more consciousness and deliberation than the AFL and CIO bureaucracy.

As India raises its voice, it also makes clear the fundamental cleavage of interests between the American working class and the imperialists of Britain and America. The American workers have no interest whatever in supporting the continued enslavement of India. On the contrary, the interest of the American workers is bound up with freedom for every people. The "socialists," Stalinists and trade union bureaucrats who oppose India's struggle for independence do not represent the interests of the American working class. Their attitude toward India reveals their role as agents of the imperialists. India is one more touchstone by which the American workers can determine which workers' organizations and leaders are loyal to the interests of the working class.

It is a fact that the only workers' political organization which meets this test is the Socialist Workers Party, the Trotskyists. That is one more proof that the Trotskyists are the authentic representatives of the historic interests of the world working class.

Petty-Bourgeois Radicalism on The Struggle in India

The essence of petty-bourgeois radicalism is phrase-mongering with no thought that the words will ever have to be followed by deeds. Unfettered by any responsibility to the participants in the struggle, the petty-bourgeois radical can afford unlimited intransigence of the word. It doesn't cost anything, so he raises the stakes. Shouting and doing, Marx noted, are irreconcilable opposites. Quite conscious that the doing is

beyond him, the petty-bourgeois radical is unbridled in the shouting. Political impotence assures him of never having to make good his ferocious words. Abstentionism masquerades as revolutionary doggedness. Instructive examples of this phenomenon are provided at every turn of events by the Shachtman "Workers Party." The latest comes in connection with India.

With the moderation of doers, Lenin and

Trotsky declared the working class, by its own methods, should support any colonial struggle even if it were led by the colonial bourgeoisie. In his "Open Letter to the Workers of India" on the eve of the war, Trotsky declared: "In the event that the Indian bourgeoisie finds itself compelled to take even the tiniest step on the road of struggle against the arbitrary rule of Great Britain, the proletariat will naturally support such a step . . . with *their own* methods." This is the "moderation" of revolutionary *action*.

The petty-bourgeois radical has no need of moderation; everything is possible in words. In June, just before the outbreak of the

present struggle in India, Shachtman decreed that, in view of the extension of the military arena, colonial struggles under bourgeois leadership are undeserving of the support of revolutionists; Shachtman now would support nothing less than a colonial struggle under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. At the top of his lungs he decreed it:

"Yes, the struggle of the colonies for freedom is utterly hopeless during the present World War *if they continue the course of serving one imperialist camp against the other.* That is today the course of the bourgeoisie in every colonial and semi-colonial country. . . .

"The Second World War, imperialist to the marrow, is total and all-dominating. In its first stage, at least, it was inevitable that it draw into the grip of its iron ring all the isolated national wars and struggles for national freedom. That is where these struggles are today—within the iron ring of the imperialist war.

". . . Yes, the struggle for national emancipation of the colonies *has been deserted*—by the Chiangs and the Nehrus and the Boses and the Wangs, by the people who led and directed it and then, at the show-down, brought it into the imperialist war camp. . . .

"It is therefore on the basis of objective analysis, and not of rhetoric, that we declare that . . . only the leadership of the proletariat can re-launch the just wars of the colonies against imperialism." (*New International*, June 1942.)

An Embarrassing Revolt

Shachtman scarcely had gotten this off his chest when the pressure of the Indian masses impelled the bourgeois All-India Congress to embark on a civil disobedience campaign against Britain. Shachtman had said all such struggles are inevitably part of the imperialist war and undeserving of support. But great masses, ignoring his prophetic decree, arose under the formal leadership of the Congress. What would Shachtman say now?

Logically, it might seem, only two courses were open to him. Either repeat that the struggle in India is undeserving of support. Or, recognizing the empty intransigence of his previous words, concede their falsity and come out for support of the struggle. But if men of ordinary clay would see only these two alternatives, Shachtman is otherwise constructed. In the face of the events he did not have the brass to repeat his absurd pronouncement. Still less did he have the honesty to acknowledge his error. He preferred to seek a formula avoiding either explicitly repeating his June decree or recognizing its falsity.

The new formula that Shachtman found is the "Workers Party Statement on India" (*Labor Action*, August 17). Its boldly-conceived principle is: "Stand by the people of India." What about *this present struggle led by the Congress*—does Shachtman support it? There is nothing about that in the statement.

"The Workers Party stands 100 per cent with the people of India." But at the given moment the people of India are fighting under the banner of the Congress—does the "Workers Party" stand 100 per cent, or 10 per cent, behind *this* struggle? No, that is ruled out by Shachtman's June pronouncement, which he had to maintain in order, as they say in the Orient, to save face. That is worth more to Shachtman than ten revolutions.

His statement says: "We do not know whether Gandhi, Nehru and Azad intend to go through with their call to mass struggle." In June, Shachtman was absolutely positive that these men could only serve "one imperialist camp against the other"; now he doesn't know whether they will "go through" with "mass struggle." We, on the other hand, were and remain certain that the Congress leadership will *not* go through with the struggle to the end. The question is whether or not revolutionists should support the struggle, wholeheartedly and unconditionally, as long as it does go on. Before and now, we answer YES. Shachtman said NO in June and now says nothing. His verbal intransigence of June is followed by political cowardice.

The "Workers Party" statement is a deliberately dishonest document. It is designed to give the *appearance* of support without declaring support of the actual struggle led by the Congress. In its small way the statement is as deliberately dishonest as the Stalinist formula, which declares support of Indian independence but condemns the struggle. The dishonesty in the two cases flows, of course, from very different sources. In the case of Stalinism it serves the material interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy. In the case of the "Workers Party" it serves Shachtman's personal considerations.

His Basic Line

This is not to say that if Shachtman were honest he would condemn his June article. As a matter of fact, he would now be reiterating it, if he had the courage of such convictions as he has. He could not repudiate it without at the same time abandoning his whole conception of the Second World War. In his conception, the "character of the war" determines the role of all participants, regardless of whether they are imperialist or non-imperialist powers. He makes no distinction between the role of the imperialist powers and that of semi-colonial China and the Soviet Union. To him "The Second World War, imperialist to the marrow, is total and all-dominating." From this false conception he drew his logical-enough corollary in June that the "total and all-dominating war" determined the character of all present colonial struggles: "That is where these struggles are today—within the iron ring of the imperialist war." It was on the basis of this false and anti-Marxist theory that Shachtman abandoned the defense of the Soviet Union and split from the Fourth International on this issue. His natural next step was to aban-

don the defense of China against Japanese imperialism. Equally consistent was his refusal to support the specific struggle in India.

In all these instances the essence of Shachtman's politics comes out: abstention from the struggle, cloaked by ultra-left phrases. Trotsky pointed this out when the Burnham-Shachtman group called for a simultaneous insurrection by the Polish people against both Hitler and Stalin. Trotsky answered: "The advanced workers in eastern Poland could justifiably say: 'A simultaneous insurrection against Hitler and Stalin in a country occupied by troops might perhaps be arranged very conveniently from the Bronx; but here, locally, it is more difficult. We should like to hear Burnham and Shachtman's answer to a "concrete political question": What shall we do between now and the coming insurrection?' . . . Throughout the vacillations and convulsions of the Burnham-Shachtman opposition, there is a tendency to refrain from active participation, a tendency to self-elimination, to abstentionism, naturally, under cover of ultra-radical phrases." Likewise for India, Shachtman will support nothing less than simultaneous insurrection on two fronts: against British imperialism and the native bourgeoisie. Naturally that would be best. But if the workers of India are not yet ready, if the native bourgeoisie stands, for the time being, at the head of the struggle against British imperialism? Shachtman will not support it, as he will not support the Soviet Union against Hitler or China against Japan. Until the struggle catches up with his prescription for it, he will abstain.

If the struggle does catch up with his formula, Shachtman will find new reasons for abstention. When the Red Army invaded Finland, Shachtman opposed defense of the Soviet Union but added: "If the imperialists assail the Soviet Union with the aim of crushing the last conquest of the October Revolution and reducing Russia to a bunch of colonies, we will support the Soviet Union unconditionally." Reality caught up with his prescription when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. Whereupon Shachtman changed his . . . prescription.

* * *

P.S. The August issue of Shachtman's *New International* has just appeared. To its previous theoretical errors, it now adds an irresponsibility which one can characterize only as criminal. On page 197 it says of the Social Democrats: "Where even the bourgeois press hesitated before the extreme slander of labeling Gandhi and his group as 'Japanese-Axis agents,' the decrepit old nags of the *New Leader* did not hesitate." The editorial board, then, understands that to characterize the present bourgeois leadership of the Indian struggle as linked to Japan is an "extreme slander." But on page 196—in the same editorial on India—we read in the *New International*:

"Therefore, beyond a doubt the Indian

bourgeoisie is casting about for a new master to which it may subordinate itself; a new power before which it may lay its claim for junior partnership in the exploitation of the country. Obviously that new power is the greatly expanded Japanese Empire! It is impossible to say whether a 'deal' or tacit understanding has been reached with Japanese imperialism, but it is clear that doubly parasitic Indian capitalism is seriously pondering the question."

The difference between the "extreme slander" of the *New Leader* and that of the *New International* is that the latter pretends to give a "theoretical" basis to its slander. A Marxist would grant that it is theoretically not excluded that the Indian bourgeoisie will go over to Japan at some stage or another, and the point may very well be made in a general analysis. But certainly not at *this*

moment, when British and American imperialism and their labor lieutenants are attempting to justify the repressions by smearing Gandhi-Nehru as aides of Japan; when there is not the slightest sign that the Congress leadership is seeking a "deal' or tacit understanding" with Japan; when the entire leadership of the Congress is imprisoned by the British and unable to defend itself, and every honest democrat—not to say revolutionist—should lean backward to defend the Congress leaders against the mountains of slanders.

Moreover, the *New International* goes far beyond the proposition that it is not theoretically excluded that the Congress leaders will turn to Japan at some stage. It says *much* more: The "Indian bourgeoisie is casting about for a new master" and "Obviously that new power is a greatly expanded Japanese Empire" and one cannot say "whether a

'deal' or tacit understanding has been reached." This, as a matter of fact, goes further than the *New Leader*, which did not even pose the thought that an actual deal might have been reached. An enterprising British agent could very well quote this slander of the *New International* as the impartial testimony of "revolutionists" against the Congress leadership.

This criminal irresponsibility flows from the Shachtmanite freedom from any sense of participation in the struggle. The thing furthest from his mind is any sense of responsibility toward the participants in the struggle. Why can't he say anything he pleases about the Congress leadership? Does it matter what he says? This "freedom" is the essence of petty-bourgeois abstentionism.

F.M.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

The Second World War

By LEON TROTSKY

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second and final section of an interview that Trotsky gave in 1940 to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, which published it in its March 10, 17 and 24 issues. The first part, published last month, dealt with the Stalin-Hitler pact and the Soviet-Finnish War. The date at the end of this document is that on which Trotsky dictated to his secretary his written answers to the questions of the *Post-Dispatch*.

QUESTION: What would be the wisest action for Stalin to take today in Rumania, considering the possible political, social and military implications?

ANSWER: I think that the Kremlin itself, particularly after the Finnish experience, will consider in the next period as "wisest" not to touch Rumania. Stalin can move against the Balkans only in agreement with Hitler, only in order to aid Hitler—at least as long as Hitler's strength is not undermined and this is not at all near. At present Hitler needs peace in the Balkans in order to obtain raw materials and to maintain his ambiguous friendship with Italy.

From both a military and a political point of view, Rumania is another edition of Poland, if not worse. The same semi-feudal oppression of peasants, the same cynical persecution of national minorities, the same mixture of lightmindedness, impertinence and cowardliness inside the ruling stratum personified by the king himself. However, if the initiative of the new Entente compels Hitler and Stalin to upset the unstable peace of the Balkans, the Red Army will enter Rumania with slogans of agrarian revolution and probably with greater success than in Finland.

QUESTION: What can or must Stalin do in the Balkans—generally, in the light of present events? In Persia? In Afghanistan.

ANSWER: The Soviet armed forces have to be ready to defend a vast area with insufficient means of communication. The world situation dictates the necessity not of dispersing the army in separate adventures but of maintaining it in powerful concentrations. If, however, Great Britain and France—with some cooperation from Germany—consider it necessary to undertake a war against the Soviet Union, the situation will be radically changed. In this case it is not excluded that the Soviet cavalry may try to invade India through Afghanistan: technically the task is not unrealizable. The former sergeant-major of the Czarist army, Budenny, may be destined by history to ride a white horse in the role of a "liberator" of India. But this is in any case a rather distant perspective.

QUESTION: Considering Russia's vastness and its numerous borders and actual and potential enemies, what is its immediate future?

ANSWER: The invasion of Finland indubitably provokes a silent condemnation by the majority of the population in the USSR. However at the same time the minority understands and the majority feels, that behind the Finnish question, stands the problem of the existence of the USSR. Its defeat in the world war would signify the crushing not only of the totalitarian bureaucracy but also of the planned state economy; it would convert the country into a colonial booty for the imperialist states. The peoples of the USSR themselves have to crush the hated bureaucracy; they cannot bestow this task on either Hitler or Chamberlain. The question is whether, as a result of the present war, the entire world economy will be reconstructed on a planned scale, or whether the first attempt of this reconstruction will be crushed in a sanguinary convulsion, and imperialism will receive a new lease of life

until the third world war which can become the tomb of civilization.

QUESTION: The Soviets are generally credited with having made a strong defense and having, in effect, defeated the Japanese at Changkufeng in the summer of 1938. Do you believe this was a test case of Soviet arms and, if so, do you believe it caused Hitler to look in other directions than the Ukraine?

ANSWER: The Red Army, as was said above, is incomparably more powerful on the defensive than on the offensive. Besides, the popular masses, particularly in the Far East, understand well what Japanese domination would mean for them. However, it would be incorrect, following the Kremlin and the foreign correspondents attached to it, to overestimate the importance of the fighting at Changkufeng.

In the past years I have referred several times to the fact that the Japanese army is the army of a decomposing regime and has many traits resembling the Czarist army on the eve of the revolution. Conservative governments and general staffs overrate the army and navy of the Mikado in the same way that they overrated the army and navy of the Czar. The Japanese can be successful only against backward and half-disarmed China. They will not endure a long war against a serious adversary. The success of the Red Army near Changkufeng thus has a limited significance for its evaluation. I don't think that this episode had any influence on Hitler's strategical plans. His turn to Moscow was determined by much nearer and more powerful factors.

The Communist Party of the USSR

QUESTION: Concerning the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—what do you think of the rank and file of the party? You have said that the leadership of the party does not follow Marxist-Leninist lines. Do you believe, if that leadership were removed, that the party would proceed in the socialization of Russia, and to what extent do you believe Russia already has been socialized? Is it possible for the Russian people to change leadership now without violence? If a change in the leadership were made, would it lay Russia open to attack from other powers? Would it risk the loss of what the people have gained?

ANSWER: Our differences with the leadership of the so-called Communist Party of the USSR ceased a long time ago to carry a theoretical character. The "Marxist-Leninist" line is not at all the issue now. We accuse the ruling clique of having transformed itself into a new aristocracy, oppressing and robbing the masses. The bureaucracy answers with accusations that we are agents of Hitler (yesterday) or agents of Chamberlain and Wall Street (as of today). All this bears very little resemblance to theoretical differences between Marxists.

It is about time that serious people cast aside the spectacles which the professional "friends of the USSR" put on the nose of radical public opinion. It is about time to understand that the present Soviet oligarchy has nothing in common with the old Bolshevik Party which was a party of the oppressed. Degeneration of the ruling party, supplemented by bloody purges, was the result of the backwardness of the country and the isolation of the revolution. It is true that the social upheaval brought important economic successes. Nevertheless the productivity of labor in the USSR is five, eight and ten times lower than in the United States. The immense bureaucracy devours a lion's share of the modest national in-

come. The second part is consumed by the armed forces. As before, the people are compelled to fight for a piece of bread. The bureaucracy plays the role of distributor of goods and retains the choicest morsels for itself. The higher layer of the bureaucracy lives approximately the same kind of life as the well-to-do bourgeois of the United States and other capitalist countries.

Twelve to fifteen millions of the privileged—these are the "people" who organize the parades, manifestations and ovations which create such an enormous impression on liberal and radical tourists. But apart from this "*pays legal*" as was once said in France, there exist one hundred and sixty millions who are profoundly discontented.

What is the evidence? If the bureaucracy had the confidence of the people, it would strive to maintain at least its own constitution; in reality it tramples it underfoot. Antagonism between the bureaucracy and the people is measured by the increasing severity of the totalitarian rule.

Nobody can say with certainty—not even themselves—what is wanted by the two millions of Communists who are doomed to silence by the Kremlin with even greater brutality than the rest of the population. However there can be no basis for doubting that the overwhelming majority of the Communists and the population do not wish the return of capitalism, particularly now when capitalism has thrown humanity into a new war.

The bureaucracy can be crushed only by a new political revolution that will preserve the nationalized means of production and the planned economy and will establish on this basis a Soviet democracy of a much higher type. This profound transformation would increase immensely the authority of the Soviet Union among the laboring masses all over the world and would make practically impossible a war of the imperialist countries against it.

QUESTION: If you had been the leader of the Soviet state, what would have been your international policy from the time Hitler came into power in Germany, thereby adding German fascism to Italian fascism to form a fascist bloc in Europe?

ANSWER: I consider this question internally contradictory. I could not have been the "leader" of the present Soviet state: only Stalin is fit for this role. I did not lose power personally and accidentally, but due to the fact that the revolutionary epoch was superseded by a reactionary one. After prolonged efforts and innumerable victims, the masses, tired and disillusioned, retreated. The vanguard became isolated. A new, privileged caste concentrated the power in its hands and Stalin, who played before a secondary role, became its leader. The reaction inside the USSR proceeded parallel to the reaction over the entire world. In 1923 the German bourgeoisie strangled the unfolding proletarian revolution. In the same year the campaign against the so-called "Trotskyists" began in the Soviet Union. In 1928 the Chinese revolution was strangled. At the end of 1928 the "Trotskyist Opposition" was excluded from the party. In 1933 Hitler takes power and in 1934 he carries through his purge. In 1935 begin the tremendous purges in the USSR, trials against the Opposition, liquidation of the old guard Bolsheviks and of the revolutionary staff of officers. Such are the main milestones which show the indissoluble connection between the strengthening of the bureaucracy in the USSR and the growth of world reaction.

The pressure of world imperialism upon the Soviet bureaucracy, the pressure of the bureaucracy upon the people, the pressure of the backward masses upon the vanguard, such

are the causes of the defeat of the revolutionary faction which I represented. That is why I cannot answer the question what I would have done if I had been in Stalin's place. I cannot be in his place. I can be only in my place. My program is the program of the Fourth International which can come to power only under the conditions of a new revolutionary epoch. I recall, by the way, that at the beginning of the last war, the Third International was incomparably weaker than the Fourth is now.

Why the War Must Spread

QUESTION: What do you believe will be the outcome of the European war—politically, economically, socially and territorially?

ANSWER: In order to formulate an opinion about the possible outcome of the war, it is necessary to first answer the question whether it will be possible shortly to pacify the unfurled fury through a compromise or whether the war will develop its devastation and destruction to the end. I don't believe for a minute that the pacifist attempts of the neutrals (including the mysterious mission of Mr. Sumner Welles) will meet success in the more or less near future. The contradictions between the two camps are irreconcilable. As great as may be Hitler's conquests in Europe, they will not solve the problem of German capitalism; on the contrary they only aggravate it. The Austrian, Czech and Polish industries were added to the German; all of them suffered from narrowness of national borders and lack of raw materials. Further, in order to retain the new territories, a constant tension of military forces is unavoidable. Hitler can capitalize on his European successes only on a world scale. In order to do this he must crush France and England. Hitler cannot stop. Consequently the Allies cannot stop either if they do not wish to commit voluntary suicide. The humanitarian lamentations and references to reason will not help. The war will last until it exhausts all the resources of civilization or until it breaks its head on the revolution.

The Imperialist Programs and Ours

QUESTION: How will Europe and the world look after the war?

ANSWER: The peace programs of both camps of this war are not only reactionary but also fantastic, that is, unrealizable. The British government dreams of the establishment of a moderate, conservative monarchy in Germany, of the restoration of the Hapsburgs in Austria-Hungary and of an agreement of all European states on the question of raw materials and markets. London would act correctly if it first found the secret of a peaceful agreement with Ireland about Ulster and with India. Meanwhile we see terrorist acts, executions, passive and active resistance, sanguinary pacifications. Is it possible to expect that a victorious England will renounce its colonial rights in favor of Germany? Fundamentally England proposes, if victorious, a new edition of the League of Nations with all its old antagonisms but without the old illusions.

With France it is even worse. Its economic specific weight is in evident contradiction with its world position and with the extent of its colonial empire. France seeks a way out of this contradiction in the dismemberment of Germany. As if it were possible to turn the clock of history back to the epoch preceding 1870! The unification of the German nation was an inseparable result of its capitalist development. In

order to dismember the present Germany it would be necessary to break the backbone of German technique, destroy the German factories and exterminate a significant part of the population. It is easier to say than to do.

The program of freedom and independence for small nations proclaimed by the Allies sounds very attractive but is entirely devoid of content. Under an unlimited domination of imperialist interests on a world scale, the independence of small and weak states has as little reality as the independence of small industrial and commercial enterprises under the domination of trusts and corporations (in this respect see the statistics of the United States).

At the same time that France wishes to dismember Germany, the latter wants on the contrary to unify Europe, naturally under its heel. Concurrently, the colonies of the European states would have to be subjected to German rule. Such is the program of the most dynamic and aggressive imperialism. The task of the economic unification of Europe is in itself progressive. However the entire problem is who is to unify, how and what for? One cannot believe for one minute that the European nations will accept being locked in the barracks of National Socialism. *Pax Germanica* would mean unavoidably a new series of bloody convulsions.

Such are the two "peace" programs; on the one hand the Balkanization of Germany and thereby of Europe; on the other the transformation of Europe and then of the entire world into a totalitarian barracks. The present war is being waged for the sake of these two programs.

QUESTION: What, in your opinion, is the way out? Who and how and by whom can real peace be achieved?

ANSWER: First of all, I recall that in the past war, which was fundamentally a rehearsal for the present, not only did none of the governments materialize its peace program but neither did they survive for long the conclusion of the peace treaty. Into an abyss fell three old and solid firms: the Romanovs, the Hapsburgs and the Hohenzollerns, with a suite of smaller dynasties. Clemenceau and Lloyd George were swept from power. Wilson ended his days as a victim of his crushed hopes and illusions. Before his death Clemenceau foresaw the coming war. Lloyd George was doomed to see a new catastrophe with his own eyes.

None of the present governments will survive this war. The programs which are now proclaimed will soon be forgotten just as will their authors. The only program that the ruling classes will maintain is: Save their own skins.

The capitalist system is in a blind alley. Without an entire reconstruction of the economic system on a European and a world scale our civilization is doomed. The struggle of blind forces and unbridled interests must be replaced by the rule of reason, of plan, of conscious organization.

For Europe economic unification is a question of life and death. The accomplishment of this task belongs, however, not to the present governments but to the popular masses, led by the proletariat. Europe must become Socialist United States if it is not to become the cemetery of the old culture. A socialist Europe will proclaim the full independence of the colonies, establish friendly economic relations with them and, step by step, without the slightest violence, by means of example and collaboration, introduce them into a world socialist federation. The USSR liberated from its own ruling caste will join the European federation which will help it to reach a higher level. The economy of the unified Europe will function as one whole. The question of state borders will

provoke as few difficulties as now the question of administrative divisions inside a country. Borders inside the new Europe will be determined in relation to language, and national culture by free decisions of the populations involved.

Will this seem utopian to the "realistic" politicians? To cannibals in their time the giving up of human flesh was utopian.

The Future of the United States

QUESTION: Does dictatorship of the proletariat necessarily mean the surrender of the civil rights as embodied in the Bill of Rights of the United States, and of course, including freedom of speech, press, assembly and religion? Do you believe that there is a middle ground between capitalism, as we know it in the United States, and communism, as you would envision it in the United States?

QUESTION: You have said that the Kremlin fears war because that war is likely to be followed by another revolution of the masses. Would you elaborate on this?

ANSWER: Permit me to answer these two questions together. Will the United States enter the revolutionary road? When and how? In order to approach the theme correctly I will begin with a preliminary question: Will the United States intervene in the war?

In his recent prophetic speech combining the language of Wall Street with the language of the Apocalypse, Mr. Hoover predicted that on the fields of gory Europe two horsemen will triumph in the end: hunger and pestilence. The former president recommended that the United States remain aloof from the European insanity in order at the last moment to tip the scale with their economic might. This recommendation is not original. All great powers not yet involved in the war would like to use their unexhausted resources when accounts are settled. Such is the policy of Italy. Such is the policy of the Soviet Union in spite of the war with Finland. Such is the policy of Japan in spite of the undeclared war against China. Such is, in fact, the present policy of the United States. But will it be possible to maintain this policy for long?

If the war develops to the end; if the German army has successes—and it will have really great successes; if the specter of German rule over Europe will arise as a real danger, the government of the United States will then have to decide: to remain aloof, permitting Hitler to assimilate new conquests, multiply the German technique on the raw materials from the conquered colonies and prepare German domination over the entire planet; or to intervene in the course of the war to help clip the wings of German imperialism. I, least of all, am fit to give advice to the present governments; I am simply trying to analyze the objective situation and to draw conclusions from this analysis. I think that before the indicated alternative even the former head of the American Relief Administration will reject his own program of neutrality: it is impossible to possess with impunity the most powerful industry, more than two-thirds of the world's gold reserve and ten millions of unemployed.

Once the United States, as I think, intervenes in the war, possibly even this year, they will have to bear all its consequences. The more serious of them is the explosive character of the further political development.

QUESTION: What do you understand by this?

ANSWER: On February 10, President Roosevelt warned the American Youth Congress against radicalism, advising it to improve the existing institutions, little by little, year by year.

Such a procedure undoubtedly would be the best, most advantageous, most economical, if . . . it were realizable. Unfortunately "the existing institutions" in the entire world are not improving year by year but deteriorating. The democratic institutions become not perfected but decomposed and cede their place to fascism. And this is not due to an accident or to the light-mindedness of the youth. Capitalist monopolies, having corroded the middle classes, are devouring the democracies. Monopolies themselves were a result of private ownership of the means of production. Private ownership, having once been the source of progress, came into contradiction with modern technique and is now the cause of crisis, wars, national persecutions and reactionary dictatorships. The liquidation of the private ownership of the means of production is the central historical task of our epoch and will guarantee the birth of a new, more harmonious society. The act of birth, daily observation teaches us, is never a "gradual" process but a biological revolution.

You ask whether an intermediate organization between capitalism and communism is possible. German and Italian fascism were attempts of such an organization. But in reality fascism only brought the most repulsive characteristics of capitalism to a most beastly expression. Another sample of the intermediate system was the New Deal. Did this experiment succeed? I think not; first the number of unemployed has seven zeros; the 60 Families are more powerful than ever before. And most important there is not the slightest hope that an *organic* improvement is possible on this road. The market, banks, stock exchange, trusts decide and the government only adjusts itself to them by means of belated palliatives. History teaches us that revolution is prepared on this road.

It would be a great mistake to think the socialist revolution in Europe or America will be accomplished after the pattern of backward Russia. The fundamental tendencies will, of course, be similar. But the forms, methods, the "temperature" of the struggle, all this has, in each case, a national character. By anticipation it is possible to establish the following law: The more countries in which the capitalist system is broken, the weaker will be the resistance offered by the ruling classes in other countries, the less sharp a character the socialist revolution will assume, the less violent forms the proletarian dictatorship will have, the shorter it will be, the sooner the society will be reborn on the basis of a new, more full, more perfect and humane democracy. In any case, no revolution can infringe on the Bill of Rights as much as imperialist war and the fascism which it will engender.

Socialism would have no value if it should not bring with it, not only the juridical inviolability but also the full safeguarding of all the interests of the human personality. Mankind would not tolerate a totalitarian abomination of the Kremlin pattern. The political regime of the USSR is not a new society, but the worst caricature of the old. With the might of the techniques and organizational methods of the United States; with the high well-being which planned economy could assure there to all citizens, the socialist regime in your country would signify from the beginning the rise of independence, initiative and creative power of the human personality.

QUESTION: You have asserted that a privileged class in Russia today rules the Soviet Union. Who are they and how are they privileged? Would you compare these people to persons in the United States?

ANSWER: The regime of bourgeois democracy came into

being through a series of revolutions; it is sufficient to recall the history of France. Some of these revolutions had a social character, that is, they liquidated the feudal ownership in favor of the bourgeois; others had a purely political character, that is, while maintaining the bourgeois forms of ownership, they changed the system of governing. The proletarian revolution, at least in a backward and isolated country, is also more complicated than it was possible to imagine *a priori*. The October revolution had a social and political character, it changed the economic basis of society and constructed a new state system. In general and on the whole the new economic base is preserved in the USSR, though in a deteriorated form. The political system on the contrary has entirely degenerated: the beginnings of Soviet democracy were strangled by the totalitarian bureaucracy. Under these conditions a political revolution under the banner of a new democracy on the basis of the planned economy is a historical inevitability.

Hitler's Coming War Against the USSR

QUESTION: What do you think of Litvinov's future with the USSR since the Kremlin's change of policy from collective security to cooperation with Germany?

ANSWER: I have never considered the future of Mr. Litvinov. He wasn't an independent political figure, but an intelligent and able functionary of the diplomatic corps. Was he familiarized with the fact that under the cover of speeches about the "united front of the democracies" the negotiations with Hitler were conducted? I am not certain about this but it is quite possible. In any case it would not contradict Litvinov's political physiognomy. Whether he will be preserved for some new appointment or whether he will be physically liquidated as a scapegoat for some of Stalin's failures, is a question important for Litvinov himself, but not of political interest.

QUESTION: Do you think probable an alliance of capitalist countries against the USSR?

ANSWER: Recently the ex-Kaiser Wilhelm raised his program: "The parties in the war should cease operations and unify their forces in order to aid Finland. They should make a united front to cleanse the world and civilization of Bolshevism." Nobody, of course, is obliged to take the ex-Kaiser too seriously. But in this case he expresses with commendable frankness what others think and prepare. Mussolini does not hide his designs in this respect. London and Paris strive to acquire the friendship of Mussolini at the expense of the USSR. Washington sends its plenipotentiary to Rome. The president of the United States, according to his own words, does not wish to remain neutral in the Soviet-Finnish War: he defends Finland and religion. Sumner Welles has the task of consulting England, France, Italy and Germany, but not the Soviet Union; this means consultation—against the Soviet Union. Consequently there is no lack of forces striving to prepare a crusade against the USSR. "The defense of Finland" is the mathematical center around which the corresponding forces group themselves.

The difficulty of this tendency consists in the fact that only Hitler can wage a serious war against the USSR. Japan could play thereby a supplementary role. However at present the German armed forces are directed against the west. In this sense the program of the ex-Kaiser is not for the immediate. But if the war lasts—and the war will last; if the United States intervenes—and it will intervene; if Hitler encounters insuperable difficulties on his road—and he will inevitably encounter them, then the program of the ex-Kaiser will surely be placed on the order of the day.

From what I said above, you will see clearly where I stand in relation to this grouping of forces: on the side of the USSR entirely and unconditionally; before all—against imperialism of all labels; after that—against the Kremlin oligarchy which facilitates with its foreign policy the preparation of the march against the USSR and with its domestic policy debilitates the Red Army.

February 14, 1940.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Brazil Enters the War

Brazil is a "democracy" where there are no elections and the former Congress is now occupied by the Goebbelitos of the Department of Information, Press and Propaganda; where hundreds of political prisoners languish in jails and concentration camps; where labor, denied independent unions by police guns, is *gleichgeschaltet* into the equivalent of the Nazi Labor Front. The "crusade of the democracies" has a new Paladin: dictator Getulio Vargas, who on a battleship in Rio harbor, the day after Roosevelt's "stab-in-the-back" speech at Charlottesville, greeted the Italian entry into the war in his own inimitable way, commenting:

"Virile peoples must follow the line of their aspirations instead of standing still and gazing at a structure which is crumbling down. . . . We are marching toward a future different from all we know in economic, political, and social organization, and we feel that old systems and anti-

quoted formulas have entered a decline. It is the beginning of a new era."

The nature of the Vargas regime has been officially described by Vargas's theoretician and apologist, Francisco Campos, author of the 1937 Constitution under which Vargas is now ruling, in the volume *O Estado Nacional* ("The National State"). It merits a moment's examination. "The Brazilian State," says Campos in a typically fascist mystification, "while thoroughly democratic, is also totalitarian." Considering "democracy stagnant and totalitarianism progressing rapidly over the entire world," Campos declares: "There is not a country which is not seeking its man of destiny, no people which is not clamoring for a Caesar." Campos dismisses democracy as a "fantasy which no longer has a place in the world of today." The U.S. presidential campaigns he describes as "four months of political licentiousness." He adds as a clincher: "Parliamentary institutions in public life are today so much garbage, destitute of political significance . . .

a parliamentary hall today has about the same influence as a museum."

Here indeed is a sepulchre of democracy big and black enough to keep the Stalinist whitewashers busy for some time. The Stalinists are themselves of course illegal and viciously persecuted in Brazil. But they will conveniently forget their own one-time hero, Luis Carlos Prestes, who since his 1935 putsch has been rotting in the jails of their new "democratic" ally.

Washington Made Him

Vargas is Washington's man, and has been from the beginning. In his surprisingly frank book, *Good Neighbors*, Hubert Herring reveals Washington's support of Vargas, against the wishes of the wretched workers and peasants, and even of sectors of the bourgeoisie. "A Brazilian business leader of unassailed character," he reports, when asked by him what the U. S. could do for Brazil, answered "with an emphatic 'Nothing! Do nothing now. Withhold all loans, all credits, all cooperation from Vargas. Starve him. . . . He cannot survive six months without the aid of the United States.' I asked his opinion

of the Export-Import loan of \$20,000,000. . . 'It is a grievous blunder. You simply help keep Vargas in power. . . ' I asked what he thought of the credits secured by Aranha in 1939. 'Washington simply propped up Vargas. Without that help, he would have fallen by now. . . It is as immoral and disastrous to help Vargas as it would have been to finance Hitler as he built his machine against the democracies of Europe. . . Vargas cannot last six months without Washington. . . ' So, concludes Herring, "Washington has chosen to cooperate with Getulio Vargas."

Apart from the \$20,000,000 mentioned above, the March 1939 agreements lent this totalitarian despot nearly \$120,000,000, and in early March of the present year, he received another \$100,000,000 credit. On the last-mentioned credit, the "Latin American Bulletin" of *Time* magazine pointedly noted: "Bulk of the money will be spent in the U.S. for industrial equipment of many types." \$19,200,000 of the first amount was earmarked for "liquidating blocked commercial accounts." In every case, Yankee imperialism is getting the cream.

Arthur Krock, in his August 26 column in the *New York Times*, writes:

"A Washington official who has been closely connected with the trends of policy in Brazil gave the following outline to this correspondent today:

"The entrance of Brazil into the war against the Axis is a first-magnitude triumph of the President's Good Neighbor policy as pursued by Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Under-Secretary Sumner Welles. President Vargas's effective endorsement of it can be traced to several factors: well-laid foundations of the policy at several Pan-American gatherings, notably the most recent one, at Rio de Janeiro; the recognition of President Vargas's regime by the State Department when it began; the refusal of Washington to oppose the totalitarian forms of government he introduced and Mr. Welles's sympathetic public discussion of these. . . ."

Brazil's formal entry was as foregone a conclusion as it was in the last war, when Brazil was the only South American country to enter.

At present writing it is not yet wholly clear why Vargas and his Yankee puppet-masters chose precisely this moment to make Brazil's long-standing belligerency formal.

In this connection, another statement in Campos's *O Estado Nacional* is pertinent: "It is necessary to keep the masses in a permanent state of excitement so that at any moment they can be transformed from a latent state of violence into an effective force to be used in crushing any attempt to break down the unity of political command by the Dictator. . . . This explains why totalitarian states must divert their internal political tension into international tension." On such a diversion Vargas has now embarked.

A formal state of Brazilian belligerency may have been desired on account of Wash-

ington's military-strategic plans. Argentina already has serious cause for future worry in the heavy concentration of bombers in Brazil, both those which are openly U. S. and those whose wings bear Brazilian targets. The Yankee stooges of the Vargas bureaucracy regularly demand that French Guiana be taken over. And a United Press dispatch from Vichy on August 26 reported the Paris press accusing Brazil of having "suggested to Portugal that Brazilian and U. S. troops occupy the Azores and Cape Verde Islands . . ." which would give the Anglo-U. S. bloc a southern stepping-stone similar to Iceland in the north.

One thing is certain: the open entry of Brazil into the war was not taken at the demand of or for the benefit of the groaning Brazilian people, its millions and millions of agricultural peons slaving under semi-feudal conditions, or its millions of ill-paid city workers.

Canada

From Canada we receive word of progress by the Fourth Internationalist movement there. Modest gains in membership are being made in spite of conditions of illegality, arbitrary imprisonment without trial and restrictions of free speech and press. We can hope the growth represents the beginning of a process of recovery from the blows the Canadian Trotskyists received at the hands of the government since the beginning of the war.

The strengthening of the organization takes place primarily in British Columbia and the far western districts of Canada. This region is the traditional stronghold of working-class radicalism in the Dominion.

The political labor movement in British Columbia is represented mainly by the reformist Cooperative Commonwealth Federation. While the CCF is strong throughout the western part of Canada and has had some electoral success even as far east as Ontario, its center is in British Columbia.

The CCF was born during the depression which began in 1929. It is founded on trade unions but also has residential clubs. The power of the organization in British Columbia can be gauged by the fact that in the last elections it polled a total of more than 150,000 votes out of a total population of about three-quarters of a million. It is now the second party in the province.

In relation to the war it takes a position that can be termed social-chauvinist. They support the war, but with a certain reserve, criticism and dubiousness. During the recent vote on conscription, for example, the CCF advocated the "conscription of wealth" as well as men. What was meant by this is not clear, even to the leaders of the organization. But the fact that the CCF made this reservation brought it a torrent of abuse from the Stalinists. The latter (often from prisons where they had been put by the Canadian government during the previous "anti-

war" period which ended with the invasion of the Soviet Union) demanded full and unconditional support to the Canadian government in the prosecution of the war.

The choicest Stalinist epithets (including that of "Trotskyist") were reserved for the left wing of the CCF. The left wing is quite strong within the organization. One of its spokesmen is Colin Cameron, a member of the provincial legislature. It claims to advocate a socialist solution to the problems of the war and fascism: for the war, but also for socialism.

Its position may be better understood if we quote an extract from a speech Cameron made at the last conference of the CCF in the spring of this year. He said:

"It is my profound conviction, shared I hope, by all the movement, that only by the adoption of socialist methods can we hope to achieve victory and at the same time preserve (or should I say 'achieve') a democratic framework for our society. . . . Our party remains the only body to discharge the responsibility of driving home the lesson that victory requires a total war effort and a total war effort requires socialism—unless we are prepared to accept fascism in its stead."

The left wing of the CCF represents the state of mind of tens of thousands of workers and dirt farmers of western Canada, who hate fascism and capitalism with every fibre and yet cannot see any way out except to support the war. The very course of the war will aid these workers to see the truth of the point of view of the Marxists. We can expect that the Fourth Internationalists in Canada will strengthen their organization and be able to develop in these workers a clearer understanding of the problems of the working class and their socialist duty.

Mexico

Just arrived here is the full text of the speech to the National Council of the C.T.M., Stalinist-controlled Mexican trade union center, by Lombardo Toledano, titular head of the purely titular Federation of Workers of Latin America. He is visibly distressed by the "leftist" misunderstandings in the ranks concerning the true nature of "national unity." These leftists must be disabused *pronto* of the notion that "national unity" is just a temporary tactic of the working class, a lesser evil necessitated by circumstances. Toledano chooses his words with care and they are of an exemplarily crude clarity:

"This is an error. . . . All the proposed solutions are solutions tending to associate, on a platform of national unity, the interests of the exploited classes with the interests of the exploiting class."

You didn't get it? Toledano will make it simpler and clearer yet:

"National unity . . . consists in the unity of the revolutionaries with the reactionaries."

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