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TWOPENCE

NORWAYS' "FIFTH COLUMN"

The swiftness and efficiency with which German imperialism invaded Denmark and seized key points in Norway has compelled the reluctant admiration of its bitterest enemies. But leaking through the news come hints which show that this initial success owes more to treachery in the invaded countries than to "brilliant staff-work" by the invaders.

The question as to which group of imperialist bandits was technically the first to invade and to violate neutrality is of no importance to socialists. The Altmark incident and the laying of mines in Norwegian territorial waters by the Allies, the obviously well planned entry by Germany, the obviously well-matured counter campaign of the Allies, all prove that

both sides systematically prepared to transform Scandinavia into their battlefield.

For the bourgeois governments who have the misfortune to exist in the small neutral no-man's-land between the belligerents there is also no touchstone to distinguish aggressor from protector. But in any case the bourgeoisie in these countries, like their class brothers the world over, have no interest in fine distinctions of international law. They are concerned solely with the retention of their profits. And for them, patriotism has significance only when it serves to protect those privileges and profits.

At dawn on April 9th the invasion of Denmark was commenced. By 6.45 p.m.

the German High Command was able to report that practically the whole country had been occupied. Confronted with a fait accompli, the Danish bourgeoisie was offered a bargain: to accept the "protection" of the Reich accompanied by black-out, cutting of communications, commandeering of supplies, rationing and traffic curfew, and to receive in return certain safeguards, namely the autonomy of Denmark with retention of its own currency, continued maintenance of Danish armed forces, and payment for requisitioned material. In brief, if they surrendered national rights, they would be permitted to retain property rights.

King and Premier spoke for the ruling class when they called on the people not to resist. But the soldiers, a cross-section of the popular masses, who had been fed for years on patriotic phrases about defence of the homeland, resistance to invasion, war of defence, and so forth, began to put up a resistance and instances are reported where soldiers had to be compelled to cease firing on the invaders at the muzzle of the officers' revolvers.

No less bewildered than the soldiers, the public on the streets jibed bitterly at them: "our defenders", etc. The soldiers hang their heads. The authorities appeal to the populace not to jeer at the army. The bourgeoisie busily figures out its accounts at the newly arranged rate of one Reichmark to two kroner.

German imperialism expected and prepared for a similar reaction in Norway. But it is clear that here the ruling class faltered, their panic-stricken government fled and the state authority was at the crucial moment abandoned. On the one hand the hirelings of German imperialism stepped forward to make the attempt to seize control. On

the other hand, the masses, and in particular the soldiers, taking seriously the slogans of defence of the homeland, spontaneously surged forward, in spite of authorities and officers, to repel the invasion. It was not until the day following the commencement of the onslaught that the Norwegian government took sufficient courage from the stand made by the people to declare its own attitude towards the action taken by Germany.

In a series of dispatches from correspondents to American papers is disclosed the extent to which the Norwegian ruling class was prepared to follow in the footsteps of Denmark's rulers in casting overboard its hypocritical "patriotism" in order to save its privileges and its profits. In those areas where the impact was first felt and where defensive measures were entirely in the hands of the authorities, mines were disconnected to allow the passage of German warships, warships were ordered not to resist and to disarm and land their men on "orders, ostensibly from Prof. Koht," ports were surrendered to small handfuls of troops. A case is made out for the creation by the Germans of a nation-wide network of Quislings who sought to "betray into German hands" the entire country.

But all that is indicated by these items is that on the first day of the invasion the German forces met with much the same spineless capitulation in Norway as in Denmark. The only orders issued were the "cease fire" and "preserve calm." The government now hints darkly at forgery, treachery, "quisling." But confirmation is not lacking of the clash that took place between the officers and the lower ranks over the order to capitulate.

Thus, the TIMES of April 18th publish-

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es in its Stockholm correspondent's despatch: "Today the Stockholm newspapers publish a report from their correspondents on the frontier that a Norwegian captain was shot by a young subaltern when he gave orders to the troops not to resist." This one incident epitomises the situation that arose in Norway when the invasion began.

When it is noticed today that German forces, small in number, widely scattered and with dangerously tenuous lines of communication are nevertheless presenting the Allied and Norwegian forces with serious problems and are firmly holding the points they have seized, the question immediately springs to mind: if these important strategic points can be held with such small garrisons under severe difficulties, why did not the Norwegian garrisons succeed in holding them in the first place against the German attack? The answer is contained in a series of items that have penetrated through the propaganda mists.

Thus, the TIMES correspondent, April 17th: ".....200 men of the crew of the Tordenskjold, the most powerful Norwegian warship stationed in Southern Norway, were ordered to march ashore and into the adjoining woods just before the German ships steamed up the (Oslo) Fjord. Only 15 men were left on board. Although the mine-layers, Olav Tryggvason and Froya, opened fire and sank several German ships and virtually stopped the whole squadron, the commander of the fort at Horten ordered the white flag to be hoisted.

Messages from the frontier quote escaped sailors as saying that treasonable surrender was also the cause of the fall of the Rauer Fort on the east side of Oslo Fjord. The commander ordered the white flag to be hoisted

on the ground that he had no ammunition. The garrison (so the sailors say) knew that supplies of munitions had arrived a few days earlier, and demanded to be allowed to fight; but the commander refused."

In this way, also, five Germans occupied the railway station at Kongsvinger. Two captured the post office. The fortress of Frederiksten was occupied by a German officer commanding six men. According to eyewitness accounts, ports were taken with mere patrols.

In striking contrast to the behaviour of the professional defenders of the homeland, the government and the military chiefs, stand the record of the soldiers who fought even though ammunition had mysteriously disappeared and the workers who fought with them. The press account of the four bus drivers who deliberately drove over a precipice while transporting enemy troops from Oslo indicates the measure of the heroic self sacrifice which the Norwegian workers are ready to bring to a cause which they feel, rightly or wrongly, to be a just one.

The White Paper issued by the Norwegian Government was an attempt to explain its remarkable inaction in the face of the German offensive, to conceal its own treacherous role before the Norwegian people. But the truth emerges that the "Fifth Column" was headed by the Government of Norway and included all who had property and privileges to guard. It was defeated only by the spontaneous action of the people themselves, the workers, peasants and soldiers in the ranks. The white flags were already hoisted, the forts abandoned when popular resistance frustrated the sellers-out, forced them to cross sides and to declare war on the imperialists who were

the first technically to invade.

For German imperialism, the hope that Norway would follow on Denmark's example has been disappointed. Allied imperialism gnashes its teeth at the march stolen on them by the foe and at the "treachery" by means of which it was accomplished. Both sides have now the opportunity to vent their spleen by blasting the country off the map. The sacred property which the Norwegian ruling class sought to save by handing over practically all harbours, airports and railway termini to the Nazi protector, is now all the more savagely destroyed through that false step. They popularised all too energetically the slogan "Defend the Fatherland," and the masses translated it into action in spite of them.

The British bourgeoisie too, confronted with the choice of fatherland or property, would turn defeatist the instant it was convinced that its profits could be better safeguarded that way. Nevertheless, having labelled the treachery of their Norwegian counterparts as "Fifth Column - Quisling!"

they attempt to stick those same labels on to all who oppose the war in Britain, and they rise to sublime heights of impudence when they attempt to include revolutionary working class opponents of their war in this category.

The example of Norway has served to show what the "patriotism" of the ruling class is worth when put to the test. Sweden, Holland, the Balkan states are shudderingly awaiting their turn. They too will provide further examples of the utter hollowness of ruling class solicitude for the integrity of the "national heritage"; their championing of the defence of their neutrality will be exposed as a deception of the people.

In the small nations as in the great the ruling class is concerned solely with the integrity of its property and the defence of its profits. As the war deepens and widens this fact will obtrude itself ever more glaringly on the tortured masses. And they will draw from it the right conclusions.

Transport House maids

Just a quarter of a century ago last month and in identical circumstances to those pertaining today, the brave, German revolutionary, Rosa Luxemburg wrote:

"Either the class struggle is the imperative law of proletarian existence also during war..... or the class struggle is a crime against national interests and the safety of the fatherland also in time of peace."

This profound statement retains its forcefulness today in the second world war.

An examination of the "home front" battle reveals that during the first three weeks in April, six industrial strikes have been reported involving some 1,500 workers. Of these disputes three were for improved conditions and three to demand the reinstatement of dismissed workers who had been victimised for militancy.

Nor were disputes confined to industry. They penetrated the Civil Defence Services and the farm. In West Ham the A.R.P. vehicle drivers struck over the question of wages and hours and on a large farm in Cambridgeshire

the workers struck for the reinstatement of a dismissed worker.

A peculiar feature of these episodes is the proportion of solidarity strikes. And this factor influenced further militant activity. When a girl canteen worker at Westlands Aircraft Factory was sacked for joining a trade union, the aircraft workers forced her reinstatement upon her employers by boycotting the canteen. Perhaps the most peculiar incident of this character was the demand of 5,000 Vickers-Armstrong workers for the reinstatement of a manager to whom they were particularly partial.

Again on the question of economic demands and working conditions; the Glasgow bus and tram men are demanding strike action to enforce a revision of the existing schedules. North Woolwich engineers and West London L.P.T.B workers placed a ban on overtime on account of grievances, and when the heating system broke down in a Luton engineering factory, so strong was the demand for heating that the management provided the workers with hot coffee.

Activity on the proletarian front, during April also includes the fighting of two by-elections and decisions to fight two further ones: East Renfrew, where the I.L.P. has nominated Annie Maxton and the Pollock division of Glasgow where the divisional Labour Party is sponsoring a "stop the war" candidate, Mr. John Nicolson. One of the promising moves made by the organised masses recently is, however, the establishment of a provisional co-ordinating committee to unite the efforts of the shop stewards in the engineering and allied trades throughout the whole of great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In the class enemy camp plans for a

counter offensive are being carefully prepared. Parallel with the developing militancy of the impoverished toilers, the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie carefully geared to the tempo of events, commences slowly but none the less surely to revolve. As yet little use has been made of the E.P.A. but it is not on the statute book for the purpose of ornamentation. The Ministry of Labour has issued a new order to provide for an industrial census and this is already being applied in the engineering, boilermaking and aircraft industries. As the National Register was a prelude to military conscription, so is this act a prelude to industrial conscription. The Minister of Labour announced in the House of Commons on April 16th that, in order to recruit semi and unskilled workers for industrial training, "if necessary we shall use full compulsory powers.

Many and varied are the methods of the most cunning ruling class in history to suppress working class militancy. The Motherwell U.A.B. informed an unemployed worker that if he persisted in selling the DAILY WORKER they would consider registering this as an occupation (thus rendering him ineligible for benefit). In the City of London fourteen A.R.P. men were dismissed for complaining of their conditions. Under the legal pretext of "obstruction" the police constantly hound left-wing and pacifist literature sellers from Marble Arch, London and frequent arrests are made. A similar legal manoeuvre was employed to prevent the "stop the war" candidate from holding a factory gate meeting during the Battersea by-election. A useful gauge of the extent to which such procedure will go is the action of the Australian Government who are utilising the censorship regulations to prevent Communist Party papers and all papers

and journals "with a predominantly Marxist interpretation of social history" from printing "news of the war, recruiting and training of troops, Russia and its Government, any strike within the Empire or in any Allied country, and any industrial unrest, real or imaginary."

While the examples previously quoted could be reinforced with numerous others, the bourgeois class offensive in Britain has not yet extended beyond the preparatory stages. As Hitler made his preparations in Norway, so his equally corrupt and ruthless counterparts here are operating in the proletarian ranks. The "Fifth Column" of Chamberlain and Churchill, the occupants of the luxurious offices in Transport House are performing their task faithfully by isolating the Stalinists and militant workers and testing the reactions of organised labour to their foul machinations.

For leading the workers in a Watford printshop in a ban on overtime, contrary to an E.C. decision, two local N.A.T.S.O.P.A. officials have been barred for life from holding official positions in the union. The London Trades Council Executive is attempting to bar political resolutions from the agenda of the Council meetings. A Manchester Labour Councillor has been threatened with expulsion for acting as Chairman at a DAILY WORKER rally.

Following on the heels of the disaffiliation of the Hampstead Labour Party, the expulsion of Mr. D.N. Pritt and the proscription of the Militant Labour League and Russia Today Society (the former, incidentally, an anti-Stalinist revolutionary grouping) comes the disaffiliation of the anti-war Pollock (Glasgow) Divisional Labour Party, and the University Labour Federation. Because it is "dominated

by Stalinists and "Trotskyists", the Sheffield Trades Council is suffering the same fate. The Indian Stalinist, Krishna Menon, has been removed by the Dundee Executive from the Labour parliamentary candidature, and Labour League of Youth members are being forbidden by Transport House to sell the anti-Stalinist, anti-war, revolutionary paper YOUTH FOR SOCIALISM.

These moves apparently trivial when isolated but important when correlated together with numerous others, are accompanied by a press campaign, rabid on the part of the yellower section of the gutter press, tentative in the case of the DAILY TELEGRAPH and the TIMES against the "fifth column" a category which covers all anti-war and defeatist elements. This question was also raised in the House of Commons on April 25th.

This brief sketch of the recent movements on the class front reveals as yet no encounter of any magnitude between the rival forces. The increasing pauperisation of the masses, now being aggravated by the increase in travelling costs and the additional burdens imposed by the latest budget, must inevitably produce reactions on the part of the enslaved toilers which in turn will necessitate counter-measures by the oppressors.

Unlike their enemy and their ally, the British bourgeoisie has not, as yet, been forced by economic necessity to stake its last on totalitarianism. With a reserve industrial army of over 1,200,000 and a Labour and Trade Union bureaucracy operating on their behalf, the rulers in Britain have not had need to resort to any marked degree to their official Gestapo to defend them against attacks on their wealth and privileges from the masses. But in the class war as in the imperialist

war a prolonged deadlock is impossible

The oppressed and exploited masses in all the belligerent countries have a common task, that of defeating the enemy at home - the exploiting class. The British proletariat retains, in the remnants of capitalist democracy, a weapon absent from the armoury of

the workers in the other belligerent countries. To allow the bourgeoisie to wrest this from our grasp would be criminal. With the example of France before us we must begin our offensive against the bureaucracy of the labour and trade union leaderships. "The class struggle is the imperative law of proletarian existence also during war..." The main enemy is at home.

Testing Time in France

The incalculable weight of the mechanised might of totalitarian war puts an added strain on modern capitalist society which reveals its every weakness. At no point in the international system of imperialism have such cracks appeared as in France.

The whole position of France as a great imperialist power is entirely incommensurate with its actual resources and capacities. Ever since the last war it has gradually undergone a process of slow subjection to British and American capitalism.

The worsened conditions associated with this led to the historic wave of working class militancy of 1936 which was so foully betrayed by the "Socialists" and Stalinists. Between January and June of that year the membership of the French Trade Union Federation soared from 1,300,000 to 5,000,000. There can be no doubt that, given a correct revolutionary lead, the French workers would have pressed on to a political struggle for power.

With the betrayal, however, the wave receded and the way was left open for the ruling class, with the war partly as its reason and partly as its excuse, to launch a series of attacks on the conditions of the workers which are unique in their intensity and fury

In the first place, the four and a half million men who have been called to arms are being paid at the rate of a penny a day. The pittance given to wife and three children is 17/- a week¹. These rates are far below even the 2/- a day that is paid to British soldiers and the 36/- due to a wife and three children. The 1/- a day which the French soldier is supposed to receive when at the front is, in fact, withheld under the plea that it is only to be paid to men facing danger in actual service.

The conditions of the workers in the factories is little better than those of the soldiers. As the "Economist" of April 20th, says, "The sacrifices made by soldiers set the standard for the treatment of civilians far more in France than in Britain. Levies and taxation take a heavy toll of the incomes even of the poorest, and consumption is kept stringently down." That is an understatement of the position.

Wages have been ruthlessly kept down, hours have been increased until, in defence factories, 72 hours per week is the lot of the French worker. All French workers are under military jurisdiction and are liable to instant call up. Their wages have been fixed at the September level and may not be increased without the permission of

the Minister of Labour.

Taxation has increased to such an extent that, whereas the taxation payable on an income of £200 a year in Britain is £12.5.0, in France it is £26.8.0. In other words, 6% is payable in Britain against 13% in France. In the matter of overtime the incredible position has been reached where there is a 40% levy on wages received for all the hours which are worked over 40 per week.

Dilution goes ahead at an unprecedented rate. Already there are 300,000 women working in arms factories at reduced rates, and the number is rising daily. In munition factories directly controlled by the Government 30% of the workers are women. In some of the privately controlled factories the proportion is as much as 60%. The wages they are receiving are admitted in the British press to be extremely low, but this is attributed in these quarters to the anxiety of the working women of France to make sacrifices in the national cause. A decree passed on February 28th empowered the Government to "mobilise all women for war work, to compel their registration and employ them compulsorily." This power has not been used yet, but there can be no doubt that once the war starts in earnest, compulsory mobilisation of women for work in factories will be enforced.

Side by side with this industrial repression goes the campaign against all "anti-war" and pro working class elements in the political field. Reviewing the action taken against the Communist Party, M.Sarraut announced on March 20th that 300 Communist Municipal Councillors had been suspended, 2,778 others deprived of their seats, 159 organs (including HUMANITE and CE SOIR) suppressed, 620 syndicates and 675 party associations dissolved, and 3,400 militant communists arrested.

The pretence is maintained in this country that it is only the Stalinists who are being persecuted, and that the reason is not their championing of working-class rights but their link with Soviet Russia which, in turn, is linked with Germany through the Soviet German Pact. The wholesale arrests of Fourth Internationalists, whose allegiance is to the working class and not to Stalin, gives the lie to this. The campaign is aimed not simply at the Stalinists but at every organisation around which the French ruling class considers the discontent and growing militancy of the workers may crystallise.

In this they have the support of the Blums and Jouhaux who stand ready to direct the explosive energy of the workers into safe reformist channels which have been so useful in the past. The construction of the Reynaud Government with its greater percentage of Socialists than its Daladier predecessor is proof of the faith which the capitalist class places in its reformist servants to keep the workers in order.

It would be foolish to imagine that Blum and Jouhaux on the one hand and the Stalinists on the other have been completely discredited by the Popular Front fiasco and by the recent twists of the second group. Each can still lay the blame on the other. The Socialists can point out that the policy of the Communist Party today means victory for Hitler, demanding as it does, a negotiated peace. The Stalinists can demonstrate that the sacrifices which the Socialists are calling on the workers to make are being made in the interests of the ruling class.

Undoubtedly, each section has the possibility of increasing its support in the coming period. Their betrayals

have been great but they can still manage to talk their way out of them and promise great things for the future. Their words, however, can never be translated into action.

When the workers put these words to the test and discover that the demagogues who utter them cannot lead them out of the morass of capitalism, they will

turn to the road of revolution.

It may well be that the French workers will be the first in all Europe to take this road of revolutionary struggle against capitalist oppression. The most urgent need of the day is to ensure that when the time comes the revolutionary party will be strong both in France and in this country to lead the workers to success.

British Labour and India

The basis of imperialist rule over colonial peoples is force. To this the Chamberlain government is no exception. The extensive application of the Defence Regulations, the arrests of hundreds of revolutionary workers, Congress Socialists, Stalinists, militant trade unionists and even of petty bourgeois nationalists and the savage sentences meted out in many cases, such as life imprisonment for making a speech, have been extensively dealt with in previous issues of this paper.

The wave of repression waging throughout India is the greatest refutation of the imperialists' plea that the only obstacle to India's obtaining freedom is disunity among the Indians. The Secretary of State for India, Zetland, stated recently that the British Government cannot divest itself of its responsibility towards the minorities in India and consequently until these minorities were agreeable, not even Dominion status was possible for India. Such tender solicitude for minorities is indeed touching, particularly when it comes from a band which has never scrupled to ride rough shod over both the minority and the majority when it has suited its own interests. The India Constitution Act of 1935 was

passed in the teeth of the opposition of all sections of Indian political opinion not excluding the Liberal Federation. The minorities assume importance, therefore, only when they are prepared to make themselves tools of the imperialists.

But who are the minorities who are to be protected against the selfish demands of the majority of the Indian people for freedom? The noble Marquis specifically mentions the Moslem League and the Indian Princes. It is a monstrous suggestion that the British working class should line up behind the great landlord princes of India and the reactionary communal leaders on the pretext of defending the interests of the minorities. The so-called "representatives of minority interests" are in reality the creatures of British imperialism. Every worker who has taken part in a strike knows what use is made by the bosses of the black-legs and their alleged right to earn their living. The minority question in India as raised by the National Government is essentially a question of stooges.

The imperialists would never have succeeded in deceiving the British workers as to the real character of imper-

ialist rule in India without the assistance of the labour and trade union leaders. Remember the noble indignation of these gentlemen at Nazi repression in Czechoslovakia and Poland and contrast it with their complete silence over the repression in India. In a recent speech Mr. Greenwood said that he supported the war because Hitlerism meant the suppression of the labour and trade union movement and that in fighting Hitler, he was defending the Labour movement in Nazi ridden countries. While Mr. Greenwood was indulging in his pious lamentations, Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, General Secretary of the Congress Socialist Party which stands on the same level of reformism as the British Labour Party, was being put in prison. Not a word has been uttered in protest by the Labour bureaucracy. They say they are not fighting this war for imperialist profits but for a new world order rid of Hitlerism and Imperialism. But the thinking worker will judge them not by what they say but by what they do. If they are against imperialism, let them denounce both British imperialism and Hitlerism. Let them come out in support not only of the Czech but also the Indian masses.

The debate on India in Parliament revealed that there is no difference whatsoever between the labour leaders and the National Government. This did not surprise us. As early as October 26th, Mr. Wedgwood Benn had declared in the Commons that Labour was not going to quarrel with Chamberlain over India. "It is desirable that we should maintain a united policy on the Indian problem." On April 18th, the same Mr. Wedgwood Benn declared that India was too disunited for self government and that in any case nothing could be done during the war. "We could not legislate during the progress of the war." What Mr. Benn really meant was that

democratic legislation was not possible during the war but that repressive legislation was possible; for on the same night that Mr. Benn spoke, Parliament passed a law vesting supreme power in the hands of the Governors in eight provinces of India.

Any other attitude on the part of the Labour leaders was an impossibility. Since the last world war one European nation after another has gone down under fascism. In Britain the class struggle still remains confined within the framework of the capitalist democratic state. This is made possible principally because of the immense colonial possessions of Britain which enabled the capitalists to carry on without seriously attacking working class standards of living and its rights to organise politically and in trade unions. The Labour and Trade Union bureaucracy, unable to take the road of the socialist revolution which is the only alternative to the eventual triumph of fascism, sees in the perpetuation of the imperialist system a guarantee of immortality. In defending capitalist democracy, they are forced to defend the imperialist system.

The policies of the rest of the non-revolutionary working class parties in this country in relation to the colonial movement present a spectacle to the workers no less uninspiring than that of Transport House. The I.L.P. leaders pride themselves on their anti-imperialist stand, on their denunciations of imperialist methods in the colonies. But how is it possible to reconcile its policy towards the war with its alleged support of the anti-imperialist movement in the colonies. It is not enough to express indignation and horror over the shooting of colonial workers and peasants; one must have a policy. But the I.L.P

policy which is expressed in the slogan, "Stop the War" is based upon the idea of a capitalist peace to be negotiated by the warring imperialist governments. Such a peace, even if it were possible, would obviously be at the expense of the colonial masses and the Czech and the Polish workers and peasants. Messrs. Brockway and Smith are clever enough to realise this. "It is true," says Dr. Smith, "that we are demanding of Chamberlain that he sit down with Hitler and work out a peace settlement. But don't you see that we are calling at the same time for a workers' conference which will sit next door to Chamberlain and Hitler and work out a socialist peace programme which they will press upon the Munich gang." But alas, the erudite Doctor forgets one thing and that is: if you press the capitalists too hard they begin to bite. And if it is not possible to press the capitalist governments to make a socialist peace today when they are fighting among themselves, how will it be possible tomorrow when they will be at peace with one another? Besides, the idea that the workers can "press" the capitalists to abrogate their property rights, their imperialist aims, is so absurd, so comical that it would have caused Homeric laughter in the working class movement if the issues involved were not so serious. Those who stand, genuinely for the ending of colonial slavery can take up only one position, that of revolutionary socialism. Not for a capitalist war, not for a "capitalist peace" but for the international socialist revolution. The pacifism of Messrs. Brockway and Smith has unfortunately landed them in the same camp as that of Hitler-Chamberlain. This is a fact, in spite of the fine frenzy of some of the articles on the colonies in the NEW LEADER.

The policy of the so-called "Communist"

Party and of the Third International in relation to the anti-imperialist movement in India is even more traitorous than that of the I.L.P. because it is more deceptive. The "Popular Front" is now buried among the antiques in the Kremlin. The Stalinist leaders have suddenly become aware of the fact that the "Democrats" of Whitehall have always behaved like Hitler in their own colonial possessions. A considerable number of articles have appeared in the DAILY WORKER denouncing British terror in India and advertising the growing mass opposition to British rule. But let no worker be deceived by this sudden change of front into believing that the Stalinists have become genuine anti-imperialists. Their agitation against the imperialist system is on the same level as that of the I.L.P. "I want to see India independent and free." declared Mr. Gallacher magnanimously in the Commons debate. A noble aspiration, but how is it to be achieved? Can the British workers help to free India by demanding of Chamberlain that he should make peace with Hitler? A peace between Chamberlain and Hitler would have for its motive their joint need to perpetuate world imperialism for another epoch. Only the struggle for the international socialist revolution, for the defeat of both Chamberlain and Hitler at the hands of the international working class can help to free the Indian masses from the chains of imperialist exploitation. Those who are not for the overthrow of imperialism NOW - not in some distant future but NOW are not genuine partisans of the Indian masses but hypocrites and word twisters.

The predominance of reformist and Stalinist ideology in the working class movement in Britain has contributed not a little to the weakness and isolation of the proletarian vanguard

in India and the growth in power and prestige of the reactionary native bourgeoisie as represented by Messrs. Gandhi-Nehru & Co, the leaders of the Indian National Congress. Just as the leaders of the I.R.A. are able to pose as the leaders of the Irish People's struggle for freedom because of the blows which the Irish Socialist movement has received at the hands of the Third International, similarly the tasks of the capitulatory leaders of the Congress has been immensely facilitated by the Stalinist leadership.

The principal tasks of the Stalinists both in India and this country have been to cajole the masses of Indian workers and peasants into accepting the leadership of the Congress leaders, to head off the rising tide of anti-imperialism into the safe channels of Gandhian non-violence and to

fight against the efforts of the advanced section of the workers to build up a revolutionary socialist party which alone can lead the struggle for freedom.

But slowly yet surely revolutionary ideas are coming to the fore in India again. A number of small groups, such as the Bengal Labour Party and the Communist League which originated from revolts inside the Stalinist ranks, testify to the inevitable victory of revolutionary Marxism over all the capitulatory tendencies in the movement for national liberation. To the extent that Marxist ideas, the programme and tactics of the Fourth International, penetrate the working class movement in India, to that extent will India's fight for freedom be strengthened and victory assured.

BELGIAN COMRADES UNDER FIRE

The United Press recently carried the following dispatch from Brussels:

"The Cabinet, which met unexpectedly today, was reported to have discussed means of strengthening legislation against persons disturbing internal order. It was believed that the Cabinet was anxious to suppress the activities of communist agitators who, it was alleged, recently provoked strikes, especially among coal miners!"

The most recent strikes among Belgian miners were those of the Levant de Flenu company in the Borinage region, the traditional stronghold of our Belgian comrades, the Revolutionary Socialist Party (P.S.R.) Several months ago it was reported that the party's legal organ LA LUTTE OUVRIERE had been suppressed and had made its reappearance under the title L'ACTION SOCIAL-

ISTE. The paper had to change from the mining region to Brussels. It is consequently safe to assume that the Cabinet action is directed against our Belgian miner comrades.

Despite all previous attempts to drive them underground, our comrades have shown a remarkable ability to readjust themselves under fire. Their deep roots among the Borinage proletariat have assured the continuity of their work. If their past performance is any indication, they will be able with the aid of their following in the pits to overcome even these latest moves of the government. Their heroic resistance to the war preparations of Belgian capitalism is an example of the vitality of the Fourth International under increasingly difficult conditions.

4th INTERNATIONAL in AUSTRALIA

Our comrades of the Communist League of Australia (Section of the Fourth International) are steadily evincing signs of rapid growth. Their bold, revolutionary work, carried on under war time pressure, is attracting widespread support from a working class which has a tradition of anti-war struggle. The anti-war resolution which was adopted in March by the New South Wales Federation of the Australian Labour Party, despite the rabid opposition of the party's leadership, may be regarded as another indication of the trend.

Recruitment to our ranks from the disillusioned Stalinist party is continuing apace in Australia. The latest number of the MILITANT, official organ of the Communist League, reports that J.N.Rawlings, editor of WORLD PEACE, has broken with Stalinism and endorsed the Fourth International.

Rawlings was a member of the Australian Communist Party for fifteen years. From reserved criticism of the Peoples Front line he developed to the point where, at the outbreak of the war, he openly took issue with the local satrap of the Kremlin, one J.B.Miles, who went so far as to urge "fit and available members" of his party to join up with the army and "to participate in the struggle to defeat the aggressor armies." After several months of increasing conflict with the party leadership, Rawlings was summarily expelled on December 17.

Aside from his journalistic work, which made his name familiar in radical circles throughout the British Empire, Rawlings is the author of the "History of the Australian People" and of numerous pamphlets on economic and historical questions.

Here is an excerpt from a statement issued to the press by Comrade Rawlings after his expulsion:

"With the Comintern attitude, switching now left, now right, towards the war, and with policies spread over years, that led to that attitude, no true Marxism can have anything to do.

"Events have shown that the Third International has followed the path of the Second. But the path of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky is the only path that the workers can follow to their emancipation, and a new, Fourth, International must be built to lead them along it."

Jack Kavanagh and Betty Roland have now publicly declared their stand with the Fourth International. Kavanagh is a former leader of the Communist Party of Australia and Betty Roland is that country's leading playwright. In a statement issued by her and published by the Communist League, Betty Roland says:

"Naturally my disillusion has not been confined to the leadership of the C.P. of Australia, as I realise that events here, as in all sections of the Communist International, have their origin in Moscow. And, while I recognise that the U.S.S.R. is still a workers' state and still retains the principle achievement of the October revolution, i.e., the socialised means of production, nevertheless the present leadership under Joseph Stalin is the enemy of that workers' state, and, unless speedily deposed will certainly bring about the destruction of the gains of October and betray the Soviet Union into the hands of the capitalist class, as they have betrayed the revolutionary cause in so many other parts of the world since they came to power."

REPRESSION IN FRANCE:

REVOLUTIONISTS BREAK WITH P.S.O.P.;

JOIN FORCES WITH 4TH INTERNATIONAL

In a previous issue we reported the arrest of a group of French Trotskyists. Now we learn that two comrades previously arrested, the youth leaders Bourdois and Chuvin of Marseilles, have been sentenced to two years each. Comrade Lucien Weitz, the National Secretary of the Workers and Peasants Socialist Youth League (JSOP) - who had been arrested before the outbreak of the war itself - has had an additional sentence of four years hung on him.

Recently the leaders of even the "moderate" Workers and Peasants Socialist Party (PSOP) - which had "purged" itself shortly before of the revolutionary Minority (including Lucien Weitz, Daniel Guerin and the Trotskyists - have been seized by the Government.

The arrest of the PSOP leaders is, in a sense, ironical. For the latter, a combination of free masons and pacifists, refused to prepare for illegal work and insisted on carrying on as if the war had not broken out and as if

no dictatorial regime, had been installed. In fact, they had voted to expel the revolutionary Minority because the Minority, demanding that the party carry out in action its resolution for revolutionary struggle against war (revolutionary defeatism), adopted at the last convention of the PSOP had pointed out that such action was possible only by illegal means and had proceeded in the localities where it was in control to act accordingly. Even the expulsion of the revolutionary defeatists and all the "legalism" of the free mason leaders of the PSOP could not save them from Dandier's axe.

The revolutionary PSOP Minority, under the leadership of Daniel Guerin - author of the brilliant work, "Fascism and Big Business" - and Lucien Weitz, as well as the Trotskyist comrades who entered that party a year ago, have now joined in a body with the Committees of the Fourth International for joint work and for the building of a united party, on the programme of the Fourth International.