

INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF CRISIS

by Jay Lovestone

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This crisis will sharpen and hasten the political maturing of the antagonisms against the capitalist system in the colonies and make more acute and more explosive the relations, more complicated the entanglements among the big imperialist powers, themselves. The worsening of the economic conditions in the colonial and semi-colonial countries as a result of the crisis will aggravate the relations between the native toiling masses and the rising native bourgeois exploiters in these lands. Thus the crisis will accelerate the tendency towards the native bourgeoisie no longer serving as bearers, leaders, organizers of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in these countries. As a result of this crisis the developing native bourgeoisie will not only be less capable but less willing to fight for capitalist democracy in their own domains.

At the same time the bourgeoisie of the dominant imperialist countries will bring still more pressure on the colonial countries, will whet their rapacious appetites at the expense of the colonial masses. A classic example of this can be seen in the recent feverish attempt of Great Britain to strip India of gold, to strip India of the gold it took the Hindu people centuries of work to obtain (but not own!), only in order to help British imperialism meet certain international obligations and bolster up its currency—the dethroned pound sterling. This intensified pressure against the colonial masses will, of course, bring violent repercussions in these countries, make the social relations there still more unstable.

It is obvious that the danger of a new world war is aggravated by the crisis. The extension of state capitalism means the automatic and simultaneous increased preparation for war. The need for smothering the growing discontent at home because of the lowered living and working standards, the need for new markets, drives the imperialist ruling cliques to war as a way out. The inherent contradictions of the system sharpened by the crisis afford an ever more fertile soil for the seeds of a new world war. Increased nationalism flowing out of the desperate attempts of each national ruling class only feed the hatreds and fan the flames of war amongst the big powers.

Finally, the most significant of the social consequences of the present crisis is the fact that it lays the objective basis for the international proletarian revolution. The crisis enhances the possibilities and the probabilities of international working class revolt against the bourgeois order. The soundest and strongest objective basis for the growth of a victorious revolutionary international labor movement is to be found in the weakening of the capitalist system as a social and economic system. The experiences and disillusionment of a great mass of the population during the crisis will have far-reaching effects in this direction. Then, the simultaneous successful construction of socialism in the Soviet Union gives a positive bend to this development, a bend in the direction of being inspired by the Soviet example. What is happening now is, that on a world scale, without exception, the economic crisis is preparing the ground for a radicalization of the workers in the different capitalist countries.

Particularly in the United States there is a growing, tho still vague and confused, tendency to question not only the economic leadership or policies of the ruling class, but to doubt the efficacy and worthwhileness of the

capitalist system itself. It is true that in the past crises also debtors yelled for the cancellation of debts, bankrupt farmers fought for the abolition of mortgage charges or changes in the currency system. Yet, in the past crises in the United States there was not noticeable any tendency to question, to doubt and to oppose the capitalist system as a social and economic order. Professor Bonn very properly underlines the significance of this new attitude when he stresses that:

"For behind every one of these earlier crises stood the fact that it had been brought about by the too rapid opening up of a new and over-rich West and would be surmounted by the rapid colonization of a still richer further West. To-day, such a West no longer beckons . . . the system seems no longer equal to this task and quite spontaneously the question arises in thousands of hearts and brains: Is the capitalist system really any longer justified if in the richest country in the world it is incapable of shaping an order which shall guarantee to a comparatively sparse population, admittedly industrious and capable, a subsistence consonant with human needs developed by modern technique, without millions being from time to time reduced to beggary and to dependence upon soup kitchens and casual wards?" (M. J. Bonn, "Prosperity—Myth and Reality in American Economic Life," pages 151 and 153).

On the European working class the collapse of American prosperity has already had a decisive and significant effect. One does not hear so much talk about "Ford against Marx," about Fordism as a solution for capitalist ills and disasters. The European ruling classes are no longer sending delegations of experts and hand-picked labor officials to investigate the conditions in the United States and bring back glowing reports putting forward the United States as the model. On the American working class the collapse of prosperity has not yet had such a marked effect. Rather, the effect shows itself first in the heart but not yet in the head. Still, with this objective basis, the effect will also travel to the head in time. Such a consequence of the crisis will prove world-shaking.

WHO IS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT?

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struction Council, a powerful labor-hating building trades employers association, Roosevelt never failed to show his profound opposition to the just claims of labor to life and freedom. Directly and thru his associate, Lieutenant Governor Herbert H. Lehman, he has persistently intervened in labor struggles in this State, always to the advantage of the employers. The needle trades workers of New York City could tell a sensational tale of Roosevelt's "labor" activities.

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Franklin Delano Roosevelt is no newcomer in politics. He springs from the aristocratic Roosevelt stock, all wealthy landowners and capitalistic parasites. His father was an outstanding railroad lawyer, vice-president of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad and president of the Lake Champlain Transport Company. He has inherited his father's wealth, interests and connections.

Roosevelt was Assistant Secretary of Navy under Woodrow Wilson. In this capacity he showed himself to be an extreme jingo, an unashamed imperialist. His mission was to drive the American people into the world slaughter to safeguard the investments and financial interests of Wall Street and to this mission our "progressive" hero addressed himself with enthusiasm. In popular articles (for example, Ladies Home Journal, June

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