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CONCERNING "SOCIALIST REVIEW"

SPECIAL APPEAL

Since the first issue of the "Socialist Review" the costs of producing a duplicated magazine have continued to rise with every issue. Due to this constant increase the position today is that to produce a magazine of this size is almost as costly as printing. This, coupled with the fact that the circulation of the paper has risen steadily, has led to the decision that given an extra effort by comrades who support the "S.R", a PRINTED journal can be achieved.

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With this as the aim, a fund is being opened to finance printing the paper. All donations, no matter how small, will be received with thanks, and acknowledged by individual receipt.

The ideas of our journal are reaching an ever-increasing circle of people, We feel sure that comrades will agree that this must continue, and would be greatly facilitated by a printed paper, so with this as our goal we make this appeal for cash.

Please send all donations to W.S.Ainsworth, 16 Rowdale Rd, Beeches Estate, Birmingham,22a.

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Editorial

THE PERSIAN CRISIS

The crux of the Persian crisis is the struggle over the division of the profit of its oil industry. Up to now, the overwhelming majority of these profits have gone, in one form or another, into British hands, as can be seen from the following figures:

	Received by British Govt. in taxation	Royalties to Persian Government	Gross Profits
	£Mn.	£Mn.	£Mn.
1947	15	7	34
1948	28	9	53
1949	23	13½	41

That the financial arrangements were too much against the interests of Persia is clear from the fact that after the outbreak of the crisis, even the representatives of the A.I.O.C. did not dare to pretend that the royalties paid to the Persian Government were anywhere near sufficient. Accordingly they proposed temporarily to fix the sum of royalties, which had been £7 million in 1947, £9 million in 1948 and £13½ million in 1949, at an interim payment of £10 million, plus £3 million monthly, i.e., a total of £46 million a year.

The Persian Government was not satisfied with these concessions and insisted on nationalisation of the oil industry, and so the strange situation has come about that a Persian Government of large absentee landowners is fighting for the nationalisation of industry, while a British Government which claims to be Socialist is opposing this measure tooth and nail.

To add another paradox, the Persian ruling class, which for generations had been an absolutely loyal agent of British imperialism, which was a "quisling", totally indifferent and even opposed to any national movement, is now raising high the banner of national independence. Besides this, they even come out with a so-called "socialism": the fight against the poverty of the Persian masses has become the battle cry of Mossadiq and Co., for which the foreign imperialist company, A.I.O.C., serves as the butt.

The Persian Government put the blame for all the social ills, for the terrible poverty of the mass of the people, on the British exploitation of the oil wealth of the country. And to drive the point home, when Mr. Jackson, the head of the A.I.O.C. delegates to Teheran, went to see Dr. Mossadiq, the Persian Premier insisted that he go and see the notorious slums of Teheran, which are "all the fault of the Oil Company".

While British imperialism had found allies in the feudal landowners of Persia for its social policy of keeping the country backward

and thus the wages low, now the same landowners try to put the blame for the backwardness and poverty solely on British imperialism.

This strange policy of Mossadiq and Co. reflects the deep social and national contradictions in which the country finds itself. Mossadiq tries to raise himself above the two contending basic forces, British imperialism on the one hand, and the exploited anti-imperialist masses on the other, with the threat of the British navy which keeps the masses "in their places", and with the help of the masses which compels imperialism to retreat and leave the oil industry - the only important industry in the country - to the landowners' government.

To add to the complications of this situation there is the intervention of Russia and of its agency, the Stalinist (Tudeh) Party.

For 150 years Persia was a field in which two Powers fought for influence: Britain and Russia. During the last forty years, since the beginning of the extraction of oil, the struggle for control over Persia has sharpened considerably. Since the Second World War the issues have become even more vital, as Persia and the countries round it have come to be of paramount importance in the world production of oil, the life-blood of both peace and war industries and of transport. In 1950 Persia produced 32.3 million metric tons of oil, Saudi Arabia, 26.9; Kuwait, 17.3; Iraq, 6.5. Together they produced 82 million tons. As against this the target of the oil industry of USSR as a whole for 1950 was only 35.4 million tons. What is more natural than that the Stalinist bureaucracy should be attracted to the rich Middle Eastern oilfields, including Persia? What better conditions could exist for the Tudeh Party than the present crisis in Persian-British relations? That nevertheless the Tudeh Party is not reaping the fruits, is due first of all to the fact that Russia has exposed her imperialist greed for Persian oil and has thus taken the wind out of the sails of the "anti-imperialist" propaganda of the Tudeh Party. It was only five years ago that Russia demanded an oil concession in northern Persia similar to the present British one in the South. The people's outcry against any oil concession to a foreign country - whether Britain or Russia - was so great that when the Persian Government refused to grant the concession to Russia, the Tudeh Party not only was not able to raise opposition to the Government, but lost nearly all the mass influence it had formerly had.

The position of U.S. imperialism in the Persian crisis is full of contradictions. On the one hand it is in competition with the British oil interests, hence its successful effort in monopolising the oil of Saudi Arabia, its success in getting control over 50 per cent of the Kuwait oil and 25 per cent of that of Iraq. Persian oil, closed to American companies, was always a tempting object. And it must be a great temptation for American companies to send their tankers to carry away the Persian oil and thus get a foothold in this field. On the other hand, their experience of the nationalisation of the oil industry in Mexico must make it clear to the American capital-

ists that the nationalisation of the oil industry of Persia could be the first step towards the eviction of all the foreign imperialist oil companies in the Middle East. Hence the "solidarity" of U.S.A. with Britain in the Persian crisis. This "solidarity" is enhanced by the needs of the American struggle against Russia over the division of the world.

The present policy of the British Government in Persia is blatantly anti-socialist. To oppose nationalisation of the oil industry, to insist on the "right" of Britain to draw profits from Persia by exploiting the Persian workers, is a capitalist-imperialist policy which can have one of the following results: (1) A continuation of the exploitation of the oil works of Iran by British capitalism, with a greater or lesser part of the profits going to the ruling class and Government of Persia which collaborates with British imperialism. (2) The Persian landlords and capitalists with their Government can make use of the hatred of the Persian workers for their imperialist exploiters in order to transfer the oil industry from the hands of imperialism to the hands of the Persian Government; thus changing the exploiters, but not the fate of the exploited. (3) Russia can use this hatred of British imperialism to gain mass influence in Persia and turn the country into another Russian gubernia, thus changing one exploiting imperialism for another. (4) The Persian workers can expropriate the British owners and establish workers' control over the oil industry and workers' power in Iran as a whole. The duty of British socialists is to help the Persian workers to achieve the last result.

A British Socialist Government should take the following steps in the Persian crisis: Declare that Britain has no right to get a penny out of Persian oil. Renounce the property rights of Britain in Persia. Call on the Persian workers to take hold of the former A.I.O.C. With the voluntary renunciation of ownership rights in Persia, such an appeal would have a tremendous echo among the Persian workers, making it practically impossible for Mossadig and Co. to take hold of the oil industry. With the only significant industry of Persia under workers' control the rule of the feudal landlords and capitalists over the country as a whole would become impossible. The oil workers would attract the rest of the Persian workers and peasants to them and a workers' and peasants' government would be established. Such a government would be a true and loyal friend of Socialist Britain, a reliable antagonist of both Russia and American imperialism.

With the help of capital investments British imperialism held, exploited and oppressed hundreds of millions of people. With an active anti-imperialist policy of renouncing and fighting these capitalist investments, a Socialist Britain would be able to find hundreds of millions of allies in the struggle for socialism, against the imperialist war for the division of the world, for peace.

N A T A L I A T R O T S K Y

B R E A K S W I T H T H E
F O U R T H I N T E R N A T I O N A L

The following is the text of the letter sent by Natalia Sedova Trotsky to the leadership of the Fourth International and of the Socialist Workers Party, breaking off all political connection with these organisations. It was printed in the American press.

Executive Committee of the Fourth International
Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party
Comrades:

You know quite well that I have not been in political agreement with you for the past five or six years, since the end of the war and even earlier. The position you have taken on the important events of recent times shows me that, instead of correcting your earlier errors, you are persisting in them and deepening them. On the road you have taken, you have reached a point where it is no longer possible for me to remain silent or to confine myself to private protests. I must now express my opinions publicly.

The step which I feel obliged to take has been a grave and difficult one for me, and I can only regret it sincerely. But there is no other way. After a great deal of reflections and hesitations over a problem which pained me deeply, I find that I must tell you that I see no other way than to say openly that our disagreements make it impossible for me to remain any longer in your ranks.

The reasons for this final action on my part are known to most of you. I repeat them here briefly only for those to whom they are not familiar, touching only on our fundamentally important differences and not on the differences over matters of daily policy which are related to them or which follow from them.

Obsessed by old and outlived formulas, you continue to regard the Stalinist state as a workers' state. I cannot and will not follow you in this.

Virtually every year after the beginning of the fight against the usurping Stalinist bureaucracy, L.D. Trotsky repeated that the regime was moving to the right, under conditions of a lagging world revolution and the seizure of all political positions in Russia by the bureaucracy. Time and again, he pointed out how the consolidation of Stalinism in Russia led to the worsening of the economic, political and social positions of the working class, and the triumph of a tyrannical and privileged aristocracy. If this trend continues, he said, the revolution will be at an end and the restoration of capitalism will be achieved.

That, unfortunately, is what has happened even if in new and unexpected forms. There is hardly a country in the world where the authentic ideas and bearers of socialism are so barbarously hounded. It should be clear to everyone that the revolution has been completely destroyed by Stalinism. Yet you continue to say that under this unspeakable regime, Russia is still a workers' state. I consider this a blow at socialism. Stalinism and the Stalinist state have nothing whatever in common with a workers' state or with socialism. They are the worst and the most dangerous enemies of socialism and the working class.

You now hold that the states of Eastern Europe over which Stalinism established its domination during and after the war, are likewise workers' states. This is equivalent to saying that Stalinism has carried out a revolutionary socialist role. I cannot and will not follow you in this.

After the war and even before it ended, there was a rising revolutionary movement of the masses in these Eastern countries. But it was not these masses that won power and it was not a workers' state that was established by their struggle. It was the Stalinist counter-revolution that won power, reducing these lands to vassals of the Kremlin by strangling the working masses, their revolutionary struggles and their revolutionary aspirations.

By considering that the Stalinist bureaucracy established workers' states in these countries, you assign to it a progressive and even revolutionary role. By propagating this monstrous falsehood to the workers' vanguard, you deny to the Fourth International all the basic reason for existence as the world party of the socialist revolution. In the past, we always considered Stalinism to be a counterrevolutionary force in every sense of the term. You no longer do so. But I continue to do so.

In 1932 and 1933, the Stalinists, in order to justify their shameless capitulation to Hitlerism, declared that it would matter little if the Fascists came to power because socialism would come after and through the rule of Fascism. Only dehumanized brutes without a shred of socialist thought or spirit could have argued this way. Now, notwithstanding the revolutionary aims which animate you, you maintain that the despotic Stalinist reaction which has triumphed in Eastern Europe is one of the roads through which socialism will eventually come. This view marks an irremediable break with the profoundest convictions always held by our movement and which I continue to share.

I find it impossible to follow you in the question of the Tito regime in Yugoslavia. All the sympathy and support of revolutionists and even of all democrats, should go to the Yugoslav people in their determined resistance to the efforts of Moscow to reduce them and their country to vassalage. Every advantage should be taken of the concessions which the Yugoslav regime now finds itself obliged to make to the people. But your entire press is now devoted to an inexcusable idealization of the Titoist bureaucracy for which no ground exists in the traditions and principles of our movement.

This bureaucracy is only a replica, in a new form, of the old Stalinist bureaucracy. It was trained in the ideas, the politics and morals of the G.P.U. Its regime differs from Stalin's in no fundamental regard. It is absurd to believe or to teach that the revolutionary leadership of the Yugoslav people will develop out of this bureaucracy or in any way other than in the course of struggle against it.

Most insupportable of all is the position on the war to which you have committed yourselves. The third world war which threatens humanity confronts the revolutionary movement with the most difficult problems, the most complex situations, the gravest decisions. Our position can be taken only after the most earnest and freest discussions. But in the face of all the events of recent years, you continue to advocate, and to pledge the entire movement, to the defense of the Stalinist state. You are even now supporting the armies of Stalinism in the war which is being endured by the anguished Korean people. I cannot and will not follow you in this.

As far back as 1927, Trotsky, in reply to a disloyal question put to him in the Political Bureau by Stalin, stated his views as follows: For the socialist fatherland, yes! For the Stalinist regime, no! That was in 1927! Now, twenty-three years later Stalin has left nothing of the Socialist fatherland. It has been replaced by the enslavement and degradation of the people by the Stalinist autocracy. This is the state you propose to defend in the war, which you are already defending in Korea.

I know very well how often you repeat that you are criticizing Stalinism and fighting it. But the fact is that your criticism and your fight lose their value and can yield no results because they are determined by and subordinated to your position of defense of the Stalinist state. Whoever defends this regime of barbarous oppression, regardless of the motives, abandons the principles of socialism and internationalism.

In the message sent me from the recent convention of the SWP you write that Trotsky's ideas continue to be your guide. I must tell you that I read those words with great bitterness. As you observe from what I have written above, I do not see his ideas in your politics. I have confidence in these ideas. I remain convinced that the only way out of the present situation is the social revolution, the self-emancipation of the proletariat of the world.

Natalia Sedova TROTSKY

Mexico, D.F.
May 9, 1951

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