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TWOPENCE

DANZIG AND THE COMING WAR

The secret negotiations between the Chamberlain Government and Moscow have been dragged out over a period of weeks, and have still failed to eventuate in a positive alliance. From the protracted nature of the talks and the repeated "appeasement" gestures towards Germany, the conclusion has been widely drawn that the British bourgeoisie is pursuing a vacillating and uncertain course, unable to make up its mind between two equally unpleasant solutions.

But to read into British policy any indecision as to what it really wants, any evidence of senility and impotence, would be profoundly wrong. The reluctance of Chamberlain to conclude a definite pact with Russia, the refusal to make public any details of the discussions, the repeated postponements and delays, all are part of a deliberately undertaken policy.

The Anglo-Soviet Pact is being kept in reserve as the eleventh-hour instrument to be used only if the need arises to block an intended advance of German Imperialism into new territory. It will serve, when and if it is published, as a last warning to the Reich, a warning which, if it is ignored, will be followed by the outbreak of the Greater War that Germany will have to fight as in 1914 on two great fronts.

British reluctance masks a threat to Germany.

And the reluctance to come to terms displayed by the Kremlin similarly masks a threat to the Western powers, a threat to support Germany in the coming war unless the Chamberlain plan to egg Germany on to attack Russia is positively and finally abandoned.

So it comes about that in the discussions between Britain and Russia there is a third, silent participant—Germany, which bargains secretly with both parties, offering them, at a price, the thing they most desire, namely, neutrality in the coming conflict.

The Kremlin hopes for neutrality for obvious reasons. The tremendous tasks within the undeveloped territories of the Soviet Union make any thought of imperialist designs fantastic and absurd.

On the other hand, Britain hopes to maintain neutrality for the simple reason that since Germany has already been plundered of all that Britain coveted in the last war, there is nothing left to be grabbed in a new war with Germany in the event of a British victory. With everything to lose and nothing to gain, with revolts germinating in all her colonial possessions, Britain strives might and main to divert the attention of Germany towards expansion at the expense of Soviet territory.

The new Russia would be a hard nut for Hitler to crack, even after the devastation wrought by the

Stalin purges and the decapitation of the Red Army. And Germany, already weakened before the war, would certainly exhaust herself in the struggle and therefore be unable to claim the fruits of victory even if the outcome were a victory for Germany. The conquest of Russia would be a conquest, not for Germany, but for the Western powers who would step in to terminate hostilities and grab the booty when both sides were spent.

Well aware of these British designs, the German Government, though its mouth waters at the thought of seizing the rich Ukrainian lands, nevertheless, hesitates to allow itself to be used as the catspaw of Britain.

But to-day, faced with another hard winter in the throes of a world slump, Germany is forced to move once again. If Russia is not to be the victim, then the move must be made at the expense of the Western Powers along the lines of conquest which have hitherto proved so successful in Austria and Czechoslovakia. Danzig and the Corridor are the next in order on the list of Nazi designs for conquest.

The Anglo-Japanese tension over Tientsin has served to distract public attention to the Far Eastern war zone. Against the general background of twenty years ago, or even ten years ago, the episodes that have occurred, the blockade, the "indignities," etc., would have been more than sufficient cause for a resort to arms. But deeply involved as Britain is in Europe, the distraction has been ignored for the most part. The amazing complacency of the British Government with regard to Japanese "insults" is in itself an ominous warning to the world that Britain is determined to concentrate all attention on the situation in Eastern Europe which assumes the dimensions of a major war-crisis. Hopeful thoughts that the Danzig crisis will culminate in another Munich agreement, and nothing worse, are given the lie by the very placidity of the British attitude to Japanese encroachments on Eastern trading rights. It is not the millions invested by British finance-capital in Japan but the exigencies of the European situation that hold Britain's band in the Far East. Inaction in China presages sharp and violent action in Europe.

The permanent diplomatic crisis that has existed for more than a year in Europe has somewhat inured the masses to the war danger. Living so long on the slopes of a smouldering volcano, panicked so often by war alarms, the present situation is viewed as "another" crisis which will probably turn out to be yet another false alarm. British tolerance towards Japan, "appeasement" gestures to Germany,

equivocal statements by British politicians and the dilatoriness of the negotiations for the Anglo-Russian Pact are all interpreted as signs that the danger is as yet far off.

But the opposite is the case. Politicians' utterances to-day are as misleading as they were on the eve of the Great War, and just as Britain fosters peace with Japan to keep her hands free for Germany, so also is the protracted delay in the negotiations with the Soviet Union part of a deliberate plan to deal with Germany. The conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Pact has been openly made contingent upon Germany's preparations for the seizure of the key position in north-eastern Europe.

The Nazis, speaking through their official organ, the *Voelkischer Beobachter*, have angrily refused the tacit offer of the Chamberlain Government to postpone indefinitely the conclusion of a pact with Russia. ". . . Do they wish to beat down Moscow's demands by hinting at a possible understanding with Germany?" And the entire German press chorusses execrations of Britain.

Side by side with the angry rejection of Chamberlain's schemes goes active preparations for another coup. And the negotiations between Britain and Russia keep step with the military preparations of the Nazis. The slowness and tortuousness of the diplomatic exchanges over the Pact reflect the vacillations and uncertainties of German Imperialism, which fears that this next adventure may easily be its last.

The publication of the news that the Pact has been concluded is intended by its British sponsors to have the effect of an exploding bombshell in the path of Germany expansion. The news that the Pact has been signed will signify that the British Intelligence Service in Germany has become convinced that the final preparations for the coup have been completed, and another dramatic move is about to be made.

But until the Pact is concluded, while the Reich still falters on the threshold of this latest, most desperate venture of all, the bargaining goes on. If Chamberlain still seeks to make a deal with Hitler, Stalin for his part does likewise. While provocative anti-Soviet references have disappeared from Hitler's speeches and the German activities in the Carpathian Ukraine have ceased, impressive German trade delegations are planned, and offers of credits to Russia of over £40 millions are being talked of. The dismissal of Litvinov and Potemkin signify a correspondingly conciliatory attitude on the part of the Kremlin.

While the world stands poised on the verge of

military and economic catastrophe, the diplomatic game goes on. In a world which has been converted by the unprecedented arms race into one vast ammunition dump, the diplomats play hide and seek in the darkness of secret diplomacy until the inevitable spark detonates their playground.

Is it possible that long-suffering humanity will wade once more through the ocean of blood that another world war will create, will endure the privations, the famine and disease of the last universal war all over again? It is quite certain that a great deal of persuasion will be needed to convince mankind and to keep them convinced that the new war is being fought for noble and worthy principles. The clamour of the "socialists" and

"communists" about the defence of democracy, will this stand the test of another war? It is quite certain that the flames of warfare will consume all illusions and fakes, the "blood and honour" of Hitler and the "defence of democracy" of his imperialist rivals. Faced with the ultimate struggle for life itself, the masses will smash out of their path not only capitalism with its war-breeding struggle for profits and its secret diplomacy, but also the treacherous misleaders of the masses who mask the war-aims of their capitalist masters with fine phrases about democracy. In this crisis in the history of civilisation, revolutionary socialists would do well to adopt, with a different interpretation, the slogan now splashed on British hoardings: "We've Got To Be Prepared!"

Tientsin

The crisis over Tientsin has arisen as a result of an attempt by the Japanese imperialist bandits to profit from the preoccupation of their British rivals in another quarrel. The uproar in the British press over the manhandling, stripping, searching and insulting of British subjects is designed to cover up the real issue at stake, namely, the struggle for the control of Chinese currency and markets.

The Japanese military cliques, emboldened by the rapidly developing war crisis in north-eastern Europe have struck a blow at the harassed British in the attempt to capture for themselves the sole right to exploit China as a colony.

The venture in China has not proved for the Japanese the quick success that they anticipated when hostilities were commenced more than two years ago. Enormous burdens have been placed on the already precarious structure of Japanese finance and economy, while the Japanese workers and peasants under the whip of patriotic propaganda have been loaded with a task beyond their strength. They are rapidly reaching the end of their endurance, a fact which goads their taskmasters on to deeds of ever greater desperation. Thus arises the provocative acts of the Japanese in the treaty ports.

The Japanese demand that British help to Chiang-kai-Shek cease, that arms and money and other aid be cut off from China, that Britain bring pressure to bear on the Chinese to force them to capitulate. Certain concessions are offered in return for these services.

For their own ends the British imperialists have

been prolonging the struggle in the Far East by rendering help to the Chinese, but the nature of those ends is indicated by the attempts to come to terms with the Japanese in secret discussions at Tokyo. A robbers agreement is under discussion and the question at issue is only the respective shares of plunder that are to fall to the competing bandits.

The British capitalists demand their "rights" in China, gained under the plundering treaties which were wrung from the Chinese by force of arms. And they have no more ardent champions of those "rights" than the "Labour" and "Communist" leaders who denounce Japanese "insolence," demand "a firm stand" and clamour for "protection" of British claims louder than the capitalists themselves. They attempt to justify this treachery as aid for the Chinese people.

Only workers independent action, by boycott, by refusal to handle goods for or from Japan, can help the Chinese people. By demanding the restoration to China of the privileges and plunder wrung from them by imperialist conquest, by demanding the abolition of all imperialist "rights" gained under the treaties, not only will the Chinese people be aided but a blow will be struck at imperialism as well.

The outcry of the "Labour" and "Communist" traitors aims at lining up the British workers to serve as cannon fodder for the imperialists, in a war for Chinese plunder. The struggle of the British workers is not against Japanese imperialism alone but against all imperialism.

Whither the PSOP?

The sole hope for the French workers lies in the speedy forging of a new leadership which will be able to lead them out of the present demoralised and apathetic condition of the labour movement towards the seizure of power. The events of the past few years have conclusively proved that under capitalism there is no way out for the French masses.

Last year, the so-called "Revolutionary Left" of the S.F.I.O. (the tendency led by Marceau Pivert), split away and formed a new independent party calling itself the P.S.O.P. (Socialist Party of Workers and Peasants). It would, however, be an illusion to regard this party as a developed Marxist party capable of giving a clear and precise lead to the workers so urgently necessary in France to-day. Like the parties associated with it on the international field (the I.L.P., the P.O.U.M., etc.) it can best be characterised as *centrist*, i.e. it wavers between reformism, or left reformism, and Bolshevism. Nevertheless, the fact that it had not adopted a clear position either on theory or on tactics, presented an opportunity for the far smaller organisations of the Fourth International in France to enter its ranks with the object of transforming it from a centrist to a revolutionary organisation.

It is necessary to state here that the latest developments in the P.S.O.P. can only give rise to the greatest uneasiness. Like most centrist parties, the P.S.O.P. is a conglomeration of very diverse elements. Pacifists and reformists as well as revolutionists are members of the Party. The revolutionary elements, from their entry, have directed a withering fire against the reformist and pacifist tendencies.

Rather than take the risk of losing some of its petty bourgeois hangers-on, the party leadership, in typically centrist fashion, has declared war on the revolutionists. It has answered their criticism not with political arguments, but with slander and administrative measures. Whilst attacking "Trotskyism," Pivert remains silent upon the fundamental positions of Trotsky (the Permanent Revolution, etc.). An important section of the P.S.O.P., which was oriented towards a return to the S.F.I.O. has constituted itself as an "anti-Trotskyist" bloc, and it was from this section, abetted or tolerated by the Party leadership, that the main fire against the revolutionary Marxists was directed.

Whilst Pivert has made certain criticisms of the organisational methods of the Fourth International he has not stated precisely what his political disagreements are, nor has he produced any reasoned alternative to the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International.

The attack on "Trotskyism" was particularly

marked at the recent congress of the P.S.O.P. Measures were taken to deprive all those who had not been Party members for eighteen months of the right of expression. In addition, the Federal Bureau of the Seine Youth Section of the Party (J.S.O.P.) which had shown a healthy leftward development towards a clear-cut revolutionary position on war, was expelled from the Party in a bureaucratic fashion.

Centrists have always had an inherent horror of clear and precise formulations, particularly on the question of war. "Our own" I.L.P. is an excellent illustration of this fact. The declarations of the J.S.O.P. for revolutionary defeatism and for the fight to the end against French imperialism was too dangerous for the centrists to tolerate in the present period of imperialist repression and growing war danger.

The equivocation of the P.S.O.P. on vital questions and its concessions to bourgeois pacifism evidenced by a recent joint manifesto with certain pacifists have resulted in a sharp decline in the circulation of its press and in its membership. From 15,000 nominal members before last September, it has dwindled, according to the Congress report, to a membership of 5,000.

Nevertheless, despite all obstacles, the P.S.O.P. contains within its ranks many of the best French working class fighters. It is for this reason that the most clear-sighted revolutionaries of France must remain inside its ranks. They must conduct a struggle for a Marxist programme, even if this can only be attained at the price of a temporary decrease in membership as the reformists and pacifists leave the organisation. They must also conduct a struggle at the same time against the internal regime which allows a considerable section of the leadership and apparently of the membership to remain connected with Freemasonry. The international orientation of the Party must be directed towards the Fourth International and away from the so-called "Marxist Centre" of the Centrists which will inevitably crumble up when faced with any real demand upon its internationalism. Two papers circulating mainly inside the P.S.O.P. have set themselves this aim. *La Voie de Lénine* (Lenin's Path), published by a group of comrades centred around Jean Rous and Daniel Guerin (author of *Fascism and Big Business*), and *La Verite* (Truth), published by former members of the International Communist Party. Upon the development of the P.S.O.P. depends the future of the French proletariat. We can only trust that our French comrades may yet be able to prevent it from coming to the same sorry end as the P.O.U.M.

Slave Camps in Britain

The barter agreement signed in London on June 23rd, by which 600,000 bales of U.S. cotton is to be "swapped" for 80,000 tons of British rubber, is hailed as the first of a series of barter deals which will enable both countries to face the inevitable blockade in the coming war. The threat of blockade is similarly responsible for such projects as the six million pound plant now being set up by the British Government for the extraction of petrol from coal. New plans for increasing the amount of home-grown food and the shipping tonnage by means of subsidies go side by side with the piling up of stores of sugar, oil and wheat.

By these measures the character of the coming war is foreshadowed. The immense destructive machine now in the hands of the imperialist robbers is counter-balanced by equally immense and expensive defensive machinery, and the one cancels the other, so that the war will not be decided by military means. As in the last war, the first clashes will be followed by a deadlock, bloody but indecisive. The belligerents will once more settle down to the grim business of starving each other out.

In preparation for the war of mutual strangulation, with its consequences in the shape of famine diseases, reserve stores are being laid up on both sides, so that once more the one cancels the other. The race to pile up war-stores means only that the agony will be more drawn out, the populations of the belligerent countries subjected to a longer period of semi-starvation before the inevitable collapse on both sides.

The pre-war measures now being carried out, the building of unnecessary ships, the cultivation of uneconomic home crops, the adoption of uneconomic processes for fuel-production, the freezing of capital in vast stores of commodities represents a staggering wastage of human resources. It is because of the expected waste of human labour in this aspect of rearmament that the economics of the capitalist class look forward to the disappearance of unemployment in Britain. While the labour power of the workers is being squandered in this direction, employment is also found for capital to finance the insane procedure. Such is the nature of the anticipated "boom." The investors will be drawing dividends and the workers will be drawing wages, profits will rise, prices will rise, wages will rise, and so, argue Messrs. Economists, we will be experiencing a boom. The only problem to be faced, apart from the inevitable inflation that will accompany the "recovery," will be the shortage of labour.

Germany, which embarked some months ago on this road of "recovery" has been closely watched.

Dr. Shacht's methods of handling the inflation have been taken as models, and now, to deal with the shortage of labour, a leaf is to be taken from the Nazi book likewise. Dr. Ley's system of forced labour has been the envy of the British capitalist class. When Dr. Ley boasted some time ago that the German workers worked 70 hours a week "for German honour" the British boss class did not fail to take note.

At the end of last month, a work-centre for "training" the unemployed was opened in London, and the thin end of the wedge was inserted. The comment of the *Glasgow Bulletin* of June 29th is worthy of note:

"Although they're not likely to brag about it in public, many members of the Parliamentary Labour Party are fully in sympathy with the Unemployment Assistance Board's experiment in compulsory training for young men who have reached the 'work-shy' stage. Indeed, the experiment was foreseen some years ago by several leading Labour M.P.s.

"Incidentally, the U.A.B. are fully prepared for the labour camp plan. For some time past they have been compiling a very complete list of 'work-shys'."

Revolutionaries have never entertained any doubts that from the moment that war was declared, all differences between the regimes of fascist and "democratic" countries would disappear in a universal totalitarianism. But now, even before the outbreak of war, the British boss-class is beginning with the imposition of measures that turn their slogan: "Defend our democracy!" into a meaningless form of words.

As in fascist Germany, the drive towards war demands "self-sufficiency," and therefore wasted labour, and consequently, forced labour which goes side by side with military conscription. Forced to work and forced to fight, the British wage-slave will be able to detect little essential difference between his own condition and that of the German wage-slave, save that his own rulers label themselves "Democratic," the Germans "Totalitarian."

With a Minister of Information who will be a British Goebbels, a Minister of Labour—a British Leys, a Minister of War—a British Goering, the lies, the slavery and the bloodshed will match one another on both sides. Now that both British and German workers are being thrust face to face on the battlefield it is necessary for both to recognise that their real enemy is not in front of them but behind them. Sheer self-preservation demands that those enemies be dealt with drastically and without delay.

Ferment in India

by Ajit Roy

The debacle of the Chinese Revolution of 1926-27 has one important lesson for the international socialist movement. It is that in a colonial or semi-colonial country where capitalist methods of production have taken root, the anti-imperialist movement has to count not only with the foreign power or powers but with the united pro-imperialist front of native capitalists and representatives of feudalism. This lesson which is fundamental for the theoretical equipment of every colonial revolutionary is given additional support by the history of the development of Indian politics during the last two years.

But India differs from China in the fact that while the Chinese Kuo-Min-Tang fully exposed itself only in course of a civil war, the National Congress of the Indian capitalists has exposed itself in front of the masses long before the revolutionary movement has reached its pitch. From 1911 to 1927 when the Kuo-Min-Tang finally began the systematic slaughtering of Chinese workers and peasants, it had been moving more and more to the left. Its metamorphosis, when it was completed in 1927, from "the united anti-imperialist front of the Chinese people" to the counter-revolutionary organ of the Chinese propertied classes was, so far as the masses were concerned, sharp and sudden. But not so with the Indian National Congress. To-day, in a pre-revolutionary situation, it stands completely exposed. An understanding of this difference is necessary for a correct appraisal of the course of future development of Indian politics.

In 1937, the Indian National Congress agreed to take charge of the governments of 7 out of the 11 provinces in which India is divided for administrative purposes. An eighth one was subsequently added to the list when a coalition Congress Ministry was formed in Assam under the inspiration of Mr. Subhas Bose, the then President of the Congress. The Congress was able to form ministries by virtue of its numerical preponderance in the provincial legislatures. On the strength of an election manifesto, in which they had pledged themselves to an uncompromising struggle against British Rule and in which they had promised great economic reforms for the benefit of the workers and peasants, the Congress leaders had secured the whole-hearted support of the peasantry and the urban middle classes in the elections. The masses were not told, however, that the Congress would enter the governments

if they were returned in a majority. On the other hand, they were assured by them and their agents, the Nehrus and Boses, that their sole purpose in contesting the elections was that of "smashing the slave constitution" which imposed a new tyranny over the masses.

It was with no little surprise, therefore, that the masses learned that the Congress leaders had decided to form ministries in those provinces where they form a majority in the legislatures. To soothe the feelings of the membership whose suspicions had been roused, the leaders let it be known that they had accepted office only in the interest of developing the mass struggles outside the Parliaments. "We must capture every vantage-point in the interest of the coming and decisive struggle against imperialism." That was the explanation put out.

More than two years have passed since then and enough has taken place to teach the masses, out of their own experience, the utter folly of placing faith in the pronouncements of bourgeois politicians. Many of them, as they lay dead or dying in the streets of Bombay or Sholapur from the solid "patriotic" bullets of Congress Governments, will not be able to take advantage of their experience. Others, and hundreds of them, shut up in Congress prisons will have to wait before they can put the lessons of their experience to actual practice.

The bourgeoisie, once in office, refused to initiate any great changes in the old method of government. True, the majority of political prisoners have been released. But new victims have taken their places and popular agitation for securing their release is being discouraged by the Congress leaders. The imperialist state machinery, basing itself upon the Army and the Police with its network of spies and *agents provocateur*, continues to run its ancient course, picking up at a village here or a factory there the most devoted champions of the masses of workers and peasants. When asked for an explanation by the still bewildered masses the Right Honourable Congress Ministers reply with solemnity, "The Congress Government cannot tolerate any threats to Law and Order."

Therein lies the essence of the problem. The native propertied classes have realised well enough

that they cannot countenance any serious mass movement against the system of imperialist law and order without at the same time endangering their own class interests. They had called the masses to support their own struggle against Imperialism. The Imperial Government, representing the interests of British capital and finance, first prohibited and later thwarted the development of Indian capitalism. With its financial manipulations, its unjust exchange ratio, its Ottawa pacts and various other means of had imposed strict limitations on the aspirations of the Indian capitalist class. But the Indian capitalists, through all their struggle against such limitations, never meant to lead an anti-imperialist revolution. They needed the soothing presence of the British Army and the efficiency of the imperialist Police to deal with their own masses when they began to press for their own demands. Their dream was that of Dominion Status and of an equal partnership with London Finance in the business of exploiting Indian labour and peasants.

The swift development of the international crisis and the approach of the World War has put fear into the hearts of the Birlas, the Dalmias and the big magnates of Indian capitalism. "Hang on to Whitehall," is their present slogan. Their political representatives immediately catch it up. They begin to assure the masses that the old days of struggle and strife are gone for ever. Victory has been already achieved and all they need do to enjoy its fruits is to have patience, have faith in Congress Ministries and not to start any new movement which may force the hands of Congress Ministers into shooting them down or putting them behind prison bars. The following statement of Mr. Gandhi, the foremost representative of the Indian capitalists, puts it very clearly. In an interview for the American Press, the Mahatma (the Great-Soul) declared: "The outsider may not realise the fact that the majority of the provinces of British India are administered by the Nationalists, by Ministers of the Congress Party. That roughly shows that the nationalist movement is already in the seats of political power in the country."

The betrayal, however, by the bourgeois leaders of their middle-class following in the Congress has led to a crisis of the first magnitude in this venerable organisation. This crisis is intensified by the fact that it has coincided with a new upsurge in the movement of the workers and peasants against their own exploiters. The number of strikes in Indian factories during the last twelve months and the number of workers participating in them are greater than in any year since 1920. In Assam, the strike of the 10,000 oil field workers has been going on for more than three months in spite of all the brutalities of the military (4 workers shot dead). In Cawnpore, a leading industrial centre, 60,000 cotton workers are preparing for their third big

strike in two years. The peasantry, which had been marking time since the accession to office of the Congress, (contenting itself with organising imposing demonstrations and deputations to the Ministers, in order, as they said, to strengthen the hands of their friends, the ministers), is now feeling its way to direct action against the landlords as the only method of redressing its grievances. The prisons of Bihar and Central Provinces are being rapidly filled up with peasant agitators.

The crisis inside the Congress came into prominence early this year in the form of a struggle for power between Mr. Subhas Bose and his colleagues who formed the majority within the Working Committee of the Congress. The struggle was in essence one between the big bourgeois and the petit-bourgeois tendencies inside the Congress. The urban middle-class, ruined by unemployment and low wages caused by the low level of capitalist development of the country, had gained nothing from the Congress ministries. Bose, representing the growing disillusionment of the middle-class, came forward to denounce the politics of the bourgeois leadership. Against the wishes of Mr. Gandhi and the majority of the Working Committee he stood for re-election to the Presidentship and in a statement warned the rank and file that every vote against him was a vote in favour of imperialism. The rank and file returned him with a majority, rejecting the personal nominee of Gandhi.

But Bose, like all Left-Wing leaders in colonial movements, was constitutionally incapable of leading a real struggle against the big bourgeois leaders. Throughout history this type of man, the Hu Han Mins and Wang Ching Weis of China and Bose in India, have played a consistent role. They are capable of making grand denunciatory gestures and of giving an edge to a political crisis which they had not foreseen. But when the hour of decisive struggle approaches, they are nowhere to be seen near the battle-field. You will find them generally at some safe distance making long distance calls to their determined opponents about the necessity of unity and co-operation. No sooner had Bose been elected than he declared that he could not do without the Right Wing. In a notorious statement issued to the Press, he declared that he did not want the Right to leave the Congress but to remain and "lead them."

But the bourgeoisie was not prepared to compromise. The international situation would not tolerate any compromise. Working for a compromise with imperialism, they could not afford a compromise with their petit-bourgeois following.

Bose's capitulation only served to sow confusion among his followers. The result was seen in the annual conference of the Congress where the Right

was able to dictate a resolution which amounted to a vote of no confidence in the President.

Since then, Mr. Bose has resigned from the Presidency and started a 'Forward Bloc' inside the Congress which aims at pursuing the futile Menshevik tactics of pushing the unwilling bourgeoisie along the revolutionary road which it is historically incapable of following.

The crisis exposed not only the weaknesses and vacillations of petit-bourgeois radical leaders. It exposed also very clearly, the rottenness and bankruptcy of the Congress Socialist leaders and the Stalinists inside the Congress.

The Congress Socialist leaders, while supporting the candidature of Bose, had lost all appetite for fighting by the time the struggle was carried into the annual conference of the Congress. They decided to remain neutral in the attack of the Right Wing on the President. Instead of giving a lead to the petit-bourgeois revolt against the reactionaries, the Congress Socialists, mouthing phrases about "National Unity," left them to fight the battle single-handed and without any theoretical equipment. The party thereby doomed itself in the eyes of the Radical Congress workers. Resignations have since poured in from all over the country and it has succeeded in saving itself only by drawing closer to the big bourgeoisie. The following statement of Mr. Gandhi is again revealing. "We (Congress Socialists and myself) are coming nearer to one another. Either they are being drawn to me or I am being drawn to them." In an article entitled "Gandhism and Socialism," published in the party organ, Mr. Masani, the Secretary of the party, makes the interesting revelation that there are fundamental similarities between Gandhism and Socialism. This similarity referred to by Mr. Masani is derived from a statement by Mr. Gandhi, that like the Socialists, he also stood for collective ownership of the means of production. There is, however, a little difference which Mr. Masani in his efforts to make Gandhism palatable for the masses had overlooked. Socialism, in Gandhi's scheme of things, must be brought about by changing the hearts of the millionaires and by "making them trustees for the poor," and he tolerates no violence, outspokenly condemning the violence of workers' and peasants' struggles, and turning the blind eye to the violent suppression of those struggles.

Now let us observe the Indian Stalinists in action through one of the critical phases of Indian politics. The only difference between the Congress Socialists and the Stalinists was that while the former remained neutral, the latter voted against the resolution. It appears, however, that the decision of the Stalinist leaders to vote against the resolution

was a last-minute decision made in breach of a previous agreement with the Congress Socialists not to oppose it. That was the only gesture which they were capable of making against the Right. They had no policy of their own; they took their cue from the bourgeoisie and voted *en masse* for the platitudinous verbiage which went by the name of the "Resolution on National Demand." They had no alternative resolutions nor did they put forward any amendments. Since then, the Stalinists have blamed Mr. Meher Ali, one of the leading lights of the Congress Socialist Party, who, they protest, for some unaccountable reason withdrew the amendment which had been jointly agreed to by the C.S.P. and themselves. That does not seem to have upset the leaders very much since they have been continuing to shout about "Unity" and "National Front" in the approved Stalinist fashion. The petit-bourgeoisie which had begun to take a new interest in Socialism since the inauguration of the Five Year Plan is greatly disillusioned with Moscow. This is how *Forward*, a radical bourgeois paper, sums up the Stalinists: "Until the very eve of the Congress, one of the principal slogans of the Communists was not only 'Unity of the Left' but 'formation of a Left Bloc.' In the crisis that developed after the Presidential election, the slogan given by the Communists was, 'Maintain the unity of the Congress and move forward.' Does this slogan exclude the unity of the left which has been sabotaged by the shameful capitulation of the C.S.P. encouraged by the pusillanimity of the Communists themselves?" *Forward* then accuses the Stalinists of opportunism, chicken-heartedness and confusion of thought and thereby reveals its own intellectual bankruptcy; for the Stalinists betray the anti-imperialist movement not because of "confusion of thought" but because the betrayal is necessitated by the requirements of the foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy which cannot tolerate any revolution anywhere in the world to-day.

The Indian bourgeoisie is to-day the undisputed master of the Home Front. During private talks between Mr. Gandhi and the Viceroy, the mill-owners and Mr. Gandhi, and Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders, the ground is being secretly prepared for India's participation in the coming imperialist war. In order to prepare themselves for further struggles they have now initiated certain changes in the Congress organisation which will enable them to drive out of the Congress all the blocs and leagues which petit-bourgeois radicalism is busily building up.

In China, the abandonment of the workers and peasants to the Kuo Min Tang led to the Shanghai massacre. Unity with the Congress will mean the same fate for the Indian masses. It will mean, in the end, one united neck of the workers and peasantry under the imperialist axe.

Kremlin Kultur

by Dwight MacDonald

"It seems to me that our intelligentsia are living in a particularly happy time . . . The Soviet system alone gives the intelligentsia an opportunity to unfold its creative powers . . . We shall release such forces that the mere thought of it makes us breathless. (Applause). Comrades, on December 12 we shall all vote for the Communist Party, for him who expresses the aspirations of the people, Comrade Stalin. (Stormy applause, turning into an ovation. Shouts of 'Hurrah!') For the Soviet intelligentsia! For the creative work of the Soviet intelligentsia!"—Speech by M. Kalinin, president of the Soviet Union, before the representatives of the Soviet Toiling Intelligentsia of Leningrad, Nov. 26, 1937. (Quoted from *International Literature*, No. 1, 1938).

There is an aged joke about some state legislature which once repealed the law of gravitation. It now appears that in the Soviet Union, where anything can happen these days, something of the sort is actually in process. According to Harold Denny's report in the *N. Y. Times* for June 15 last, *Socialist Agriculture*, the official organ of the Commissariat of Agriculture, has just published a letter from twenty-four agricultural students denouncing as "bourgeois formalism" both the Mendelian law of heredity and the theory of genes and chromosomes for which T. H. Morgan was awarded the Nobel Prize. "The concept of the gene contradicts dialectical materialism, write the students. "We share the opinion of Academician Lysenko when he says, "To my mind it is high time to extract bodily Mendelianism and all its equivalents from the courses of higher educational institutions." Denny points out that "the fact the editor of *Socialist Agriculture* publishes the letter under the heading, 'CHASE FORMAL GENETICS FROM THE UNIVERSITIES' strongly indicates that that is just what will be done—that the Mendelian law, so far as the Soviet Union is concerned, will be repealed. Unless the editor of *Socialist Agriculture* made a fearfully bad guess."

The Philistinism which has laid waste Soviet culture under Stalin appears clearly in the invidious comparison the students' letter makes between "formal" and "modernistic" genetics—which is dismissed as academic hocus-pocus, mere theory—and "practical" genetics. The "formal" school of Mendel-Morgan is led by N. I. Vavilov, an internation-

ally famous plant expert. The "practical" school is led by T. D. Lysenko, who is in high favour with the Kremlin (and unknown outside the U.S.S.R.). Lysenko is thoroughgoing in his Philistinism, rejecting not only Mendelianism but even the science of genetics itself, which he terms "merely an amusement, like chess or football." (*N. Y. Times*, Dec. 14, 1936.) Lysenko and his followers charge the Mendel-Morgan-Vavilov school with placing a "fascist" emphasis on hereditary factors, and insist that any good Bolshevik must put the emphasis on environment. Several years ago they kicked up such a row that Vavilov was arrested as a "Trotskyist" and the Seventh International Congress on Genetics, which was to be held in Moscow in the summer of 1937, was abruptly cancelled on orders from the Kremlin.

Denny comments on the "remarkable" fact that such a controversy, involving cardinal points of political doctrine, should have been allowed to drag on for three years—indeed, that it should take place at all. I agree it is remarkable, and suggest that the Kremlin finds itself in a difficult position. For the more national consciousness the Kremlin finds its expedient to stimulate, the more expedient also it must find it to emphasize heredity over environment. And so, while on the whole inclining towards Lysenko's doctrines, the Kremlin cannot quite bring itself to summarily outlaw Vavilov.

For these very special reasons, the Vavilov school has been allowed to survive and even to dispute publicly with the dominant school. But this is a unique situation. In other fields of culture, the Kremlin never hesitates to lay down the law swiftly and with finality. In his intellectual pretensions, if not in other ways, Stalin is a twentieth-century Leonardo Da Vinci, settling out of hand the most abstruse problems of science and esthetics, turning his attention from astronomy to cubism to the expressionistic theatre—and with the most devastating effects in each field. Below I have catalogued a few of the Kremlin's more spectacular recent exploits in such matters. They will perhaps give some faint impression of what the intellectual atmosphere must be like at present in the Workers' Fatherland.

ART.

"Purification of Soviet art from 'decadent

modernistic influences' as well as the 'sticky sweetness of romanticism' was demanded to-day in *Izvestia* . . . 'Neither French impressionism nor post-impressionism nor bourgeois romanticism in the art of the French revolution, nor the spirit of eighteenth century painting, can harmonise with Soviet art.' The philosophical basis of Soviet art was defined thus: 'New ideas, new spectators and new beauty are the principal accessories of socialistic art. Its basic morality is Soviet humanism.'—*N. Y. Times*, Sept. 3, 1938.

ASTRONOMY.

"Professor Boris Gerasimovitch, head of the Pulkovo Observatory in Leningrad, was accused to-day of 'servility' toward foreign science by the newspaper *Leningrad Pravda* . . . Professor Gerasimovitch is the foremost astronomer of the Soviet Union, and he possesses an international reputation as one of the world's greatest astrophysicists . . . The current campaign against servility is based on the fact that many Soviet scientists first publish their works abroad."—*N. Y. Times*, July 19, 1936.

"Having jailed Director Gerasimovitch of the Pulkovo Observatory and shot Director Numerov of the Astronomical Institute at Leningrad and removed and jailed so many 'wreckers' and 'traitors' of star-science that no Soviet astronomers could be sent to the recent meeting of the International Astronomical Union at Stockholm, the G.P.U. has now turned its attention to the field of Soviet Art."—Bertram W. Wolfe, in *Workers Age*, November 19, 1938.

CINEMA.

"On March 17, 1937, the Central Administration of the Photo-Cinema Industry stopped the production of the much talked-of and eagerly awaited film, 'Bezhin Meadow,' on which Sergei Eisenstein, of 'Potemkin' fame, had been working for over two years . . . In an article in *Pravda*, Boris Shumiatsky, the head of the moving picture industry in the U.S.S.R. charged Eisenstein with having failed to 'learn from life,' with having placed too much faith in his own 'scholastic profundities' and with . . . 'harmful formalistic exercises' . . . Eisenstein admitted many of the criticisms. He admitted having been possessed of the intellectual's quixotic illusion that revolutionary work could be done individually . . . 'Fame came early to me,' he said. 'I overestimated myself, and that was a major error. I never advanced beyond the stage of elemental revolutionism . . .'"—Joshua Kunitz in *Moscow News*, March 31, 1927.

"Boris Shumiatsky, chief of the Soviet motion picture industry has been quietly removed . . . The magazine *Soviet Art* charged that his political blindness permitted 'savage veteran spies, Trotskyist and

Bukharinist agents and hirelings of Japanese and German fascism' to perform their wrecking deeds in the Soviet Cinema . . . He was also criticised for introducing the sex element into an almost completely masculine story, Stevenson's 'Treasure Island,' by transforming cabin boy Jim Hawkins into Jenny Hawkins."—*N. Y. Times*, Jan. 17, 1938.

HISTORY.

"One of the biggest problems confronting the Bolsheviks is to get a comprehensive history of the Communist revolution. None has yet been written, and no one appears willing to undertake the task because of the virtual certainty that whatever line of thought he pursued to-day would be unpopular five or ten years hence."—*N. Y. Herald-Tribune*, Jan. 10, 1936.

"The heavy guns of the Russian Communist Party have now been turned on the works of the late M. N. Pokrovsky, who until his death in 1932 was almost idolised as a Marxist historian, and on the younger Soviet historians who studied under him and now are accused of being active Trotskyists . . . *Pravda* is especially angered by the low estimate of Peter the Great made by Professor Pokrovsky and his followers . . . 'Pokrovsky's pupils,' writes *Pravda*, 'were fertile soil for all sorts of anti-party hesitations and wanderings . . . Many of them became Japanese-German-Trotskyist agents for Rightist dissenters.'"—*N. Y. Times*, April 18, 1937.

"Nikolai Bukharin and Alexei Rykov, former premier, are denounced along with Leon Trotsky and other one-time Soviet leaders as murderers of Mr. Kirov in a new textbook on the history of the Soviet Union just published. This is the winner of a government competition, and the group of historians who composed it received a premium of 75,000 rubles . . . The textbook awards considerable praise to Peter the Great . . ."—*N. Y. Times*, Aug. 25, 1937.

"Joseph Stalin was characterised to-day as not only a great statesman but as a model historian and scientist by Emil Yaroslavsky . . . Comrade Stalin personally executed a vast amount of the work of compiling 'A Short Course on the History of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union,' said Mr. Yaroslavsky. 'Isn't our admiration stirred by this work of Stalin, for which he found time amid gigantic State work? . . . The concrete instructions of Stalin to our historians, and concrete criticisms of their mistakes—all this caused a veritable about-face in our history.'"—*N. Y. Times*, March 13, 1939.

LAW.

"Serious charges are faced by Eugene B. Pashukanis, until a year ago regarded as chief theoretician

of Soviet justice . . . Mr. Pashukanis had taught that the State was withering away . . ."—*N. Y. Times*, April 4, 1938.

LEXICOGRAPHY.

"The Lexicographical Institute in Leningrad is one of the latest institutions in the U.S.S.R. to suffer in the constantly widening purge . . . Academician N. S. Derzhavin, editor-in-chief of the dictionary, who enjoys international reputation, has been removed from his post. His assistant, Professor Obnorsky and his secretary are likewise accused of 'counter-revolution' and 'wrecking' and there is no reason to doubt that all three have been arrested . . . The entire work will be rewritten under the direction of new editors.

"*Leningrad Pravda* published a bitter attack on Professor Derzhavin, asserting he subtly introduced heretical Trotskyist theories into circulation . . . It cited the definition of the word 'emigre' as 'one who lives permanently outside his own country' as a sample, pointing out indignantly that the definition 'said not one word about the treason of such people to their Socialist fatherland' . . . Worse still, 'comparatively few quotations from Stalin were given,' while they freely relied on quotations from Bukharin, Kamenev, and Radek.

"The editors encountered difficulties a few years ago. They issued the volume, "P", with a definition of the word, 'passport', explaining the hateful significance of this word under the Czarist regime . . . The volume had gone to press when the Soviet Government suddenly announced the introduction of a law requiring every citizen to carry a passport."—*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, August 27, 1937.

LITERATURE.

"The Soviet Union is purging its writers. The tallest reputations to fall so far have been those of V. Kirshon and A. Afinogenov, the two best-known playwrights in the Soviet Union . . . They are only two of many. The current purge . . . has turned up a nest of 'enemies of the people' in nearly every newspaper, magazine, and publishing house . . . Until the new 'party line' become clear, it would be a foolhardy Soviet writer who would advance a new idea. One of them, asked recently why he had written so little recently, quoted an old Jewish proverb: 'While a pogrom is going on, don't rush out on the street.'"—*N. Y. Herald-Tribune*, May 11, 1937.

MUSIC.

"Dimitri Shostakovitch officially went in eclipse

to-day as the Soviet Union's favourite living composer . . . *Pravda* branded his music as 'unSoviet, unwholesome, cheap, eccentric, tuneless and Leftist' and pleaded for music with a tune to it that one could whistle on the way home . . . His ballet, 'Limpid Stream,' was removed from the repertory of the Bolshoi Theatre. His opera, 'Lady Macbeth of Minsk,' was cancelled on the eve of its opening in a theatre that had been rehearsing it for months."—*N. Y. Times*, Feb. 14, 1936.

"Joseph Stalin . . . yesterday attended the revised version of Glinka's nineteenth century patriotic opera, 'Susanin' . . . The original version, entitled, 'A Life for the Czar,' glorified Czarism . . . The revised version retains the famous finale music but changes the words from 'Glory, glory to the Czar!' to 'Glory, glory to the fatherland!' . . . Mr. Stalin repeatedly applauded his approval."—*N. Y. Times*, April 4, 1939.

PHILOSOPHY.

"Professor Shatkin, who said in a lecture at the Moscow Power Institute that Aristotle had laid down the fundamental principles of Menshevism and that Plato was the father of fascism, has been summarily removed . . . This action was followed by a full faculty meeting at which both the Communist Party and the Young Communist organisation were represented, as well as the administration of the Commissariat of Heavy Industry . . ."—*N. Y. Times*, Oct. 22, 1938.

THEATRE.

"Vsevolod E. Meyerhold, head of the famous theatre bearing his name and long revered by Leftist dramatic groups abroad as a prophet of the revolutionary theatre, has received a terrific drubbing from Platon Kerzhentseff, chairman of the arts committee of the Council of People's Commissars . . . Meyerhold's first play in 1920, after he organised his new theatre, Mr. Kerzhentseff says, had a Menshevist traitor for a hero and the second was dedicated to Leon Trotsky." *N. Y. Times*, Dec. 18, 1937.

"The long-expected axe fell to-day on V. E. Meyerhold . . . The arts committee of the Council of People's Commissars ordered his theatre dissolved and members of his acting company transferred to other theatres . . . The arts committee charged . . . the Meyerhold Theatre throughout its existence was unable to free itself from the utterly bourgeois, formalistic positions alien to Soviet art, had distorted the classics for the sake of Leftist tricks, and formalistic stunts, and had failed in the production of Soviet plays, such few as it had produced being

saturated with ambiguity, even downright and anti-Soviet sneers."—*N. Y. Times*, Jan. 18, 1938.

ET CETERA: ANTHROPOLOGY, ARCHÆOLOGY, BUDDHIST LORE, ETHNOGRAPHY AND SOIL CULTURE.

"The directorate of the All-Union Academy of Science has recommended the immediate expulsion in disgrace of Nikolai Bukharin . . . The grounds given were that Bukharin presided over the most dangerous counter-revolutionary nest within the academy. According to the report of the permanent

secretary, N. P. Gorbunov, who presented the expulsion resolution, many departments of the academy were riddled with counter-revolutionary tendencies which disrupted the work of the scientific institutions . . . Mr. Gorbunov's report specifically condemned the Pulkavo Observatory . . . the Soil Institute, Literature Institute, Law Institute, the Institute of Buddhist Lore, which was accused of publishing an organ of the Buddhist lamaist religion, and the Institutes of Archæology, Anthropology and Ethnography . . . He attacked Germany for expelling her best scientists and falsifying science . . ."—*N. Y. Times*, May 21, 1937.

Pre-war Empire Policy

In spite of the vast arms spending, the volume of world trade continues to dwindle. Bourgeois economists in Britain who prophesised that the latest spurt in British armaments expenditure would give rise to an industrial boom accompanied by the disappearance of unemployment in Britain have been refuted by the facts. Government securities maintain their level, but industrial securities continue on their headlong decline. The economists, seeking for something to blame for the failure of their predictions, point to the unsettled international situation, and the stockjobbers are blamed for succumbing to panic and paralysing the stockmarket by marking down securities in the absence of dealings.

The capitalist finds to-day that the best field for the profitable investment of funds is in Government securities, not only because the capitalist class is collectively piling up the instruments of death but because the need to hold together the Empire to face the strains of the coming war involves the outpouring of funds.

As the slump and the war-crisis simultaneously intensify, the Empire is shaken to its foundations. The Irish bourgeoisie was won over by concessions enshrined in the Anglo-Eire Trade Treaty, but the explosion of bomb after bomb in Britain testifies to the determination of a section of Irishmen to exploit Britain's difficulties to the full.

The "solution" of the Palestine problem has resulted in the substitution of Jewish terrorist bombings for Arab terror.

The Indian bourgeoisie has been won over by means of concessions to the support of British imperialism in war, but the peasant war in India

steadily deepens and widens while the number and extent of strikes are mounting to new record levels.

A series of revolutionary strikes has taken place in Jamaica, Burma, British Guiana, Straits Settlements, and in the endeavour to end the general "unrest" that is sweeping through the native colonial peoples, new conciliation measures enable the British Government to pose as the friend and protector of the native workers against their employers. Labour codes are being laid down for the Barbados and British Guiana.

The generosity towards the national bourgeoisie, the fatherliness towards the workers, both flow from the same source, the need to build up support and manpower for the coming war. But the greed for profits makes British imperialism incapable of extending any real relief to the colonial peoples whose allegiance they are seeking to cultivate, and they resort again to the whip and the bullet when militant demands are made. In Jamaica, demonstrators were fired upon on June 19th, and unemployed meetings banned by the police. A bill to empower the Government to prohibit meetings or processions is now before the Legislature. In this way the workers are given a taste of the "British democracy" which to-morrow they will be asked to die for.

In spite of all the hopes of industrial revival which the British bourgeoisie places on the arms spending, the slump will deepen, the colonial "unrest" will intensify, the demands of the colonial bourgeoisie will grow more exacting. British and colonial workers, fellow-inmates of the same imperialist prison, must unite their efforts to break down the capitalist barriers that hem them in.