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The I.L.P. in Transition

By TED GRANT

The I.L.P. Conference this year provides instructive material on the evolution and direction of this Party. Under the influence of the beginnings of mass radicalisation of the working class, the I.L.P. is increasing its membership and its influence fairly considerably. For the first time for years the finances of the Party are in a sound position. Taking all these factors into consideration the leadership seems to have regarded with satisfaction the proceedings of their Jubilee Conference.

The changes in mass consciousness in Britain are revealing themselves in many ways. A political ferment and awakening is taking place among large sections of the working class. The middle class is beginning to break away from allegiance to the traditional parties of British capitalism, as the growth and success of the Common Wealth movement has shown. The by-election successes of the anti-Government candidates, or a vague programme of pseudo-Socialism or social reform, has shown the steady drift of the masses towards the Left and towards Socialism. Among the basic mass of the Labour workers a feeling of disgust and uneasiness at the association of the leadership with the Tories in the Government has been growing. The masses are beginning to discern the real meaning of the coalition with finance capital. A movement for the ending of the

electoral truce is gaining momentum among the workers in the Trade Unions, Co-operatives and within the Labour Party. It is on this background of the beginnings of mass upsurge, that the I.L.P. has gained its modest successes.

A comparison between last year's Conference and the one just held indicates the effect that these developments are having, externally and internally, on the I.L.P.

At the last Conference a sharp swing to the Left was to be observed among the membership and a process of differentiation taking place. For the first time for years real lively discussion and a critical attitude on the part of the membership could be seen. A tendency to seek a policy reflecting a genuine revolutionary solution towards the problems facing the working class. As a reflection of this a Left wing tendency was crystallised, weak and inexperienced perhaps, but orienting itself on the platform of Bolshevism. Faced with a growing opposition of this kind, the leadership revealed itself in its true Centrist character, though this time garbed in a cloak of sectarianism. The basic issue at last year's Conference was the question of the Socialist Britain Now Campaign and the problem of the Labour Party. The young Left wing put forward the correct Marxist position—the need to conduct agitation among the masses

around a programme which would have as its key issue, the demand to the labour leadership to end the coalition and wage a struggle for power on a Socialist Programme. The leadership of the I.L.P. recoiled from this with horror though refusing to face up to the problem of how to expose the Labour leadership.

Nothing could reveal the difference between Marxism and Centrism better than the attitude towards this question. In it is summed up, the tremendous gulf that lies between an assimilation of Leninism and a serious attitude towards the problem of preparing and organising a Party of the Socialist Revolution, and the superficiality and shallowness of Centrism. For this question—the key question of revolutionary policy for Britain—and the methods adopted to approach its solution contains within itself the necessity to understand and appreciate the mode of development of the working class towards the socialist revolution, an appreciation of the meaning and role of reformism, the necessity to educate the masses through their own experience, and an understanding of the decisive role which a party armed with a correct policy and method, can and should play in such a situation.

Despite the leadership, the delegates striving to find a way out of their isolation from the masses which the Socialist Britain Now Campaign signally failed to dispel, passed the resolution of Labour to Power on a Socialist programme by a big majority, without perhaps clearly understanding this policy.

The twelve month that has passed since then has confirmed completely the correctness of the analysis made by the Fourth Internationalists. Even the leadership of the I.L.P. has become aware of the sterility of their previous policy. The progressive movement of the Trade Unionist and Labour workers away from the strangling embrace of the coalition with Big Business and towards class independence, has already reached such proportions that they are beginning to observe what is taking place beyond their noses. Large numbers of Union Branches, Labour Parties and even some individual leaders of the I.L.P. and Trade Union movement, under the pressure of the mass feeling, have come out against the coalition. Alas! They have not even given a single thought or a glance in the direction of the Socialist Britain Now Campaign. Naturally, this development which they had not foreseen, has thrown the leadership off balance. A Marxist leadership could predict, assess and help to accelerate the awakening of the Labour masses and simultaneously warn and prepare them for the inevitable sellout of the Labour leadership. In that lies the essence of the policy of Labour to Power. Not so the leadership of the I.L.P. Trotsky once said sectarians were really opportunists afraid of their opportunism. That is especially so with the I.L.P. leadership except of course that their opportunism is really organic. If their previous sectarian attitude had even a grain of sense or the semblance of an argument in its favour it was in pointing out the dangers of a mass reaction and disillusionment and despair on the part of the masses at a new betrayal on the part of the Labour leadership. It is precisely this aspect of their argument that they have cast aside.

Maxton, at the recent Jubilee Conference, spoke of the "revolutionary potentialities" of the Labour Party. Brockway, at the public rally in the evening spoke of converting the Labour Party to Socialism. Thus it is that the leadership tramples on and hastily abandons the position of yesterday. One thing, and one thing only remains the same. The decisive refusal under any and all conditions to expose the real nature of the Labour leadership.

Last year when the leadership found itself in a tight corner over the question of why they refused to put

forward the idea of Labour to Power, while at the same time they refrained from putting up candidates against the Labour Party at bye-elections, Maxton unctiously explained that "they did not have sufficient money." Brockway gave the same explanation at a Socialist Britain Now Conference when confronted with the question by the Trotskyists. But if this were so the leadership had the responsibility to raise seriously before the membership at the last Conference, the need to collect money for the purpose. Their failure to do so was at best, a dereliction of duty. However, a contrast between the last Conference and the Jubilee Conference will demonstrate that this was a simple but **very unprincipled manoeuvre** designed to cover up their affinity to the Labour bureaucracy. Brockway and the Centrists internationally have spilled no little ink in their virtuous indignation at the so-called "amorality" of Bolshevism-Trotskyism. The tactical "means" of the revolutionists are distorted and falsified and pictured as "dishonest" and for this reason unlikely to achieve the desired "end". But when it suits their own ends, the I.L.P. leadership are prepared to use precisely the "dishonest" means which they so falsely attribute to the Trotskyists and Leninists.

Never under any conditions could Bolsheviks stoop to methods such as this. The prime task of the revolution after all, consists in the education of the masses and of the Party. Not having any real principles the Centrists cannot explain honestly their stand on a question of this sort because their whole position consists in evasions and subterfuges. To make a principled stand would force them to take outright the reformist or the revolutionary position. The solution of the N.A.C. is simply to avoid the issue and to deceive their own members. Thus awkward thoughts and moods on the part of the membership are avoided. In this way does I.L.P.ism differ from Revolutionary Socialism in its attitude towards the membership of its party and towards the working class.

This happy solution of the problem was not open to the leadership this year. To use the excuse of "lack of money" would be too blatant in face of the financial resources they hold, and even the most inexperienced delegate would not have believed it. A resolution was put forward from one of the Scottish Branches suggesting that if the truce was upheld at the Labour Party Conference, the I.L.P. should contest bye-elections against the Labour Party as well as against Tories. Naturally, the platform opposed this with all the strength at its command. Maxton, in moving the rejection of amendments which castigated the role of the Labour leadership, argued that the Labour leaders in the main, were decent, well-intentioned, fellows and the rank and file labour workers were as much to blame as the leaders for the situation today! Thus the I.L.P. places the deceiver and the deceived on the same level. What then, is the function of leadership? Perhaps the leadership should follow the rank and file. Thus it is that Maxton, Brockway and the other leaders of the I.L.P. reveal their real lack of elementary Marxist training. But the rejection of the resolution to put up candidates on Maxton's excuses at this Conference, is a clear indication of the real policy of the N.A.C.—the policy of a left flank of Labour reformism!

The resolutions which the leadership pushed through indicates that the realisation of the barrenness of the Socialist Britain Now Campaign and its obvious impotence to win the masses, has led to a capitulation to the Labour bureaucracy. It is clear that at the first convenient opportunity the I.L.P. will re-affiliate to the Labour Party. This will probably come at the moment when the sweep of the mass movement compels the Trade Union and Labour leadership, reluctantly to end the coalition with the Tories. From the point of view

of the Labour bureaucracy, if the I.L.P. were really a revolutionary force, they would oppose re-affiliation tooth and nail. But it is precisely the lack of a real consistent revolutionary policy which would entail as one of its indispensable prerequisites an implacable struggle against the Labour Leadership, which will secure a smooth passage for the I.L.P. They will not and cannot raise the question of affiliation by appealing to the rank and file to support them on a revolutionary policy, thus raising the same issue as an important means of educating mass opinion, but will rely on negotiations with the Labour leadership, negotiations which all the indications show, have already been taking place.

If the I.L.P. were a revolutionary party affiliation under such conditions would be disastrous. But precisely because it is not revolutionary, the move of the I.L.P. towards the Labour Party is a progressive step and can have progressive repercussions. It can promote a rapid differentiation within the I.L.P.: This does not mean of course, that the revolutionary wing of the I.L.P. should refrain from fighting for a principled fusion and accept the attitude of the leadership as at all progressive. On the contrary, they must intensify the struggle to expose the capitulation of the N.A.C. and educate the widest sections of the party cadres. Once inside the Labour Party, the evolution and crystallisation of the wings will be speeded up. The leadership will be reinforced by such "Lefts" as Cove, Messer and others in the Labour Party.

A big section of the Left workers in the Labour Party will tend to gravitate towards the I.L.P. While the leadership would more and more adapt itself to the Left reformists and the policy of the I.L.P. would swing sharply to the right. This in its turn would inevitably result in accelerating the education and regroupment of the revolutionary socialist elements within the I.L.P. With the necessity to wage a struggle against the now Left reformist leadership, the ideas of the nascent Left wing would be clarified. It would, if it was not to decay and disintegrate completely, find the road to the methods and principles of Bolshevism.

The danger is, however that the confusion of the ultra-lefts will add further to the lack of clarity, by their opposition to re-affiliation. The palpable opportunism of the leadership may drive a section of the best elements in this direction. Although, of course, after an initial opposition the ultra-lefts will inevitably capitulate to the leadership. Unless the revolutionary wing succeed in clarifying the issues in the coming months, some of the best proletarian elements will be driven along the road of organisational adventures which can only retard the building of the revolutionary party which in turn can only be the party of the Fourth International.

This Conference, far more than the last, revealed the I.L.P. in a state of flux. The discussions and the proceedings revealed a state of tremendous confusion in the minds of the delegates and even more so in the leadership. Not a single issue was debated in a manner which would clarify the problems raised and lift the rank and file delegates to a higher political plane. The time of Conference was wasted on trivialities while the leadership blurred and slurred over principled issues. The leadership used the overloaded agenda, which contained dozens of trivial amendments which could easily have been disposed of through the Standing Orders Committee. The result was that on some of the basic resolutions and amendments, no real discussion took place. Half an hour was allotted for the discussion on India, including the speech from the platform! Even on some of the other basic resolutions no thorough discussion could take place. The result was to reduce some of the Conference proceedings to little less than a farce. The leadership has full responsibility for this situation, which suited them completely. Because of this the tendencies at the Conference were not as clearly marked out from one another as they would otherwise have been. What dis-

cussion did take place though, was sufficient to reveal the heterogeneous character of the composition of the I.L.P.

The pacifist tendency, though obviously on the downward grade, was vociferous and still retained a substantial support. But the working class core of the I.L.P. has been moving steadily away from this position. The parliamentary group and the N.A.C. betrayed by their speeches that nothing fundamental separates them from the reformism of the Labour Party. The leadership revealed itself as rather nervous at the prospect of a discussion on basic principles.

The Left wing tendency moving in the direction of Bolshevism, though young and inexperienced in the face of the old and experienced parliamentarians such as Maxton, made a far bigger impression than at the previous Conference. They were clearly finding their feet and securing more support and clearer support in that section of the Conference looking for a genuine Left lead. In addition, they showed a growth of confidence in themselves and their case and stood up well to the leadership, who tried by numerous tricks to put them off their stride. Unfortunately, the Left wing in the I.L.P. is not homogeneous and there is a weak but distinct tendency towards ultra-leftism.

The confusion within the membership, the hurried nature of the discussions, all led inevitably to the victory of the platform. Voting at Conferences very often does not give a clear indication of processes taking place, and especially is this so where the differences are not clarified. On those issues where a fair amount of discussion took place, the Left wing opposition, in all its tendencies generally secured 40 or 50 votes, that is from a quarter to a third of the Conference delegates. However, this would not necessarily be a clear assessment of the strength of the opposition.

The confusion of the leadership on even elementary questions was indicated in the discussion on Fascism. A Marxian amendment was moved showing how fascism arose as a mass movement after the failure of the working class to take power in a revolutionary crisis through the failure and sabotage of its organisations; its difference with the rule of capitalists under bourgeois democracy lying in the complete destruction of all organisations of the working class. As usual with the leadership they opposed this amendment and managed to confuse content with form. The so-called "planning" of the State under fascism, which has its counterpart in the bourgeois democratic state machine at the present time they have identified as the essence of fascism. The result of all this confusion is seen in the fact that a delegate could get up on the day after the discussion and blandly announce that fascism, if the masses were not vigilant, could be introduced by the Tories, and even more as a menace, could be introduced by the Labour Party! This statement went by without disturbing the platform in the least and without any comment on their part whatsoever. And why not? Ridley writes the same sort of arrant nonsense in the pages of the "New Leader" without comment or reply from the Editorial board. So lightminded are the leadership of the I.L.P.! They are preparing to enter a party which apparently can impose fascism! Thus they teach and educate the members. Here, Comrade Maxton, lies precisely the task of leadership. Conferences in a Bolshevik Party are not meant for the purpose of merely pushing through resolutions and policy, but through discussion they act as a means of clarifying the understanding of the advanced elements in the party as to the basic problems facing the workers. The delegates in their turn assist in educating the rank and file on their return to the Branches and thus enrich and strengthen the Party.

The confusion of course, arises from the position of the leadership. On the Beveridge Plan they took an out and out reformist stand, exactly that of Maxton in the House of Commons, which differs in no wise from

that of the Labour Party or the Stalinists. Pious references, after lauding the Beveridge Report, to the realisation that Socialism alone could solve the problems of the workers, could easily be paralleled in the statements of these other organisations. The leadership managed to force through their position again mainly due to the restricted period given to discussion.

The only reference to C.P. affiliation to the Labour Party was made by John McGovern who announced that affiliation by "gangster Communism" would mark the end of the Labour Party. While we can agree wholeheartedly with a denunciation of Stalinism, such a method of approaching the problem is the worst that can possibly be made. Hundreds of the mass organisations of the working class have passed resolutions in favour of affiliation and the idea of "unity". Mere denunciation of Stalinism will not convince the workers who support or sympathise with their application. The present position of the I.L.P. on this is even worse than their previous silence. In its Editorial Column the "New Leader" quotes the threats of the Transport Union's bureaucrats to disaffiliate if the C.P. should succeed in gaining a majority for its application. Instead of castigating these leaders, who are from a different angle just as reactionary as the Stalinist leadership, the "New Leader" quotes this as an indication that C.P. affiliation would disrupt the Labour Party! This argument will certainly render more easy a future application for affiliation from the I.L.P. But it has nothing in common with a revolutionary attitude towards the question. The threat of these Trade Union bosses, who incidentally have not consulted their members on the question, is reactionary through and through. Their objection to C.P. affiliation is not made at all because of the present strike breaking policy of the C.P. but from the viewpoint of conservative bureaucrats. Certain sections of the trade union bureaucracy, have come out in favour of C.P. affiliation largely because they believe that the C.P. will serve as a means of disciplining the workers. There is not a pin to choose between all these bureaucrats. Our attitude of supporting the affiliation as a means of facilitating the exposure of all these gentlemen and the revolutionary regroupment of the workers' movement is the only principled Marxist one, and the only one which can clarify the issue for the workers.

Incidentally, we notice that the I.L.P. leadership has no qualms in denouncing the treacherous Stalinist Leadership! In this connection we may note that the booklet published by the I.L.P. to celebrate its Jubilee, proudly quotes the I.L.P.'s rejection of Lenin's attitude on this question.

During an interview with "Lenin and the Executive of the C.I. which Radek was then secretary, to which they submitted a series of questions and brought back the terms of affiliation now known as "The 21 Points", decisively rejected at the I.L.P. Conference the following year . . . (the following ideas were developed).

" . . . it was not considered essential that the I.L.P. should leave the Labour Party, but if it remained affiliated it would be expected to continually fight against its policy and its personnel, acting upon the assumption that its leaders were treacherously betraying the working class movement. To this Wallhead replied that he could not conceive the I.L.P. pursuing a policy of that description . . ."

This among other things, prevented the affiliation of the I.L.P. to the Communist International in its revolutionary period. Much water has flown under the bridges since those days. There have been revolutions and counter-revolutions and the world has been plunged into a new imperialist war. But the I.L.P. leadership has not understood or been changed by these events and has not altered its attitude. In 1920 they rejected the Leninist position and moved from the middle of the road back to a reformist position. On a new level the I.L.P. leadership is repeating its history. But this time with

different results which will be entirely unexpected by the leadership.

This Conference clearly indicates that the evolution of the I.L.P. is being speeded up. The leadership has the illusion that their apparent victory at the Conference has ensured a big growth and a pleasant haven within the Labour Party at a later stage. Nothing could be further from reality. It is virtually certain that in the next period the I.L.P. will enter on a period of extended growth, especially if the truce is broken and they affiliate to the Labour Party. However, coming events in Britain will put every programme to the test. The revolutionary working class elements in the I.L.P. will inevitably, as they gather experience in the mass movement, come to realise the real nature of Centrism.

The leading figures of the I.L.P. never tire of intoning the "internationalism" of the Party. This was emphasised by every leading speaker at the Jubilee Conference. In recent weeks Brockway has penned several articles on the question of the "New International" which completely shirk the issue. Instead of raising the question of their international relations and international programme for a full discussion at the Conference, the leadership evaded the issue completely. The Standing Orders Committee, no doubt reflecting the position of the N.A.C. (since the issue is slid over in that body's report) rejected a resolution from a London Branch which would have raised the whole problem for a principled discussion. A reference back on this question was defeated by a little over a dozen votes. It is no wonder that the I.L.P. leadership avoids a discussion on internationalism. The fate of the essentially fictitious London Bureau, to which Brockway piously refers as the I.L.P.'s international affiliates, speaks too much against the I.L.P.'s methods on the international arena. The American affiliate of the Lovestonites which the I.L.P. boasted was stronger than the Trotskyists, committed the unprecedented step in the working class movement of committing suicide and dissolving itself. The Norwegian group long ago reverted back to the Second International. The German S.A.P. came out for support of the "democracies" in the war. The French group of Doriot finished up in the camp of fascism. The latest reports indicate that the former Swedish section has now fused with the Communist Party.

The best and most resolute party of the Centrists, the Spanish P.O.U.M. proved incapable of facing the test of the revolution and through its own vacillation and indecision, was largely responsible for the disastrous defeat of the Spanish revolution and its own destruction.

Within the I.L.P. there are many groupings and tendencies moving in different directions as there were in the ill-fated London Bureau. The fact that the I.L.P. will in all probability gain tremendously in numbers and influence is no guarantee of the future! On the contrary, the process of differentiation and of sharp clashes between the differing and antagonistic groupings would be intensified by the incapacity of the leadership to give a revolutionary lead to the working class. The all-inclusive Bureau collapsed. The I.L.P.'s methods of building the International is precisely the same as its methods of building the Party. The all-inclusive Party will suffer a similar fate as the all-inclusive International.

However, there is a large and growing left wing in the I.L.P. composed almost exclusively of working class elements which is striving to transform the I.L.P. into a revolutionary socialist Party. The main task of this grouping consists in theoretical education, training and hardening out of its forces. With correct and systematic work it should win the best elements of the I.L.P. workers towards a genuine Marxist policy. The debacle of the I.L.P. is inevitable. But the best elements will inevitably break completely with centrism and find that the methods and policy of the Fourth International alone can build a revolutionary party as an instrument for the emancipation of the working class.

The Class Meaning of the Soviet Victories

BY FELIX MORROW

Great masses throughout the world are rejoicing at the victories of the Red Army. Without a rounded theory but nevertheless with a basically class loyalty, they understand that the Soviet victories are their victories too. They are definitely aware of a distinction between the Workers' State and its capitalist "allies." It is deeply symbolic that at Cardiff, Wales, in honour of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Red Army, the miners from the surrounding valleys paraded with lighted lamps, the girl munition workers in overalls, while over the City flew the red flag. Of course, the parade was officially sanctioned, Deputy Prime Minister Attlee was the chief speaker, and we can be sure that the Stalinists sought to identify the affair as a symbol of unity between the Soviet Union and British capitalism. But in the essence of the matter the red flag and the lighted lamps and overalls, so different from the symbols of the usual British celebration, signify that the workers were primarily celebrating for the Workers' State. Certainly no one can seriously pretend that the rejoicing in India over the Soviet victories is on behalf of Britain! No, at bottom it is a class phenomenon, the feeling of the oppressed toward the victories of the army established by the October revolution.

Equally a class phenomenon are the first frank reactions of the "democratic" capitalists toward the Red Army successes. These—the very first victorious battles!—have already brought out into the press the anti-Soviet sentiments—and activities—of the "democrats." The Nazi armies are still deep in Russia, are still intact—yet already authoritative voices in the "democracies" indicate their dismay at the thought of a decisive Soviet victory over the fascist foe.

A leading editorial in the *New York Times*, undoubtedly the most responsible and sober spokesman of American capitalism, undertakes "a frank discussion of the problem." The editorial states:

"Swiftly, inexorably, the Russian armies continue to drive towards the west. One supposedly impregnable Nazi stronghold after another falls before their assault.

"But as the Red Armies plunge forward, they are also raising many questions in many minds as to what other order they have written on their banners, and the greater the Russian victories grow the more insistent these questions become. They are raised in private conversations, in the press, over the radio and in Congress. And these questions carry the danger that they will provide a fertile ground for the latest Nazi propaganda with which Hitler hopes to escape the consequences of defeat—the propaganda which raises the bogey of a Bolshevik domination of Europe in an effort to scare the world, divide the United Nations and therewith pave the way for a compromise peace.

"Under these circumstances it would do more harm than good to ignore these questions . . .

"The fears and suspicions about Russia are based primarily on two considerations. The first is that Russia will use Communist groups in other countries as instruments of ideological conquest. And the second fear is that the power which has the greatest share in victory will also dictate the peace, and that Russia, having the power, will also use it for conquest, or at least for gaining 'strategic frontiers.' In this connection we cannot fail to note the Washington dis-

patches yesterday, reporting that the Soviet Embassy is circulating an English translation of an editorial from *Pravda*, asserting an emphatic claim to Bessarabia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, on the ground that they are legally a part of Russia. This is a claim that our Government has not recognised.

" . . . Russia has accepted the principles of the Atlantic Charter.

" . . . Binding Russian engagements to observe these principles were laid down in both the Anglo-Russian Mutual Assistance Agreement of May 26, 1942 and in the War Aid Pact between Russia and the United States of June 11, 1942, and it was on the basis of such acceptances that both America and Great Britain agreed to extend material and other aid to Russia—aid which she solicited . . .

"In these circumstances it seems clear that further and more explicit agreements are necessary in order to give concrete meaning to the Atlantic Charter . . ."

(*New York Times*, February 14, 1943.)

These words are clear enough. The reference to the "first fear" about Stalinist groups abroad is obviously perfunctory. It is the "second fear" that is really at issue: American capitalism has not recognised (and, the tone of the "Times" indicates) does not intend to recognise the Soviet Union's claims for strategic frontiers; it was on the basis of this non-recognition as embodied in the "principles" of the Atlantic Charter that England and America have been "aiding" the Soviet Union—and presumably only on this basis; it is time now to demand from the Soviet Union still more binding and material—"explicit," "concrete") guarantees that post-war Europe will be made up according to specifications from Washington. And if these guarantees are not forthcoming . . . During the days immediately following this editorial, as the "Times" happily noted in another editorial on February 17, "a number of bills and resolutions looking forward to the post-war world have been introduced in Congress." Senator Gillette proposed immediate negotiations for "a post-war charter in order to give substance" to the Atlantic Charter. "As matters stand now," he said, "there is no guarantee that the declarations arrived at in that agreement will be crystallised into action after the war." Representative Kee proposed that Roosevelt "without undue delay enter into agreements with the several United Nations and other members of the community of sovereign nations to secure and maintain law, order and peace." (Which "other members"—Finland? the Baltic states?) In short, the American bourgeoisie demands "without undue delay" new, still more satisfactory, guarantees that the Soviet Union will submit to the Peace of Washington.

Finland, now looms as the first case in which these guarantees will be rigidly insisted upon. Indeed, this was long foreseen: Washington never declared war on the Finnish invaders of Soviet Karelia. For that matter, however, the British declaration of war on Finland did not prevent Churchill from meeting with the Finnish Minister to Ankara, Baron Yrjoe Koskinen, during the Englishman's visit to Turkey, as a United Press dispatch of February 12 from Stockholm reported. Permit us to recall that Britain is still at war with Finland. Yet this unprecedented interview between ostensibly warring ministers is reported casually in the American

press, which does not conceal its class solidarity with Finnish capitalism against the Workers' State.

THE ISSUE OF "STRATEGIC FRONTIERS" ... Finland, indeed, is well on the way to becoming the "poor little Finland" of the Soviet-Finnish War of 1939-40. If we do not yet read of the cocktail parties and theatre benefits and airplanes and guns for Finland, we already read declarations unmistakable in their import. President Risto Ryti made a speech which the February 3 "New York Times" accurately headlined as "Finnish President Appeals to Allies," and which it was quick to hearken to in an editorial declaring:

"If the United Nations win there is a good chance that the Finnish rights to self-government and economic outlets will be respected. They will be if America has any say in the matter." ("New York Times," February 5, 1934.)

What are "economic outlets"? For the Finnish bourgeoisie it means a Greater Finland embracing large portions of Soviet territory; what is it for the American bourgeoisie? In the February 5 editorial, Finland's war against the Soviet Union was still defined by the "Times" as "aggressive." Twelve days later, however, Finland's war suffered a quick sea change. The term aggressive disappears; instead an editorial tells us:

"Despite her present alignment, Finland deserves our sympathy, for she is one of the small nations victimized by the power politics of her mighty neighbours . . . The Germans exacted from Finland 'transit facilities' that enabled them to place German troops in that country. These troops, again, were Russia's reason for air attacks on Finland, which in turn caused Finland to enter into the 'defensive war'."

("New York Times", February 17, 1943.)

The "Times" lies, and knows that it lies. Why did the Finnish bourgeoisie more than willingly agree to what Nazi Germany "exacted," in contrast to fighting a war rather than agree in 1939 to the Soviet offer of an exchange of territory to provide Leningrad with more defensible frontiers against Germany? Why did the Finnish bourgeoisie prefer to fight on the side of the German bourgeoisie rather than on the side of the Red Army? Obviously a class criterion was involved and bourgeois Finland chose accordingly. The "Times" is silent about all this, and silent likewise about the "Greater Finland" expansionist aims for which Mannerheim led the invasion of Soviet Karelia and for which he provided the Nazis with bases to sink American ships bound for Murmansk. Instead the "Times" blames it all on the "power politics" not only of Germany but of the Soviet Union. Reading these editorials, one could hardly discover that the United States is presumably the ally of the Soviet Union. And indeed that alliance is as nothing for the American bourgeoisie in comparison to a cry for help from their class brothers, the Finnish capitalist allies of the Axis.

The atmosphere in London and Washington has already encouraged the Polish government-in-exile to drop its previous pretence of harmony with the Soviet Union. In a press interview on February 21 in London the prime minister, General Wladislaw Sikorski, announcing a formal protest to Moscow stated:

"For the moment I cannot deny that there are very great difficulties with Russia. However, they can and must be overcome. At the Polish-Russian frontier not only the Polish problem is being decided but also the question of peace in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the whole attitude of the Soviet toward democracy."

"The secret Russian radio in Poland—the Kosciuszko station—is always appealing to Poles for a general uprising and demanding that I issue orders to that effect. I cannot give an order for a revolt, because I would risk drowning my nation in a sea of blood. Now is not the time. . . ."

"The Russians have dropped some parachutists in

Central and Eastern Poland. They are not so much guerrilla leaders as leaders of internal political warfare. They have been organising Communist cells, but so far, however, without any results."

"Despite contrary reports, it is not true that our government has given instructions for fighting them actively. If there are any local incidents they are spontaneous. Underhand propaganda is using falsely this argument, but the Polish Government has only had recourse to an official protest (to Moscow) against foreign elements' intervening in the internal affairs of the Polish state." ("New York Times", February 22, 1943.)

This statement is particularly important since hitherto Sikorski has been the official leader of the Soviet-"collaborationist" wing of the Polish bourgeoisie and has been sharply criticised by the anti-collaborationists, who control most of the Polish-language bourgeois press in America and elsewhere. His statement makes clear that no real differences separate the two wings; only that, hitherto, under British pressure, Sikorski has remained silent, publicly—and now that pressure is released as the Red Army advances.

In the press interview Sikorski demanded "restoration of the pre-war Polish frontiers." This means that what was formerly Eastern Poland, predominantly inhabited by Byelorussians and Ukrainians suffering national oppression under Poland, and which in 1939 was incorporated into the Byelorussian and Ukrainian republics of the Soviet Union, would have to be surrendered to the Polish bourgeoisie. But their incorporation into the Soviet Union was immensely popular both with the people involved and with the masses of the Soviet Union; what was disliked was that it was done by joining with Germany in dividing Poland; it is doubtful whether Stalin would dare risk rescinding the incorporation with which his prestige is so closely bound up. Morally, of course, the Polish bourgeoisie has not the slightest claim upon these national minorities which they oppressed so brutally.

Sikorski's real demands, however, go far beyond return of the pre-war frontiers. Their real scope is indicated by Frederick Kuh, the well-informed head of the London Bureau of the Chicago "Sun":

"It is known that General Sikorski, during his recent visit to Washington, handed President Roosevelt a memorandum dealing with the future frontiers of Poland. . . ."

"What does Sikorski want? His government in London is thinking of creating a Greater Poland."

"Would that include East Prussia, the whole of Silesia and, in the west, a Polish frontier bounded by the River Oder? Would Czechoslovak Teschen be included in this blueprint of the future Poland? Vilna? Would there be an 'independent' Lithuania under Polish influence? And would Poland's eastern boundary revert to the 1921 Riga Treaty line embodying millions of Ukrainians and White (Byelo) Russians?"

"These are definite proposals we hear from influential Poles in London nowadays." ("Chicago Sun", February 5, 1943.)

Let us sum up the issue of "strategic frontiers." Washington and London refuse to recognise as Soviet territory Lithuania, Esthonia, Latvia, Bessarabia, western Byelorussia and western Ukraine and the Finnish territory which became part of Soviet Karelia. On the other hand Stalin, in his Order of the Day of February 23, explicitly names as permanent Soviet lands "Byelorussia, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia and Moldavia (which includes former Bessarabia) . . . and Karelia (which includes the former Finnish territory)."

THE REAL ISSUE

So far we have discussed the dispute on the superficial plane on which it publicly appears. Now let us proceed to deal with the fundamental basis of the dispute.

The "democratic" bourgeoisie pretends that the sole issue is one of safeguarding the national "independence" of Finland, Poland, Rumania and the Baltic states. This threadbare hypocrisy would be easy to see through—were it not for the fact that Stalin plays into their hands. Thanks to Stalin's bureaucratic and nationalistic conception of the defence of the Soviet Union, the Soviet side of the dispute is also presented to the world working class as one over frontiers and territorial acquisitions. Moreover, Stalin's false policy prevents him from explaining to the international proletariat the purpose of the territorial acquisitions. Here one sees the fundamental continuity between Stalin's policy during the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact and at present.

For the revolutionist the first task is to arouse the world masses in defence of the Soviet Union as a part of the world revolution. But Stalin is not a revolutionist and that is not his method. Stalin did not explain to the international proletariat that the territorial demands upon Finland in 1939 were to secure the defences of Leningrad against an attack from Nazi Germany; instead he was publicly assuring Ribbentrop that Nazi-Soviet unity was "cemented by blood" shed in the joint division of Poland. Under these conditions the Soviet invasion of Finland and the partition of Poland alienated world working class sympathy from the Soviet Union—a loss which, Trotsky pointed out, far outweighed the territorial and strategical gains achieved by Stalin's reactionary methods. Today the world masses are for the Soviet Union. But tomorrow, if Stalin again appears to be invading and dividing small nations, again without explanation, his bureaucratic methods are likely to re-awaken the suspicions of 1939-40, and once more alienate from the Soviet Union the sympathy of the working class of the world. Here lies a terrible danger for the immediate future.

Regardless of what Stalin does, however, it remains the class duty of the workers to defend the Soviet Union. We must explain to them, as Stalin does not and cannot, what is really at issue in this ostensible dispute over frontiers.

Against whom would the desired frontiers guard? Not primarily against the small countries directly involved—Finland, Poland, Rumania, the Baltic states. Neither individually nor in coalition could these countries by themselves hope successfully to assault the Soviet Union. Nor for many years could they hope for aid from a defeated and disarmed Germany (not to speak of the fact that, far more likely, after defeat revolution will bring Germany to the side of the Soviet Union). That is why Walter Lippmann, dealing with the post-war "problem of carrying out the obligations of the Atlantic Charter on the western borderland of the Soviet Republic," is not telling the truth when he writes:

"For Finland and for Poland the paramount reality will be that they are the weak neighbours of a very powerful Russia. Both countries fear Russia and both of them are seeking the support of Britain and America in opposing what they believe are Russia's territorial and political designs. They are disposed to argue that if we do not align ourselves with them against Russia they will end by throwing themselves into the arms of Germany." ("New York Herald-Tribune", February 6, 1943.)

Throwing themselves into the arms of a defeated Germany is an empty threat; we doubt that the Finnish and Polish bourgeoisie utter it. They are not, indeed, in any position to threaten or to bargain with America and Britain; they are merely appealing to the class solidarity of Washington and London against the Workers' State. And this fundamental appeal is being answered and, indeed, instigated. What appears superficially as disputes over frontiers between the Soviet Union and its small neighbours are in reality the steps being taken by the Anglo-American bloc to prepare new super-Wrangels against the Soviet Union.

We dismiss with the contempt it deserves the argument that the Soviet Union has no need to worry about its precise post-war frontiers because, forsooth, peace will reign under the aegis of a permanent international police force of the United Nations. It is, alas, true—not the least of his crimes—that Stalin has signed his name to such buncombe, for example the following clause in the December 4, 1941 pact between the U.S.S.R. and the Polish government:

"3. After the victorious war and appropriate punishment of the Hitlerite criminals, it will be the task of the Allied States to ensure a durable and just peace. This can be achieved only through a new organisation of international relations on the basis of unification of the democratic countries in a durable alliance. Respect for international law, backed by the collective armed force of all the Allied States, must form the decisive factor in the creation of such an organisation. Only under this condition can a Europe destroyed by the German barbarians be restored and can a guarantee be created that the disaster caused by the Hitlerites will never be repeated."

Similar clauses appear in the Anglo-Russian Twenty Year Treaty. Since he signed these, querulous voices of the "democracies" are demanding to know, why is Stalin worried about his frontiers? Thus Stalin's signature—and the Stalinist propaganda in the "democracies" along the same line—is being used to create suspicion against the Soviet Union among the masses.

Stalin of course has no faith in those clauses and neither has Churchill or Roosevelt, although, if they can arrive at a temporary settlement among themselves, they will join in using those clauses against defeated Germany and others. But at most that could only be a very temporary and unstable arrangement. As for a longer-range perspective, Roosevelt has so little faith in an international police force that he is already openly preparing to safeguard the American frontier . . . in Africa! At his press conference in Washington immediately after Classablanca

"Notice was served by the President on our allies as well as our enemies that this country and Brazil were determined to eliminate in the post-war arrangements any threat from the West African coast to the 'bulge' of Brazil, only 1,650 miles distant at the nearest point. He said it was well to have it understood now by the people of this hemisphere and those who hold territory on the West African coast that all military, naval and air threats from West Africa must be eliminated."

"Asked if this meant post-war demilitarisation of West Africa, the President said it was difficult to state the method of achieving his goal, since the method had not yet been decided upon. It might be demilitarisation or any other of a half dozen solutions, he added." ("New York Times", February 3, 1943.)

The international police force is pap for the multitude and a talking point against the Soviet Union's seeking strategic frontiers. Roosevelt refuses to recognise a danger to the Soviet Union in a bourgeois Finland frontier twenty miles from Leningrad. But he is terribly concerned about the danger to America and Brazil from the frontiers of the British and French possessions in West Africa "only 1,650 miles distant at the nearest point." No satirist could invent a crueller joke. It certainly illumines Roosevelt's faith in the international police force and all other methods for post-war "peace."

Are there politically literate people who really believe that Roosevelt and Churchill are interested in preserving the national independence of small nations? Try to tell that to the Ceylonese and Burmese nations, the Porto Ricans, the Negro people in the southern states and the West Indies as well as Africa, and the four hundred millions of India. Washington and London wish to preserve Finland, not as an independent nation but as what it has been since 1917—an outpost of imperialism on the

borders of the Workers' State, a dagger at Leningrad. To the same role they wish to return the Baltic states. As for Bessarabia, never ethnically Rumanian and forcibly seized from the young Soviet republic in 1918 while it was besieged by the imperialist armies of intervention—what argument can be made for returning it to Rumania except to strengthen that kingdom as an imperialist outpost on the Soviet border? If the issue were really national unification, what claim can be advanced for Polish sovereignty over the Byelorussian and Ukrainian population of "Eastern Poland"?

Those in the "democracies" who deny these territories to the Soviet Union do so only to seek them as springboards against the Workers' State. They would like as soon as possible to repeat more successfully what Churchill, leader of world imperialist intervention, did in 1918-1920. They know that private property and the nationalised property of the Soviet Union are two fundamentally antagonistic systems and cannot indefinitely continue to live side by side. One or the other—capitalism or the foundations of socialism—must conquer.

The present disputes over frontiers may be resolved. The temporary relation of forces between the "democracies" and the U.S.S.R. in case of further Soviet victories, or Stalin's agreement to help try to crush a proletarian revolution in Germany, may dictate to Churchill and Roosevelt a settlement recognising as Soviet some or perhaps even all the territories now in dispute. But they will do so in the sense that Hitler agreed to the Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland and the Baltic states—in exchange for Stalin's services (including those of the Comintern)* and to await a more propitious moment for assaulting the U.S.S.R. If the "democrats" thus have to surrender outposts in Eastern Poland, Finland and Rumania, then they will find new ones in Central Poland, Bulgaria, the Scandinavian peninsula, etc. This incontestable fact also demonstrates the basic fallacy of Stalin's bureaucratic and nationalistic method of defending the U.S.S.R. Vain is his search for "strategic" frontiers in the epoch of the bomber, parachutist and tank. The Soviet Union will remain in mortal danger so long as capitalism remains the stronger power on a world scale. Only successful proletarian revolutions in Europe and the establishment of the Socialist United States of Europe can assure the existence of the Soviet Union.

THE DISPUTE ON THE MILITARY PLANE

Let us now go on to analyse the immediate military implications of the class antagonism between the Soviet Union and the Anglo-American bloc. This is not at all a question to be settled at the "peace" table after a definitive victory over Nazi Germany. **It will be settled in the course of the war.** Precisely for this reason the "democracies" are perturbed by the very first Red Army victories over the Nazis.

They remember what happened when the Red Army was advancing in Eastern Poland in 1939. As the Mensheviks and the bourgeois press admitted at the time, the workers and poor peasants arose in a revolutionary wave as the Red Army neared, identifying their class interests with those of the Soviet Union. The same thing happened in Bessarabia. In a somewhat different form—Red Army garrisons had first arrived by agreement with the bourgeois governments and incorporation into the Soviet Union came later—Sovietisation of the Baltic states was also immensely popular with the masses involved.* Moreover in order to expropriate the bourgeoisie in those territories the Kremlin was compelled to call upon the masses, no matter how cautiously, to take matters into their own hands: workers' committees seized the factories, peasants' committees the land, they formed provisional administrations which arrested the capitalists, landlords and police, etc. Soon enough the Stalinist bureaucracy proceeded to stifle the workers'

initiative and to gather all power into the hands of the bureaucracy and the G.P.U., and we must warn the workers that the same process of repression will be attempted in any territory taken by the Red Army so long as the Kremlin bureaucracy remains dominant. The bureaucratism is, however, small comfort to imperialism which understands the mortal danger to world capitalism from revolutionary expropriation anywhere. In 1939-40 the revolutionary wave which arose as the Red Army advanced was necessarily limited by the domination of Europe by the Nazi army, as well as the still-intact bourgeois armies of Finland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece, etc. But now if the Red Army continues to advance, the revolutionary example set by the workers and peasants of Eastern Poland and Bessarabia is likely to be followed by great masses in the Balkans and Central Europe. This thought is a nightmare in Washington and London and inevitably they must seek ways and means of preventing its realisation.

That is why the peace feelers from Finland are clearly formulated to rule out the use of Finland as a base of operations against the Nazis. While insisting they were not taking part in the "larger war," the Finnish bourgeoisie nevertheless supplied the Nazis with bases which are still being used against American and British convoys. But, even in defeat, Helsinki has no intention of agreeing to a Finnish-Soviet settlement which would permit the Red Army and Navy to use Finnish bases against the Nazis. The difference between Helsinki's attitude toward the Nazis and toward the Soviet Union is a class difference. Even if Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill were to guarantee the post-war inviolability of Finland, Helsinki fears that their word would not prevent the Finnish workers and poor peasants from rising against the Finnish bourgeoisie if the Red Army and Navy enter Finland. Nor is Helsinki sure—and in this it is profoundly correct in its appreciation of the extent of the healthy revolutionary forces in the Red Army—that Stalin has the power to appease the Anglo-American bloc by ordering the Red Army to aid the Finnish bourgeoisie in an attempt to crush the workers and peasants. Hence it is certain that, if Finland does make peace with the Soviet Union, it will preclude the entry of the Red Army into Finland. Washington and London are sure to back Helsinki in this demand, despite its obvious disservice to the grand strategy of defeating Hitler. Their class solidarity with the Finnish bourgeoisie will take precedence.

Now we can also understand the full meaning of Sikorski's protest, quoted above, against Soviet "internal political warfare" in "Central and Eastern Poland." We do not know yet whether he is accurate in reporting Soviet parachutists in those areas engaged in organising an uprising against the Nazis. That such activities are at least envisioned is indicated by a February 22 United Press dispatch from Moscow reporting a letter sent to Stalin by Dimitrov for the Executive Committee of the Communist International—this is the first mention of

* Stalin's thanks for the Polish territory took the form of joining the Nazi "peace offensive." The "Declaration of the Soviet and German Governments" of September 28, 1939 stated:

"After the conclusion today by the German and Soviet Governments of an agreement regulating the questions arising from the disintegration of Poland, thus creating a firm basis for protracted peace in eastern Europe, they express the opinion in mutual agreement that the liquidation of the present war between Germany on one side and England and France on the other side would coincide with the interest of all the peoples.

If, however, these efforts of both Governments are unsuccessful, then it will have been established that England and France carry the responsibility for the continuance of the war. In case of the prolongation of the war, the Governments of Germany and the Soviet Union will consult with each other on necessary measures." ("Izvestia", Sept. 23, 1939.) In accordance with this declaration the Comintern during the ensuing months branded France and England as the "warmongers" guilty of continuation of the war.

* John Scott's "Duel for Europe, 1940", gives a good description of all the Soviet occupations.

that body since June 22, 1941—in which they “promise to exert even greater effort so that at the moment of the decisive battles we may successfully aid in the creation of a universal anti-Hitler war in the rear of the German fascists.” This resurrection of the Comintern is probably part of Stalin’s “war of nerves” with his allies for better terms. Quite apart from Stalin’s plans, however, the workers and peasants of Eastern Poland are certain to repeat again their revolutionary actions of 1939 as soon as the Red Army approaches. This is what Sikorski fears.

From the point of view of effective struggle against the Nazis, Sikorski’s protest is of course preposterous. His demand that the Red Army refrain from organising uprisings in Central and Eastern Poland—i.e., in Hitler’s rear—is on a par with the position of the Beck government during the Franco-Soviet pact and the subsequent Anglo-Soviet negotiations, when Beck was ready to agree to a Polish-Soviet pact against Germany—but only on the condition that the Red Army must not enter Polish territory to confront the Nazi invader. Absurd as that condition was, it was backed by London and was one of the causes for the collapse of the Anglo-Soviet negotiations. Sikorski apparently has reason to believe that his present demand will be backed by Washington and London—his government-in-exile has in itself little bargaining power. But whatever concessions Stalin might be tempted to make, it is plain that the advancing Red Army would never agree now to Sikorski’s demand to abandon “internal political warfare” behind Hitler’s lines.

To forestall a Red Army advance into Poland and the Balkans, Sikorski is urging Washington and London to open a second front in the Balkans. As Frederick Kuh reports from London:

“Sikorski is known to favour strongly the earliest possible Allied expedition into the Balkans so that American, British and Polish troops could reach Eastern or Central Europe at least as soon as the Red Army. These tendencies are certainly heightening Russian suspicions.” (Chicago “Sun”, February 5, 1943.)

Soviet suspicions that such a move is in prospect are also cited that same week in an editorial in the British Liberal weekly, the “New Statesman”:

“The Russians fear that when the continent is invaded by Allied armies the blow may be so delivered as to be indirectly aimed at the Soviet Union as well as against Nazi Germany. To many such suspicions may sound exaggerated, but let us not forget what no Russian ever forgets—that the last war ended with Allied intervention not in Berlin but at Archangel.”

That Soviet objections to such a plan have gone through diplomatic channels was indicated as early as last November by Edwin L. James, managing editor of the “New York Times”:

“There are reasons, well known in diplomatic circles, to believe that the second front Stalin desires is a second front in Western Europe. . . . In fact, the question arises as to whether if from Africa a second front could be established in the Balkan States it would meet in full the desires of the Russian chief.” (“New York Times”, November 8, 1942)

Publicly the Soviet opposition to the North African-Balkan plan was indicated only in indirect forms: extensive reports in the Soviet press about “second-front” demonstrations in Trafalgar and Union Square, the insistence of the Stalinist press that Roosevelt and Churchill in January 1942 had promised a second front in Europe during 1942, Stalin’s letter of October 4, 1942, to A.P. correspondent Henry C. Cassidy, insisting “that the Allies fulfill their obligations fully and on time.” None of this, however, made clear to the world working class the danger to the Soviet Union which would arise from a second front in the Balkans. The most the Stalinist press ever did on this question was to argue that a second front would be more possible and more effective

against the Nazis in Western Europe than in the Balkans. Thus when Willkie on October 26, 1942, made his “report to the people,” and in advocating a second front in Europe suggested it might be best to have it in Southern Europe—Italy or the Balkans—“A Veteran Commander” wrote in the Stalinist press:

“There is a flaw—a military flaw—in this speech (of Willkie) . . .

“The danger lurks in the words ‘free North Africa from Axis domination and begin an assault on the soft spots of Southern Europe.’

“It means that the second front in Europe is only to follow the completion of the North African campaign—note the word ‘and’!—and that that Second Front will be directed against the weakest link of the Axis and not against the strongest, as it should—note the words ‘soft spots of Southern Europe’!

“The African campaign is NOT a Second Front, and cannot be one, even if successful. . . .

“Access of troops and supplies to Africa is difficult and entails great loss of time and a lot of shipping, especially so for the Allies. It’s almost 15,000 miles from the U.S.A. to Egypt around the Cape of Good Hope . . .” (“Worker”, November 1, 1942.)

This cowardly argument collapsed when the North African expedition did succeed. Moreover Stalin and his flunkies are committed to justifying to the Soviet and world workers his sacrifice of their interests to the Anglo-American bloc in return for “aid” to the Soviet Union. Hence the Stalinist press hailed the North African expedition; so did Stalin, in a second letter to Cassidy, which said it, “radically changes the political and war situation in Europe in favour of the Anglo-American Soviet coalition.” Thus Stalin ceased even his indirect warnings on the meaning of an Anglo-American front in the Balkans precisely at the time when its preliminary, the North African expedition, became a reality. Here again we see that Stalin’s methods are the polar opposite from those of Lenin and Trotsky, to whom the first consideration in defence of the Soviet Union was to arouse the world working class by explaining to it the real situation.

Stalin is all the more to be condemned by the workers for deluding them because privately he showed thorough awareness of the situation. In June 1942, Roosevelt and Churchill made the decision for the North African expedition without consulting Stalin, and in mid-August Churchill went to Moscow to break the news to his “ally.” Something of what happened then we now know from two very informative articles by Forrest Davies in the February 20-27 issues of the “Saturday Evening Post”. Stalin vehemently protested to Churchill against the June decision for a North African expedition and insisted on a second front in western Europe, but of course Churchill remained adamant. Stalin showed his chagrin the next month in an astonishing incident at a private dinner he gave to Willkie on September 20, 1942:

“The Kremlin dinner was nearing its end when an American guest proposed a toast to the Russian and Allied pilots. Stalin proposed an amendment. With some feeling, he saluted the Soviet pilots who, he charged, had gone to their death while fighting in the ‘cast-off’ planes furnished by the Atlantic allies. While his guests listened in a stunned silence, the premier of Russia accused the British prime minister of ‘stealing’ 150 planes—Lockheed P-38 Lightnings—out of Russian-bound convoy.”

It is notable that Willkie thereupon answered Stalin, praising Churchill and asking Stalin “what Russia’s situation would have been had Britain been conquered or gone over to the enemy at a time when Russia, for her own good reasons, was standing aloof from the battle.” Willkie’s quarrel with Churchill is an intra-class argument; he stands on the side of British imperialism in the more basic dispute with the Workers’ State.

The class meaning of the proposed Balkan front is further illumined by the situation in Rumania, ally of

the Nazis. Why the touching solicitude of the "democracies" for the claims of the Rumanian camarilla to Bessarabia? It is not even being said that the "democracies" would support this claim only on behalf of a democratised Rumania. There is an obvious reason for this. As in Italy, the "democracies" are seeking a Darlan deal in Rumania. That they have no perspective of a full-scale military assault to knock Rumania out of the war is indicated by the fact that neither by bombing or sabotage have they touched the British and American-owned oil wells in Rumania, now working full-speed for the Nazis. This significant fact is underlined by the able correspondent, C. L. Sulzberger, formerly in Rumania, in a dispatch from London:

"Many Rumanians are inclined to blame the Allies for this (the lack of Allied sabotage in Rumania) because of an alleged lack of desire to blow up wells owned by United Nations interests . . . —and the writer never received a satisfactory answer to this question from the British group of oil men who used to frequent Bucharest's Athene Palace. . ."

"When Russians get within easier bombing range it is logical to expect that they will concentrate their efforts on devastation of refineries." ("New York Times", February 17, 1943.)

To put it more plainly than Mr. Sulzberger's broad hint: the Balkan-front-and-Darlan-deals is being pressed ever more hastily in order to forestall Soviet bombing of the Rumanian ally of the Axis as the Red Army advances nearer to bombing distance. The same Anglo-American considerations hold equally for Hitler's Bulgarian friends —and even more so for Yugoslavia where they must back the royalist Mikhailovitch against the successes of the pro-Soviet Partisans.

Further developments may, it is possible, do away with the specific dispute between the "democracies" and the Soviet Union over a Balkan front. As in the case of the disputes over the "strategic frontiers," Roosevelt and Churchill may find it advisable to "appease" the Russians and open a second front in Western Europe first instead of in the Balkans. This shift may be dictated if Rommel's army remains in being on the Southern Mediterranean coast, making extremely risky an Anglo-American crossing to the Balkans. The Balkans would be closed off, too, if Hitler seizes Spain and Gibraltar, closing off the Mediterranean from the Atlantic. But whatever happens cannot blur the class meaning of the preoccupation of the "democracies" with the idea of a Balkan front which would cut the Red Army off from Europe. Basically, too, this class meaning will dominate any other front opened by the Anglo-American armies. Just as vain as Stalin's search for "strategic frontiers" is his search for a "good" Anglo-American second front. At best Stalin's false policy can succeed in leaving the "democracies" holding relatively poorer outposts on the Soviet borders. We repeat: the Soviet Union will remain in mortal danger so long as capitalism remains the stronger power on a world scale, i.e., so long as there does not exist the Socialist United States of Europe. The fundamental antagonism between the system of private property and the system of nationalised property will not be obviated by the shifting of Churchill and Roosevelt from plans for a Balkan front to plans for a Western European front.

If we were minded to forget this, we have just been forcibly recalled to it by the decision of Washington to expand its armed forces to eleven millions. This decision unquestionably means curtailing civilian manpower to the point where considerably less supplies will be available for the Soviet Union. This fact is pointed out by the Social-Democratic organ here, which writes:

"There is the suspicion that our Army men are, for reasons of their own, underestimating the importance of Lend-Lease. An over-sized Army of our own would

limit our supplies to Britain, Russia and China. Russia and China have millions of men eager to fight who need equipment. There may be good reasons for building up our forces at the expense of our Allies, but if there are such reasons, they should be openly stated. Do we fear that some of these friends will be too powerful at the end of the war?" ("New Leader", editorial, February 20, 1943.)

We suspect that the "New Leader"* editor pretends to be a little more naive than he actually is in real life. Undoubtedly he remembers the sage advice given by Auer to Edward Bernstein, when the latter too early and too openly revealed the anti-revolutionary content of his revisionist doctrine: "My dear Eddie, one does it but one shouldn't say so." Naturally, General Marshall cannot at this stage say publicly for what purpose he wants an "over-sized" Army. Incidentally, the sole difference between the General and the "New Leader" is concerning the means of putting the Soviet Union in its place. In the same issue an article on the Soviet territorial claims suggests that Russia, with its "terrible wounds to heal," "will face a tremendous task of reconstruction, and she will need help. An effort should be made to persuade her. . . . Obviously the point of departure should be the situation existing before the period of aggressions and annexations." In short, what the General would do by an "over-sized" Army, the Social Democrats proposed to do by economic coercion. But, since the Social Democrats are not pacifists, we can be sure they will eventually be converted by the General, since they already agree with him on the objective. The counter-revolutionary role of Social Democracy against the Soviet Union is certain to be repeated here and everywhere.

What the "New Leader" pretended not quite to understand was very well understood in plain-speaking bourgeois circles. Arthur Krock, the Washington correspondent of the "New York Times", wrote on General Marshall's secret testimony to a Congressional committee:

"The answers of the War Department are uttered in private and they may be good ones. It is possible to speculate that one of them is: to assure the kind of peace that will prevent a new war the United States must have overwhelming military strength behind its delegates to the peace conference. A victorious Russia, master of Europe, may need more than the sermons of Henry Wallace to refrain from seeking too high a price for its contribution. . . ."

"That would be an answer calling for serious consideration. . . ." ("New York Times", February 12, 1943.)

Likewise the Luce press reports:

"George Marshall's testimony was deeply secret, perhaps his programme . . . was insurance against the possibility that a victorious Russia might dominate the entire continent of Europe. Perhaps the expansion, unquestionably approved by Franklin Roosevelt, might have been planned to make U.S. weight felt at the peace table." ("Time" magazine, February 22, 1943.)

And the military expert, Hanson Baldwin, writes: **"America's voice at the (peace) conference table must be an important voice if the whole job of the war is not to be repeated in another 25 to 50 years; yet the American point of view will be only as authoritative as the military strength behind it. This is not power politics but realism." ("New York Times", February 22, 1943.)**

These days do not permit one to savour the Homeric laughter worthy of these solemn statements that while the Red Army is bearing the whole brunt of the war the American Army is being readied to fight the peace.

* American New Leader.

In truth the references to the use of American military power at the peace table are not at all accurate and are designed to blunt the sharp fact that this power is being expanded to face the Red Army on the continent of Europe long before a peace conference.

Meanwhile the first victories of the Red Army have been followed by a furious outburst of diplomatic moves in neutral capitals where both Axis and "United Nations" diplomats are gathered. Especially active are diplomatic circles at the Vatican, where Roosevelt was the first American president to maintain an envoy. Is it merely a coincidence that the American Archbishop Spellman (he saw Roosevelt before he left, according to the March 1 "Time") arrives in Rome the same week that Mussolini's son-in-law is accredited as Ambassador to the Vatican? The Vatican's own diplomacy is quite frankly anti-Soviet and it has "some" support here, as the Luce press, reporting Spellman's trip, writes:

"The Church regards the spread of Communist doctrine and Russian influence as its first problem. . . ."

"One means of opposing a Russian sphere of influence would be a Catholic Federation, pivoted on a Catholic Austria-Hungary, supported by Danubian agrarian parties and possibly involving exiled Otto Habsburg, who apparently has potent friends in high places. Poland would be a northern anchor, Italy the southern anchor of such a federation. But, should restoration of the Habsburgs meet with too great resistance from socialist Freemason Czechs and pro-Russian Yugoslavs, an Eastern European Catholic Federation might be contrived, binding Catholic groups together in a Balkan cordon sanitaire from Poland to the Mediterranean.

"Invasion of Hitler's Europe may be aimed through the Balkans. If so, one result could be misunderstanding with the Russians, whose armies would be in the

north while Allied armies were moving in from the south. The best hope of avoiding such a misunderstanding is a complete rapprochement with Moscow. Lacking that, the plans credited to the Vatican appeared to be among the few under real consideration. High sources in Washington reported that at least some U.S. support had been given to these plans." ("Time", February 22, 1943.)

We can be sure that at some stage of this diplomatic drama one of the chief actors will appear—the Junker aristocracy who constitute Hitler's general staff. Unlike most of the generals of the western world, the Junkers are extremely able politicians in their own right, with a long tradition as rulers. In 1918 they threw the Kaiser overboard in order to weather the revolutionary storm and military defeat. As revolution and defeat loom again they will be quite ready to drop Hitler and don the cap of "liberty". They will certainly prefer to save capitalism by calling in the Anglo-American armies than permit the Red Army to cross the German border. And let us recall that the defeated enemy in 1918 was instructed in the Allied armistice terms to retain General von der Goltz's troops in the Baltic states, where they crushed the Lettish soviets.

In war as in peace Stalin's theory of "socialism in one country" demonstrates its bankruptcy, and this fact is being underlined for us every day by the responses of the bourgeoisie to the first victories of the Red Army. The almost untouched armies of the United States and Britain have stood by while the Red Army has been bled white. On the military plane the Soviet Union cannot hope to prevail against world capitalism. Only the shock troops of proletarian revolution can redress the balance. In spite of Stalin and against Stalin, we are confident, the strangled October revolution, which has so often demonstrated its persistent vitality, will find the road to unity with the European revolution.

Imperialist Perspectives in Europe

By ANDREW SCOTT

Europe stands today at the political, economic and military crossroads of the world. And the crossroads are busy. It is not merely a matter of the interrelationships, struggles and manoeuvres of the two dozen countries of the Continent itself; it is a matter also of the interests, rivalries and contradictions of the great Powers of the entire world.

America and Britain on the one side, and the Soviet Union on the other, have perforce had to take an interest in Europe's affairs. And today they surround the Continent, waiting for the moment when they can attempt to impose their regime upon it; and meantime discussing the character of that regime, the method of imposing it, the timing of their blows, the role of the various elements in the "Alliance". German imperialism, for its part, has left little doubt as to its interest in Europe. It has occupied almost the entire continent, and now crouches ready to defend its plunder from "allied" attack. A gigantic clash over the body of Europe is imminent. And with this clash as the basis; with the United Nations "Alliance" as superstructure; with the activities of all the quislings and "Free Governments" as ornamentation, we have a by no means simple picture. But when we add to this the real essence of

Europe's position—the class struggle; and finally take into account, not what the Grand Alliance has in common but that in which it differs, then we are faced with a state of affairs which it would be the grossest understatement to describe as complex.

It is principally with the clash of the great powers in Europe that we intend to deal here. For the small; and even the medium sized, Powers of the Continent are now merely in the position of Yes-men to one or other of the great aggregations of industrial and military power whose paths cross in Europe. Europe's immediate destiny is being forged by the hammer blows of Germany on the one side, and of America, Britain and Russia on the other. Its ultimate destiny will be fashioned by millions of workers and peasants. The capitalists and landlords of the small countries of the Continent stand between these forces inept, fearful, incapable of decision, scurrying to the side of whatever Power looks best able to protect them from the revolution. As for Hitler's "New Order" no one any longer believes that this will last a thousand days—let alone a thousand years. What is the main point at issue is not the "New Order" but the alternative to it. It is from this point of view that the plans and actions of the "Allies" take

on importance—for they are claiming to be about to liberate Europe from Hitler and establish a genuine New Order.

For the American and British capitalists the chief topic of discussion at the moment is not primarily how to invade Europe. It is, how to prevent Europe making a nuisance of itself again in the future. And that means how to prevent Germany making another bid for supremacy in the world market. The old instrument for keeping Germany in order—the balance of power—has been shattered. France was the principal factor in that balance. With the fall of France has fallen also the old balance of power in Europe. It managed by dint of colossal efforts to survive the first world war; but it has gone thundering to destruction in the second. British imperialism is now seeking around for an alternative.

The search is not easy. For no matter in which direction they look they only find contradictions and complications. One section is seriously looking to Russia to take the place of France in off-setting Germany's gigantic industrial and military power. Another section sees the only solution in the smashing of Germany's industry. Still another section would combine this with a direct and permanent occupation of Germany—if not of all Europe.

Britain tried to guard against a too powerful Germany by building up an alliance with France. That did not succeed in preventing the last war but it did just manage to prevent a German victory. In the meantime, however, Germany has grown both in industrial and military strength, and France has become a completely third rate factor in the whole balance. This process did not take place merely by simple addition and subtraction; for the dialectics of the whole process forced Britain to help build up a strong Germany against Russia; France not having the industrial power to be capable of this task. This meant, in effect, helping Germany to become, by a greater margin than ever before, the strongest Power on the Continent.

The results of this policy, as manifested in the present war, only indicate the hopelessness of the contradictions of capitalism. Any Power that is supported may (and almost inevitably will) reveal itself as a Frankenstein later on. British imperialism was afraid to make France too strong, in case it achieved too great a measure of independence; and in the crisis France proved completely valueless as an ally. They were afraid to leave Germany too weak, for fear of Russia; and in the crisis Germany proved so much the more formidable a foe.

But now, with plans being discussed for the future of Europe, the contradictions are showing themselves to be sharper than ever, the alternatives more difficult to choose, and the dangers more acute. For now it is clear that if a balance is to be maintained in Europe against Germany it will have to be operated through some Power that has the industrial and military capacity to put up a serious opposition to German expansionism. And yet—such a Power may rise to be an even greater threat than German imperialism. Particularly when the only Power that can possibly qualify for the position is the Soviet Union.

This dilemma itself is already causing dissensions and splits among the Anglo-American imperialists and their theoreticians. A powerful section of British capitalism is ready to accept the Soviet Union as a peace-time ally, and as the balancing factor in Europe. But there is little support for this scheme in America, where the capitalists show much more enthusiasm for a direct occupation of Germany, and a semi-direct rule over the rest of Europe by means of the most open and cynical quibbling.

The differences have their roots in the opposing interests of British and American imperialism in Europe, and in the difference in strength between the two powers.

British imperialism is desperately anxious to retain its European market. Before the war between 50 and 35 per cent of Britain's exports went to Europe. But at the same time it knows that it is too weak to keep order in Europe alone. If, however, American strength is invited to collaborate for the purpose of occupying the Continent, that same American strength will see to it that its efforts do not go unrewarded. That is, Europe will become mainly an American and not a British market. It is for this reason that the "Times" has come out for a sort of Continental "Monroe Doctrine"—an arrangement whereby Europe will be a British preserve and the Western Hemisphere an American preserve. The writer of the "Times" Editorials expresses the general idea delicately that "in any future world organization of security reasonable account will have to be taken of geographical proximity."

This still leaves Britain with the necessity to find a partner in Europe to balance against Germany. The "Times" makes it clear that this partner is to be Russia, and so also does Professor Carr, the Editorial writer of the "Times" in his book "Conditions of Peace". In regard to Eastern Europe the "Times" says:

"The nucleus of military and economic power, which is the only effective instrument of security, must in that region, within the general framework, be provided primarily by Russia—the sole country east of Germany possessing industrial resources and development on a scale in any way equal to the task. This is a hard fact which cannot be overcome by wishful thinking or overlooked without dire peril. It is a fact of which the British and American peoples have become increasingly aware in recent months. Recognition of its implications and consequences is a condition of the establishment of relations of lasting confidence with Russia."

But the implications of this policy have not been welcomed in Wall Street. For it means a strengthening of Britain in Western Europe, a strengthening of Russia in Eastern Europe, and a shutting out of America from both. A few days after the "Times" outstanding Editorial on the subject had been published, the American Correspondent of the "Economist" reported:

"Some exception has been taken (in the U.S.A.) to the proposal for joint Anglo-Russian guardianship of European security and what is interpreted as a demand for advance approval of Russian frontier demands; and a disclaimer from Mr. Eden was necessary to allay the fear that Britain was relying on a post-war Anglo-Soviet bloc rather than on a concert of the United Nations."

But Mr. Eden's disclaimer was not very strong, and it did not alter the fact that the most powerful section of British capitalism are afraid of an American domination of the Continent. To be sure, the American capitalists attempt to disguise their policy as a defence of the rights of all the small nations of Europe, and recoil in "horror" at the thought of Russia's frontier being extended at the expense of Poland, the Baltic States, Rumania, etc. The "New York Times", in a highly critical Editorial, said:

"American opinion will not look favourably on any proposal to put the small nations of Europe on the auction block in order to purchase Russian confidence and co-operation. . . . Appeasement of Russia is no more likely to succeed than appeasement of Hitler."

The general scheme of the international manoeuvres begins to emerge. Stalin has assured the British imperialists that he is a safe ally by his struggle against the revolution throughout the world, and not least by his massacre of the entire revolutionary leadership in Russia. It is the turn of British—and American—imperialism to assure Stalin of their sincerity by guaranteeing the sacredness of Russia's extended frontiers. British imperialism, for its own reasons, is ready to do this.

American imperialism is not. To accept these frontiers would only be part of a general acceptance of Anglo-Russian domination of Europe. So Washington comes out against this scheme with a defence of the principles of the Atlantic Charter! This only means that Washington is determined to impose its own regime on Europe.

From assuring Russia, British imperialism has now to turn to assuring America. The "Times" tries to smooth things over by pointing out that its policy "does not involve a balancing of Britain's friendship with Russia against Britain's friendship with the United States." Professor Carr amplifies the matter in his book. He indicates that, after all, Russia is not so very dangerously strong:

"Just as there was a tendency before June 1941 to underestimate her (Russia's) military capacity, so there may be a danger of exaggerating it in the closing stages of the war. Fifty years hence Russia may have become a great industrial Power. But at present, Russian industrial development judged by Western standards is still limited; Russia is relatively weak in skilled industrial man-power in the Western sense of the term; her capacity for sustained military action beyond the limits of Russian or former Russian territory remains to be proved."

But although this may reassure British imperialism, it has little effect on the other side of the Atlantic. For it still leaves Wall Street out in the cold so far as the European sphere of influence is concerned.

Further warnings are conveyed by Carr. He enlarges on the dangers of a policy of smashing up Germany's industrial machine, as American imperialism has so often threatened to do. "Europe," he says, "cannot maintain—much less increase—her present standard of living without German productive power . . . It is not possible to weaken Germany economically without producing a serious setback to the prosperity of Europe as a whole."

This is by no means an example of any heartfelt concern on the part of Professor Carr or British imperialism for the poverty-stricken masses of Europe. It is an appreciation of the fact that the destruction of Germany's industry would carry with it a triple menace for British imperialism. First, by lowering Europe's standard of living still further it would bring about the danger of Continent-wide revolution. Secondly, it would leave Russia relatively too powerful on the Continent. Thirdly, it would in large measure destroy Europe's value as a market. For an agricultural or semi-agricultural Europe could not absorb a fraction of what an industrial Europe can absorb in the way of imports from Britain.

And in any case such a destruction would imply a permanent occupation of both Germany and Europe by Allied forces. If these were American, they certainly might succeed for a limited time, owing to America's strength, in keeping Europe in subjection—but it would be American imperialism that would derive what benefit there was, not British imperialism. And if the troops were British, then the occupation would just not be possible. Carr states the matter mildly when he says that "nothing is more certain than that the British people would be unwilling, if indeed they were able, to undertake responsibilities involving a permanent British military occupation of Germany and permanent British control of the German administration." After the last war the British troops of occupation in the Rhineland gave so much of their own food allowance to the starving women and children of Germany that their health began to suffer and the Army chiefs had to demand that the Government should raise the blockade.

But if it is fatal for British imperialism to have Germany's industry destroyed, it is equally fatal to leave it intact. For that swiftly growing giant can only find a place in the world by elbowing its way into the positions already occupied by Britain. And it can only carry out its "elbowing" by means of a third world war. The

Professor's new balance of power, with Russia taking the place of France could no more prevent this than did the old balance of power. Indeed the working out of the contradictions of the new balance would be a thousand times stormier than that of the old. For, assuming that some stability were possible after the war, Russia's industrial development would race ahead at a pace that would shock the imperialists of Britain and force them not only to refrain from destroying German industry but to help to build it up. And between these two swiftly revolving millstones British interests in Europe would be ground exceeding small.

Meantime, desperate efforts are being made to find a common denominator of Allied policy in Europe. Eden has paid a special visit to the United States and come back empty handed. Stalin has called Litvinov back to Moscow, and has re-emphasised his demand for the extended frontiers. The diplomatic break has taken place between Russia and the Sikorski Government. It is clear that Litvinov's departure is not unrelated to Eden's failure to secure America's agreement to Anglo-Soviet plans. Stalin is making efforts to force a decision in his favour.

The only common denominator that can be found is the fact that all the "Allies" are opposed to the Revolution in Europe. Nothing more positive can be achieved. All of them are interested in Europe only for the satisfaction of their own interests, and these interests are mutually antagonistic. They cannot afford to help on each other's interests in Europe; hence no Second Front to enable Russia to march into the disputed border regions; hence no promise by America to agree to those regions being incorporated in the U.S.S.R. A joint Anglo-Soviet domination of Europe might work for a limited period. But an Anglo-Soviet-American domination is beyond the bounds of possibility. America will impose her own terms if she comes in. And this will apply no matter what temporary promises or pacts the U.S. may make with the Soviet Union. And the American plan for Europe not only clashes with those of Britain and Russia but also clashes with the very possibility of putting it into action. If it were only a question of occupying and holding down Europe the task would be grandiose and difficult enough. But the rest of the world will present to America in one degree or another precisely the problems with which Europe is presenting her. And American imperialism will be forced to attempt the same sort of action against the rest of the world as against Europe. Not even mighty America can hold down the millions of Europe, Asia, Africa—and America. What are these problems? Some of them have been stated so clearly and so dramatically by Walter Elliot in an article in "The Times" that no apology is needed for quoting him at length:

"The problem is this. The non-industrialised world is about to embark upon the industrial revolution, though whether it is wise to do this is another matter . . . The industrial revolution is going to spread all over the world, like it or not. It is impossible for one portion of the planet to take a mortgage on the rest for showing it the way how. The forces are too big. We are about to witness, for instance, the greatest exodus from the country to the town that has ever been seen—for this is Asia moving. This will be Africa moving. A far higher percentage of the world's population is engaged upon agriculture than is necessary to sustain it; and the world is beginning to find this out. Imagine 60 per cent of India in cities. Or, if that is too distant and unlikely, not to say appalling, imagine 60 per cent of China in cities—industrial cities. Or if even that seems too unlikely, though it is on the march now, imagine 60 per cent of Russia in cities. It is not a very great demand upon one's powers of thought; though its implications are.

The tap of all this power, to turn on and off, to

control and direct, is for the moment in the hands of the Western democracies, which, for practical purposes, means Britain and America. It is a responsibility and a strain quite large enough to engross the attention of all who will have the time for it. Let the Keynes and the Morgenthau plans have due time and attention but no more. For there are other problems, urgent and roaring, and their proportionate demand upon our power of work and thought is many times as great."

Walter Elliot, like the whole breed of capitalist statesmen, is uneasy before the gigantic stirrings that are taking place throughout the world. They are afraid not just of the industrialisation of the backward continents but of the implications of that process. For who will carry it out? Against whom will it be carried out? By what methods will it be carried out? Imperialism knows well that the only force in these great areas capable of beating out a path to a modern industrial civilisation is the industrial proletariat; that their method will be the method of the October Revolution; that their allies will be the millions of poor peasants; that their struggle will be aimed against foreign imperialism and native capitalism. The British capitalists know this. They know how India will move, how China will move, how Africa will move. But many of them are mad enough to imagine that they can prevent Asia moving, prevent Africa moving—and at the same time plunge Europe back to a state resembling that of the backward continents and hold its masses of workers and peasants in subjection.

Europe's problem differs from that of the backward continents. In most of its countries the "industrial revolution" has already been accomplished—even if incompletely. What is at issue is not so much the building up of industrial power as the releasing of it from the shackles of the nation states and of capitalist control. Millions of people have to find a way of using that industry to drag themselves out of the dark pits of penury and backwardness.

Pre-Hitler European capitalism built up and maintained national boundaries which succeeded, not in building up economy, but in strangling it. Post-Hitler Euro-

pean capitalism has smashed most of these boundaries down—but the result has been, not that economic progress has overflowed them, but only the black tide of economic backwardness and political reaction. If Europe is to march forward, the next step must be the smashing of these national boundaries, and the unification of Europe in a way that will release economy from all its artificial restrictions.

Not only Hitler, but also the British and American capitalists, know that a Europe made up of a series of independent or even semi-independent national states is no longer possible. Hitler's "unification" has been seen in action. An indication of the British attitude was given by "The Times" when it said that, "the small nations may want to paddle their own canoes, but henceforth they will have to do so in convoy." What is at issue in Europe among the squabbling bands of capitalists is who is to control the convoy. But no matter which band wins in the long run, the direction in which the convoy sails will be constant—toward increasing poverty, slavery and degradation for the mass of the people.

The only alternative to this is a Europe whose economy is planned as a single whole; and planned on the basis of socialised property freed from national boundaries. And the task of bringing this about is the task both of the European and the international proletariat.

The squalid details of present-day capitalist and Stalinist diplomatic manoeuvres are working themselves out in accordance with their own laws and the relationship of forces between the "Allies". In the future all sort of permutations and combinations are possible on this road. American imperialism may dominate Europe by open force; the Anglo-Soviet balance may have its brief hour; Stalin, in desperation, may engage in further flirtations with Hitler. But not one of all the possibilities of "Allied" intrigue can solve either Europe's "internal" problem—that is, the achievement of a unified planned economy; or its "external" problem—that is, the co-ordination of that planned economy with world economy as a whole. Only the European workers in conjunction with the world proletariat can accomplish these tasks.

The Left Wing Zionists and the Fourth International

By ROSE CARSON

Every crisis in society finds Jewry being used as a scapegoat by reaction. The vulnerability of its position, as minorities within other national states has constantly made the Jews an easy prey for every reactionary regime—Spain, Poland, Czarist Russia, and now Germany.

In holding the Bermuda Conference Britain and the United States have brought the problem of Jewry into the arena of world politics. Although the results of the Conference have not yet been made public, sufficient has been indicated by the spokesmen of both Britain and America, to reveal in advance the fatality of Jewry expecting succour from this assembly. Mr. Law, for Britain, had proclaimed before the Conference that not much was to be expected from it. The Jews were warned against "premature hopes." The difficulties of rendering assistance were heavily stressed. All that was promised was:

"Where joint action may be possible, we may hope to lay the foundations for such action. . . . We may be able to work out tentatively some basis for wider international discussion with a view to wider international organisation and discussion." Concretely, this means yet **another Conference**, and Robert Waithman, "News Chronicle" Washington correspondent, writes:

"The impression here is, that a number of cautious gentlemen have conducted a series of formal meetings in an atmosphere defined in advance with the aid of such clichés as 'exploratory conversations and the formulation of preliminary proposals.'" From this it can be seen that nothing is to be expected from the sympathy of the present Allied statesmen, to which Jewry is looking for help.

But the brutal Nazi persecution of the Jews, the relentless slaughter and inhuman tortures perpetrated upon

helpless Jewry, and Hitler's threat to annihilate the majority of the race in Europe poses the question once and for all, of a **real solution** before the workers and intellectuals of all sections of the Zionist movement.

Hashomer Hatzair, the extreme left wing of the Zionist movement, which was, until the present catastrophic period, the hope of Jewish socialist militants, has failed together with the rest of Zionism, to understand and develop a real programme for the solution of the Jewish problem. The systematic destruction of Jewry is not merely the result of blood lust and insanity: it is rather the calculated example by which Hitler hopes to stun and terrorise the conquered peoples of Europe. It is a continuation of the same method and policy by which Hitler succeeded in Germany. The resistance of Russia and the peoples of Europe, the growing strength of the Allied imperialists, have shown the hollow mockery of Hitler's boasts of a thousand years of the New Order. Hitler knows only one method to stave off disaster: Terror and more intensified terror. The treatment of Jewry is Hitler's horrible example to Europe. The Nazis' choice of the Jewish race lies primarily in expediency rather than any special hatred for the race. Not only has Hashomer Hatzair failed to understand Hitler's motive; it has failed also to show the Jewish millions the way out of their oppression.

HASHOMER HATZAIR'S DIFFERENCES WITH THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Two claims are repeatedly made by Hashomer Hatzair. One: they are Marxists, and two: they fully concur with anyone who says that the ultimate solution to the Jewish question lies in the socialist society.

It is necessary, however, to examine Hashomer Hatzair's ideas and methods in order, either to substantiate the above claims, or refute them.

The main and most oft repeated criticism by Hashomer Hatzair of the Fourth International is usually voiced in the following manner:

On viewing the policy of the Fourth International to our question, we have never found an honest attempt to formulate a transitional programme for the Jewish masses, based upon their specific situation.

From the above the following conclusions must be drawn: that Hashomer Hatzair regards the Jewish question as a special problem quite apart from the problems facing the international proletariat; that this special problem demands a specific transitional programme for Jewry; and that this problem can be solved prior to, and independently of, the problems of society as a whole. In order to establish whether these conclusions are correct, it is necessary to restate, however briefly, the history and development of modern Jewry.

During feudal times, and even during the earliest period of capitalism, Jews were herded into ghettos and permitted only certain functions within society. These were: trading, finance and non-guild handicrafts. Their rigid exclusion from the craft guilds, their common economic status and lack of civil rights prevented them from integrating into society at large, thus forcing them to remain a caste. While possessing common customs, religion and even language (Yiddish), they could not form a self-contained national unit with class formations, but became of necessity, minorities within other national societies. In its early progressive stage, capitalism liberated the Jew from the Ghetto, and permitted him, to enter commerce and the consumer industries, (where Jews are to be found primarily today) in all class layers—workers, petty bourgeois and big bourgeois.

Owing to the uneven development of capitalism, in Eastern Europe, even this infiltration into the life of society was impossible. Consequently the Jews there were less emancipated and retained their caste status and quasi-national characteristics to a greater degree than elsewhere. In the decline of capitalism, we see the

process reversed. The Jew is forced back into the Ghetto. He is not permitted any function in society; he is the scapegoat—signifying capitalist society's inability to solve its organic problems—and finally, he is threatened with extermination.

From the above it is clear that the economic, social and political development of the Jews has been part of the general development of modern society—opportunity and rights in the era of rising capitalism; restriction of rights and persecution, and finally threats of extermination in the period of the decline of capitalism.

Even a bigoted Zionist cannot but agree, that the conditions of the people as a whole are not so very different from this. The smashing of the working class organisations, loss of rights, the threats of mass extermination by war, civil war, and famine: these are general to Jewish and non-Jewish masses, even though the problems are sharper and more personal to the Jews, who are more vulnerable to persecution as minorities.

The repression and persecution of the Jewish masses, handicraftsmen and middle class elements of Eastern Europe, in the latter half of the last century, drove the leading intellectuals to find a solution for their plight. The best of these intellectuals turned to Socialism and played and still play, an outstanding role in the working class movement. The idea of "territorialism" found expression, however, among another section of Jewish intellectuals. This idea gave rise to all kinds of fantastic schemes and reactionary utopias. Baron Hirsch with his Angola project, and Baron Rothschild with his scheme for Uganda, first gave concrete expression to territorialism. Eventually, Dr. Theodore Herzl amalgamated the various tendencies into one political movement: modern Zionism.

After the last war, Zionism seized its opportunity of demanding a Jewish national home in Palestine through Dr. Chaim Weizmann as its reward for financial and military service rendered to British imperialism during the last war.

A Jewish state surrounded by a hostile Arab world, would be forced to look to Britain for protection. Such an outpost in the Near East was essential to the British Empire, quite apart from its value for trade and investment. In the Balfour Declaration of 1917, British Imperialism promised the Jews a national home in Palestine. In 1922 the League of Nations granted a mandate to Britain—and from then onwards Zionism became part and parcel of British Imperial policy.

As soon as it became clear to the native population that a Jewish state signified a Jewish majority, based upon British bayonets, there was an immediate outbreak of struggle which culminated in open warfare for nearly three years (1936-1939). British imperialism resorted to aerial bombardment, razing villages, collective fines, martial law, concentration camps—together with bribery, intrigue and corruption, such as is constantly employed by Britain as all other imperialists to subdue her colonial slaves in India and elsewhere. All these measures, however, failed to subdue the Arab people in their struggle for national liberation. Finally, in order to avoid arousing sympathetic action from the entire Arab world, Britain was forced to make concessions to the Arabs.

Partition was offered, but was unanimously rejected by both Jews and Arabs. After various other attempts to arrive at a compromise, the Woodhead Commission of 1939 was set up, and on the basis of its report, Britain declared a new policy. The mandate was "modified" and a "new interpretation" was given to the Balfour Declaration. The concrete result of this was that the immigration of the Jews and the sale of Arab land was restricted.

The growth of Jewish nationalism is of course, a natural outcome and natural reaction to anti-Semitism. In general the nationalism of an oppressed people is recognised by Marxists as progressive. But in the case

of Jewish nationalism, Zionism has also its reactionary side, since it depends for the realisation of its aims, upon British imperialism.

During the Arab struggles, the Zionists amply demonstrated the reactionary consequences of their dependence upon British Imperialism. The Zionists, including the Labour Union, Histadruth, and our "Marxist" Hashomer Hatzair, supported the suppression of the Arab national struggles by open scabbing and strike-breaking of every political strike called by the Arabs in protest against British brutality, imprisonment, martial law, etc.

A. Ben-Israel, in "Whither Zionism", states:

"It must be now clear from all points of view, that this complicated task of transforming the abnormal Jewish life into a normal one . . . can only be brought about with world assistance. Therefore international financial support is necessary."

To justify the establishment of the Jewish national state, Hashomer Hatzair states:

"Only the colonisation of Jewry will permit the development of a Jewish working class and peasantry. The creation of such a proletariat and peasantry makes the role of Jewry a normal one."

From this we gather that the Jewish masses, being unable to assist in overthrowing the bourgeoisie of the particular country of which they form a minority, their first task therefore, must be to obtain territory; secondly, to create a national bourgeoisie and proletariat; thirdly to lead the latter to overthrow the former. Such is Marxism a la-Zionism! This is a farcical caricature of the Marxist conception of the development of the class struggle. Seriously to advocate such a programme, believing that it will make Jewry's role a normal one, exposes an utter lack of understanding of the historical process and the nature of the present period.

In reality all that Zionism can signify is not a Jewish national home, not a refuge for persecuted Jews, not a federation of "socialist communes", but a Jewish capitalist state as part of the British Empire. Moreover, gained at the expense of the Arab peoples. The idea of buying land, of acquiring empty spaces on a scale commensurate with the problem, is completely fantastic in the twentieth century. It is evident that if Palestine, a tiny state, is to be built up economically so as to create a proletariat capable of taking power, it will have to compete with the great imperialist powers, and this on a shrinking world market. Since these great powers are at the moment engaged in the most destructive war in history for a redivision of this market, it follows that Palestine cannot hope to take part in such a scramble independently, but must of necessity, become a pawn within the orbit of one or other imperialist power.

Palestine cannot hope to escape the world historical process: if the international world proletariat fails to accomplish the social revolution, then inevitably fascism will triumph. The German debacle will be re-enacted throughout the entire world, and Palestine, being part of this sphere, must inevitably suffer a like fate.

ZIONISM'S DIFFERENCES WITH BRITISH IMPERIALISM

To prove that Zionism is not a tool of British Imperialism, "Hashomer Hatzair" states:

"Illegal emigrations organised by Zionism is proof that Zionism is actively fighting against British Imperialism."

In the first place, it must be understood that these illegal immigrations are necessarily on a very small scale. Secondly, we characterise Zionism, on its general political character. Friction on minor points is no indication of diversity of interests or serious opposition. The editorial of "Hashomer Hatzair", February 1943, states:

"Our struggle is part of the same struggle which the Chinese and Indian masses wage today against the forces of imperialism. Our struggle is the socialist

battle for the right of self-determination of nations." This is a wanton distortion of the truth. The fact is, of course, that the Indian and Chinese movements, albeit dominated by treacherous bourgeois leadership, are based on real existing social classes within real existing national societies. The emancipation of the Indian and Chinese masses depends upon a revolutionary struggle against imperialist oppression, whereas Zionism cannot struggle against imperialism since it is forced to rely upon it for its very realisation. For Zionism to struggle against imperialism, it would be necessary to appeal to the Arab world, which constitutes the majority in Palestine and the surrounding territory for a joint struggle for independence against imperialism. To do this, the whole Zionist movement would have to give up its first aim: a Jewish majority. In actual fact, Hashomer Hatzair realises that this is unreal. In "Whither Zionism" we read:

"The grandiose plans of transferring millions of Jews to Palestine immediately after the war are, consequently, nothing but an illusion. We have to make constructive plans over a long period of years, in order both to absorb in Palestine, and preserve in the Ghetto (exile)."

This statement clearly reveals the futility of Palestine offering a solution to the Jewish problem. From the foregoing it is obvious that Lenin's dictum "The fate of the Jews in every country is intrinsically bound up with the fate of the working class", has been amply borne out. Common problems demand a common programme, such a programme can only be the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International and the Socialist Revolution.

HASHOMER HATZAIR'S ALTERNATIVE.

Hashomer Hatzair claims to conduct a genuine struggle against bourgeois Zionism and presents its programme as a Marxist alternative. Hashomer Hatzair criticises the Fourth International for its "unreal approach" to Jewish problems and for its lack of a "constructive attitude". It is necessary to analyse Hashomer Hatzair's programmatic contribution to the solution of the problem. The Editorial of "Hashomer Hatzair" of February states:

"We as Jews and socialists will take revenge for this slaughter of our people by the creation of a new life through Chulutzuth."

Through this Chalutz movement, (this is, the Pioneer Movement), Hashomer Hatzair will create a new life! Since the Chalutzim are mainly farmers, this means that Hashomer Hatzair believes that by training a number of farmers it can solve the Jewish problem. Capitalism has brought mankind to an impasse in the present imperialist slaughter which engulfs the whole world. It wipes out the populations of immense areas and effects the masses of every race and creed. This situation can only be solved by socialist revolution and emancipation of all the oppressed peoples. In such a situation Hashomer Hatzair offers not tested and trained revolutionaries welded under the banner of revolutionary socialism, but a few farmers! Farmers, moreover, who have very little possibility of ever tilting the soil of Palestine. To such absurdity, Hashomer Hatzair has the temerity to prefix "Marxism" and a "real approach".

The reactionary character of this utopian programme is properly seen if it is taken in conjunction with the Bi-national state which is visualised by the Hashomer Hatzair. In "Whither Britain" A. Ben Israel has this to say:

"First our political programme is above all, based upon the right of Jewish immigration into Palestine. Our claim in common with all Zionists, is to see the majority of the Jewish people in Eretz Israel."

And further,

"Our fate is historically linked up with Palestine—whether the Arabs like this or not, and we therefore

can have no compromise on this question." In actual fact the world Zionist Congress demands a commonwealth based upon British imperialist bayonets, and Hashomer Hatzair demands a Jewish majority with safeguards for the Arabs based upon an International Commission. There is merely a difference in formulation, except that Hashomer Hatzair cover its reactionary policy with revolutionary sounding phrases with the object of attracting the left socialist thinking Jewish youth.

All the idealist claptrap written and spoken by the Zionist theorists and apologists has been completely exposed by the economic development of Palestine. The Jewish state which was to have been so different, the ideals of "righteousness" and "justice" learned in the hard school of experience has been exposed in all its threadbare poverty. The Iraq Petroleum Company, the Ruthenberg Electrical Scheme, the Dead Sea Concessions to the I.C.I. are but a few of the large scale capital investments in Palestine. Palestine has been developed in the same old capitalistic way. Speculation in land, over capitalisation, extremes of poverty and wealth; the same greed, the same exploitation of the national population, the same use of the dispossessed peasants, as a source of cheap labour. There is no "difference", no "righteousness", nor can there be.

A false perspective and a false policy, far from assisting Jewry, can only help reaction. The Jewish youth must turn away from the blind alley of Zionism and its left cover, the Hashomer Hatzair. They must learn to understand and see the "Special Jewish question" as part of the general crisis of imperialist capitalism.

In Britain and in the other "democracies" there is a widespread sympathy for the European Jews who suffer under the murderous regime of Hitler. But despite this

fact, anti-semitism, far from diminishing, is growing among the reactionary sections of the capitalist and middle class and even backward sections of the workers. But the next period will not be one of increasing reactionary measures against the Jews. It will be a period of civil wars and socialist revolutions. Only those who do not and will not think can close their eyes to the inevitable progressive revolutionary movements which will sweep Europe and shake capitalist Britain and the capitalist world to its foundations.

Headed by the working class, all who are progressive in the mass of the populations will march forward and solve the common task: the Socialist Revolution.

Without a revolutionary perspective, without a revolutionary programme and without a revolutionary party to teach and lead this forward march of the masses, the revolutions will be defeated singly and collectively and followed by disorientation and apathy. In such an event the "Black Hundreds" of imperialist reaction will rise again. Military dictatorships and vicious fascist regimes will become the dominant form of capitalist government. Even in the present day "democratic" metropolitan centres in Britain and the U.S.A., anti-semitism will become part of the reactionary cement. The further enslavement of the Jews and possibly their almost total annihilation, are the inevitable outcome of such a perspective. All the programmes of reformism will be torn to shreds in the coming battles.

Serious Jewish youth will not toboggan down the hill with closed eyes behind the banners of decadent and non-Jewish reformism. They must base themselves on the perspective of revolution and turn to the Fourth International, whose programme, the United Socialist States of Europe alone can tear mankind from the path of destruction. Only on this road lies the solution to the Jewish problem.

The National Question in Europe

By M. MORRISON

EDITOR'S NOTE: Continuing the discussion on the national question in Europe.

The terrible oppression to which the peoples of the occupied countries are subject has naturally led some very serious comrades to propose that the slogan of national liberation be adopted for all countries in Europe now under the heel of German imperialism. A close study of the connotation of the slogan and of all the factors involved in the present European situation is necessary before deciding whether to accept or reject the proposal.

Now that a victory for Hitler appears much less likely than it did a year or so ago, when a few comrades presented the "Three Theses" (published in the December 1942 issue of "Fourth International"), it may be argued that the question need no longer be discussed. This argument is not at all convincing. For, in the first place, the same problem may arise with the occupation of Europe by the forces of the Allies and, in the second place, the proposal involves a question which, since it has been raised, should be discussed for the sake of theoretical clarity.

All parties adhering to or sympathetic with the Fourth International have as part of their programme the right of all nations to self-determination. This principle of the right of nations to self-determination is of course also applicable to imperialist countries that have been defeated and occupied by Hitler's army—France, for instance. France is now in the category of oppressed nations. It must be understood, however, that recognition of the right of France to national freedom does not mean that revolutionary Marxists would support the war carried on by any section of the French ruling class against Germany. When the war began it was imperialist in character and the defeat of one of the imperialist nations does not alter the character of the war.

In the light of the fact that we accept the principles of independence of nations and the right of self-determination, it must be assumed that those in our movement who now propose the slogan of national liberation for the occupied countries mean something more than the mere recognition of these principles. The slogan of national liberation is raised by us in China, in India and in other colonial and semi-colonial countries. It must be as-

sumed that the comrades who propose the raising of the slogan for European countries mean that we apply it in the same way in these countries as we do in China and India. This is not explicitly stated either by the authors of the "Three Theses" or by Marc Loris in his articles in the September and November 1942 issues of "Fourth International". It is almost certain that such is the case with the "Three Theses." It is not so certain as far as the articles of Loris are concerned and therein lies one of their ambiguities.

Whenever Marxists have advanced the slogan of national liberation it has been under circumstances where they were willing to support a struggle for independence even when it was under bourgeois leadership. In China we support the struggle for national liberation against Japanese imperialism in spite of the fact that it is under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek representing the Chinese capitalists and murderer of tens of thousands of revolutionary workers. In India we support the struggle for national independence against British imperialism regardless of the fact that it is under bourgeois leadership. True, we distinguish ourselves from that leadership and we give it no political support. Nevertheless we support the struggle.

Our support of such struggles is based on the proposition that the struggle of colonial and semi-colonial countries for and achievement of independence weakens the imperialist system and furthers the growth of the productive forces of the oppressed nations. In addition, national freedom is a democratic demand and any struggle for national freedom is one which Marxists are in duty bound to support even though it is led by capitalist elements. At all times, socialism must stand out as the champion of freedom and democracy for the oppressed masses and nations.

Were we to adopt the slogan of national liberation for the occupied countries of Europe, consistency would demand that we pursue the same course in these countries as in China and India, that is, that we support the struggle for independence even if led by representatives of capitalism. Assuredly, enough quotations can be found in the writings of Lenin to show that when a nation is under the heel of an oppressor, revolutionary Marxists are obligated to struggle for the independence of the subject nation and to support such a struggle even if under the leadership of bourgeois elements. But it is quite elementary for all Marxists that to solve a new problem it is not at all sufficient to quote Marx or Lenin or Trotsky. What is necessary is to use the method that our teachers used, that is, to start from the concrete and analyse all the factors of a given situation.

THE CENTRAL FACT IN EUROPE: THE WAR

The central factor in the European situation at the present moment is that an imperialist war is still raging in the world to determine whether German imperialism or Anglo-American imperialism is to control Europe and the colonial world. Revolutionary Marxists refuse to support either one of the imperialist camps. They refuse to support the governments of the small European nations invaded by German imperialism. Not because the governments of these small nations represent a class whose interests are inextricably tied up with the interests of the big imperialist powers. Had Germany's invasion of any small country been independent of the imperialist conflict all revolutionary Marxists would have gone to the defence of the small nation. But it is impossible to separate the current struggle of the small nations of Europe from the imperialist conflict and because we refuse to be involved in this conflict we refrain from giving support to the small nations of Europe.

If we retain the meaning that Marxists, up to the present, have given to the slogan of national liberation, that is, the sense in which we use it in China and India, it is difficult to see how its adoption would not entail supporting those sections of the bourgeoisie of the occupied countries who are participating in the struggle against the German occupation. But the struggle of the bourgeoisie of the small nations of Europe, at the present time, is part and parcel of the imperialist conflict. In effect, then, to adopt the slogan of national liberation as an independent slogan, retaining its historic meaning, would mean to change our course and support the small nations of Europe in the imperialist conflict. I do not think that anyone intends to propose such a change in our course.

Are we not, however, supporting the Chinese struggle against Japanese imperialism, even though China is allied with Anglo-American imperialism? We have explained that our support of China is predicated on the fact that the Chinese struggle in its origin was clearly one against imperialism and that China's formal alliance with the Anglo-American imperialism has not as yet changed the essential character of its war. Analysing all the factors in the war China is waging against Japan we conclude that it continues to be independent of the imperialist war; doing the same thing with reference to the small nations of Europe we conclude that their war continues to be part of the imperialist conflict.

When asked whether the slogan of national liberation for Europe is similar to or analogous with the same slogan in China, comrade Loris went off on a tangent to show that Lenin criticised Rosa Luxemburg and other Marxists for making a distinction between the European countries and the colonial world. The distinction which must be recognised at the present time between China and the small countries of Europe is not the general distinction made by Luxemburg, Radek and others. They falsely held that the slogan of self-determination is applicable to European countries. The distinction I insist upon is one between a country where the struggle for national liberation can be considered as independent of the imperialist conflict and countries where the struggle by sections of the bourgeoisie against German imperialism is inseparable from the imperialist conflict.

If the slogan of national liberation means to support a struggle even though led by bourgeois elements then its adoption means, under present conditions in Europe, to support a struggle which we refused to support when Hitler first invaded the occupied countries. Is there any sense in refusing to support the Greek or Norwegian or Yugoslav governments at the time of the invasion and supporting them after the countries have been occupied? Now that the countries are occupied the struggle pursued by the fallen governments or their representatives within the occupied countries is the same struggle waged by them when their countries were invaded. Were we to come out with the slogan of national liberation it would appear as if we are not willing to defend independence before it is lost but only to regain independence after it has been lost.

It may be contended that Loris, at least, does not mean to use the slogan of national liberation as justifying support to any struggle within the occupied countries led by bourgeois elements. That is not at all clear from his articles. In previous answers to written questions (published in an Internal Bulletin of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party) he strongly implied that support of the struggle led by Mikhailovitch is possible. I think he has changed his mind on this question as he is careful, in his articles written subsequently, to avoid saying anything implying such support.

The Mikhailovitch example shows how dangerous it would be to adopt the slogan of national liberation for the European countries. If we support the struggle of Chiang Kai-shek, why not that of Mikhailovitch? It so happens, however, that the latter is the minister of war of the Yugoslav government in London and that the war he is carrying on is only a continuation of the war which he waged at the time of the invasion. Mikhailovitch is no worse than Chiang Kai-shek but the war led by him cannot be distinguished from the imperialist war while that led by Chiang Kai-shek is independent of the imperialist conflict.

It should not be concluded that it is impermissible, under all circumstances, to support a struggle led by a Mikhailovitch. Lenin mentioned the possibility of the political subjugation of all of Europe by some imperialist power, in which case the struggle for national liberation would come on the order of the day. Were Hitler victorious, it is quite possible that after a certain period the struggle for national liberation would, even in Europe, become the central struggle, with the revolutionary Marxists wholeheartedly supporting it.

But a definitive victory and the subjugation of Europe is only a historical possibility. It is as yet far from an actuality. It seems that the authors of the "Three Theses" as well as comrade Loris, when proposing the adoption of the slogan of national liberation for the occupied European countries, could only have done so by assuming Hitler's victory as definitive. They do not take into consideration the fact that the imperialist war is still going on. To ignore that factor is to ignore the most important factor in the whole situation.

Loris places great emphasis on the fact that the struggle for national liberation is now being waged largely by the workers; and he states that Germany's occupation of the European countries raises the national problem in a unique manner. These statements indicate that he does not view the adoption of the slogan as necessarily implying the support of a struggle for national liberation even if led by bourgeois elements. In this he separates himself from the authors of the "Three Theses" who appear to be willing to accept all the logical implications of the slogan. In fact the phraseology of the "Three Theses" is so vague as to justify the inference that the authors intend to ignore all class distinctions. If that is what they mean, it constitutes a fundamental break with Marxism.

There is of course no law making it obligatory to give the slogan of national liberation a meaning which would necessitate the support of a struggle led by capitalist elements. But certain difficulties arise if one insists on the use of the slogan in a sense different from its historical usage in Marxist literature. In the first place, it will be constantly necessary to explain that we are using the slogan in a different sense than that given to it in the past. Confusion will also result from the fact that in colonial and semi-colonial countries we mean by the slogan that we support a nationalist struggle even if led by a Chiang Kai-shek or a Gandhi. In general it is advisable to retain the historic meaning of a slogan and to give it the same political content everywhere.

Furthermore, to use the slogan of national liberation in the European countries, independently of the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe, is actually to place before the eyes of the workers the goal of national liberation under the capitalist system. As indicated above, it might be that we shall in the future be compelled to do that very thing, but to do so now would constitute a serious error.

THE SOCIALIST UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

Socialism has been on the order of the day, as far as Europe is concerned, for many years. Objective conditions have been more than ripe for the unification of Europe on the basis of proletarian regimes in the various

countries. This does not mean that a struggle for national independence was excluded in the isolated countries where such independence had not been achieved. It means only that revolutionary socialists emphasised over and over again that the national problems confronting the European masses could be solved only by a Socialist United States of Europe. The betrayals by the official socialist leadership of the European countries, particularly of Germany, permitted the reactionary force of fascism to gain the adherence of the middle classes and bring to Europe the agony which is now its lot.

No doubt, the masses of the occupied countries prefer that which they had prior to Hitler's conquest to the misery which they are experiencing at the present moment. But it would be a mistake for Marxists, at this time, to shift, in the slightest degree, from the central slogan of their propaganda in the past years. For in the minds of the masses there must also be a serious doubt that the restoration of the conditions existing prior to the conquests of Hitler will in any way solve their problems. They have not yet forgotten their misery under the pre-Hitler regimes and, while they may now know and understand all the reasons for the rise and success of fascism, they know that capitalist democracy did not prevent the fascists from gaining power. More so now than at any other time is it necessary to stress the idea of a Socialist United States of Europe.

The fact, stressed by Loris, and we accept it as a fact, that it is the workers who are putting up the fiercest struggle against German oppression, makes it all the more necessary for us to give the struggle a socialist character and aim. What shall we tell the workers to struggle for? For national liberation implying a return to the pre-Hitler period or for the proletarian revolution which would give them both national and social freedom?

Loris speaks of the necessity of having independent states before proceeding to have a Socialist United States of Europe. Ignoring the schematicism inherent in such a formulation, it tends to imply that the workers, in their struggle against the German imperialist oppressor, should aim at national independence under capitalism before going over to the task of the proletarian revolution and a Socialist United States of Europe. It is difficult to see why, if the workers are the mainstay of the struggle against the foreign oppressor, they should not aim to achieve a Socialist United States of Europe. At the very least it is the duty of revolutionary Marxists to concentrate the attention of the workers on that aim rather than on the aim of national independence. Even assuming, for the sake of argument, that the workers are struggling only for national independence under capitalism, it still remains our duty to raise a slogan which would direct them into the right channels.

It would seem that Loris agrees with this viewpoint, for he expressly states that "to speak of freedom now and to remain silent about the only means of attaining it, by the proletarian revolution, is to repeat an empty phrase, is to deceive the masses." But if, at the same time, he proposes the adoption of the slogan of national liberation without expressly stating that it should not be used independently, he practically nullifies his statement about the necessity of the proletarian revolution to attain freedom.

It goes without saying that under no circumstances should a revolutionary party ignore the natural and justifiable sentiments of the masses for national freedom. The masses must at all times see in socialism a champion of the right of self-determination of nations. That is true during the imperialist war as well as before or after it. It is not at all a question, as Loris puts it, of abandoning the demand for national freedom during the war.

It does not at all follow, that, in order to be the champions of national freedom, we must under all cir-

circumstances use the slogan of national liberation. At the present moment, in the occupied countries we must concentrate on three things. We must refuse to support or participate in any way in the imperialist war; we must stand out as the champion of national freedom; we must emphasise the necessity of socialism as the solution to the problem confronting the European masses. Insofar as one slogan is capable of indicating these manifold tasks, the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe best serves that purpose.

To any question whether we are for national independence, an unhesitating answer in the affirmative must be forthcoming, with the explanation that in order to achieve it the masses must struggle for power, to the workers.

We must be careful not to confuse the question of the proper political slogan with the question of whether we should support a particular group of workers struggling against German oppression. Under all circumstances revolutionary Marxists are obligated to support workers struggling against either a foreign or native oppressor.

Where there are groups of partisans offering resistance to the German imperialist conqueror it is necessary to study the composition and leadership of a particular partisan group before revolutionary Marxists decide to join or support it. If it is a group led by representatives of the official government, then it is participating in the imperialist war and support of such a group is out of the question. If it is a group of workers and peasants who are driven to take up arms against the foreign oppressor, it may be advisable and necessary to join and support such a partisan group and try to give the struggle the direction which we would like it to have, try to educate the workers and peasants to adopt our slogans. In the extremely complicated conditions existing at present in the occupied countries there can be no

rigid formula worked out to serve under all and any conditions.

There can also be no question about the necessity of fighting for and supporting democratic demands such as the right of free speech, free press and free assembly. Democratic demands are to be supported regardless of whether one expects a proletarian or bourgeois democratic revolution to follow the reign of fascism. When the masses begin the revolt against the fascists it will be our duty to urge them to establish soviets and take over the governmental power. They may not follow our advice. In all probability the parties of revolutionary Marxism will not be strong enough, if the revolt against fascism should break out in the near future, to have a decisive influence over the workers at first. A combination of liberal democrats, reformist socialists and Stalinists may gain control of the masses before they accept the leadership of revolutionary Marxism. No one is in a position to predict the exact course events will take.

At all times we participate in the struggle of the masses for greater freedom and at all times we point out to the masses the path which they should follow to attain that freedom. The masses must know that our central aim is to establish a Socialist United States of Europe. Any slogan which at this time will tend to take away the attention of the masses from this central idea is incorrect and harmful to the socialist revolution.

We cannot say what changes we shall make in our programme if either one of the imperialist camps succeeds in subjugating Europe, politically and economically. We can only say that, while the imperialist war is still raging and while in the memory of the masses the conditions prevailing before the conquests of Hitler are still fresh, the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe must continue to be the central political slogan of revolutionary Marxism.

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