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Trotsky on The Stalin Interview

WHAT DOES THE EXPERIENCE WITH MONGOLIA TEACH?

IN STALIN's interview with Roy Howard, the most important thing from a practical standpoint is the warning that the military intervention of the U.S.S.R. is inevitable in the event of an attack by Japan on the Mongolian People's Republic. Is this warning correct in the main? In our opinion, yes. It is correct not only because in question here is the defense of a weak state against a predatory imperialist beast—for if this alone were the guiding consideration, the U.S.S.R. would be constantly at war with all the imperialist countries of the world. The Soviet Union is too weak for such a task, and in this weakness, we might immediately add, lies the only justification for the "pacifism" of its Government.

But the question of Mongolia is a question of the most immediate strategic position of Japan in the war against the U.S.S.R. In this domain the limits of retreat must be resolutely fixed.

A few years ago the Soviet Union surrendered to Japan the Chinese Eastern railway, a position also of extreme strategic importance. At the time this action was acclaimed by the Communist International as a voluntary expression of pacifism. As a matter of fact, it was an act of compulsion due to weakness. The Comintern had ruined the Chinese revolution of 1925-1927 by its policy of the "National Front." This untied the hands of the imperialists. By surrendering an extremely important strategic line, the Soviet Government thereby facilitated for Japan her seizures in Northern China and her present assaults against Mongolia. It should now be clear even to the blind that abstract pacifism was not involved in the surrender of the railway (if that were really the case, it would have been merely an act of stupidity and betrayal); an unfavorable relation of forces: the Chinese revolution had been annihilated, while the Red Army and the Red Fleet were not ready for the struggle.

Now, the situation has so obviously improved, in a military sense, that the Soviet Government considers it possible to resort to a categorical veto on the question of Mongolia. We can only welcome the strengthening of the position of the U.S.S.R. in the Far East, as well as the more critical attitude on the part of the Soviet Government toward the ability of Japan, torn by contradictions, to wage a major, protracted war. It should be pointed out that the Soviet bureaucracy while it is very bold toward its own toilers, easily falls into a panic when faced with imperialist opponents: the petty-bourgeois is unceremonious when dealing with the proletarian, but stands ever in awe of the big bourgeois.

The official formula of the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R., widely advertised by the Comintern, reads as follows: "We do not seek an inch of foreign soil, neither will we surrender an inch of our own." Yet, in the question of Mongolia, the defense of "our own soil" is not involved at all; Mongolia is an independent state. The defense of the revolution, as this small example shows, is not reducible to the defense of the frontiers. The true method of defense consists in

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NORMAN MINI

Class War Prisoner No. 57606

"Our standing here is no accident. Our conviction is the result of the inner logic of the class struggle. But the same class struggle that results in our conviction will some day generate an irresistible wave that will sweep away forever what this court and state represents. With this knowledge we can face our sentences confidently; we know that the future belongs to us."

In the Sacramento courtroom a year ago Norman Mini stood erect and uttered these bold and memorable words to the judge who was about to sentence him on the charge of "criminal syndicalism." He and his fellow prisoners were, in reality, being punished for their activities in the strikes of the California agricultural workers of 1933-1934. All eight were given indeterminate sentences of from one to fourteen years.

The Sacramento defendants have been behind the bars now for a full year. Mini has borne the ordeal of imprisonment, of deadening routine, and of back-breaking toil in the jute mill with the same resoluteness and cheerfulness that has animated all his actions in the class struggle.

This week the victims of the Sacramento conspiracy are to come before the State Parole Board for a definite determination of their sentences. The fate hangs in the balance of California class justice.

The National Sacramento Appeal Committee, which has worked tirelessly on Mini's case since it was organized on the initiative of the Non-Partisan Labor Defense last August, has been conducting a national campaign to enlist labor and liberal support behind its efforts to exert pressure upon the Board to set the sentences at the minimum. It has succeeded in mobilizing broad sections of organized labor behind the case perhaps the most powerful and representative support in any labor defense case of recent years.

Over a dozen international unions of the A. F. of L., among them the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the I. L. G. W. U., the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, the United Textile Workers; half a hundred Central Labor Councils throughout the country; numerous local unions and worker's organizations, and a host of prominent labor, intellectual, and liberal leaders have signed resolutions endorsing the work of the Committee and petitions calling for a reversal of the verdicts and a setting of the minimum sentence for the defendants.

The voice of organized labor and of liberal sentiment has spoken out in behalf of the Sacramento prisoners. Their demands have been brought to the attention of the Parole Board. It remains to be seen whether it will heed these demands when it meets this week-end.

Whatever the decision, on this first anniversary of their prison terms, the Worker's Party sends fraternal greetings to the Sacramento defendants and renews its pledge of solidarity with comrade Norman Mini. It calls upon all its members to continue their support of the National Sacramento Appeal Committee, which will not cease until Mini is released from San Quentin, cleared of the criminal syndicalist charge, and allowed to rejoin the ranks of the revolutionaries for whom his heroic conduct has been so inspiring an example.

War on S.U. Behind New Border Clash

Nippon Gov't Driving Toward Open Outbreak In Mongolia

A three-day pitched battle between Mongolian and Manchukuo-Japanese forces in the Lake Bor region on the Outer Mongolian border brought the ever-latent Soviet-Japanese tension boiling once more to the surface this week.

Despatches from Ulan Bator, the Mongol capital, to Moscow, described a battle in which tanks, planes, armored cars and machine guns were brought into play. Several hundred men were engaged on both sides in the fight, which ended with the expulsion of the invading Manchukuo-Japanese troops. Moscow reports following the battle stated that additional Japanese reinforcements were being rushed to the battle area.

As has become customary during this lengthening and sharpening series of border clashes, Japanese sources have given a directly opposite version of events, invariably charging Mongol invasions of Manchukuo territory.

Japan Provokes Incidents

In fact the Japanese-Manchukuo forces have provoked these border skirmishes by claiming for themselves territory which has always been recognized as being well within the Mongolian frontier. Marveling into what they claim is their own territory, the invaders naturally meet with the Mongol guards who have in almost every case forced the invaders to retire.

Again, as usual, Tokyo disclaims knowledge of the activities of the Imperial Kwantung Army (Japan's mainland force), a convenient formula which enables the military to proceed with carefully planned provocative attacks at the border designed to test the Soviet defenses.

Last winter the Kwantung Army wanted to know whether the Soviet Union would assume responsibility for the defense of Outer Mongolia. It staged a whole series of attacks in the Lake Bor area to find out. The result was a flat declaration of warning from Moscow that it considered the defense of Outer Mongolia indispensable to its own defense. Diplomatic negotiations then ensued and the border provocations abruptly ceased.

In the interval occurred the bloody Tokyo events of Feb. 26. Through what appeared to be a retreat of the military elements, the army in fact emerged from the confused days of the attempted coup d'etat with its hand enormously strengthened, its financial and political demands entirely accepted by the new premier, Koki Hirota.

Hirota's Policies

The policies announced by Hirota, the new effort to arrive at some kind of "understanding" with Great Britain and the United States with reference to spheres of influence in the Far East (there were reports that actual negotiations to this end have already been initiated) represent another step on the steady path Japan is treading toward inevitable drive against the Soviet Union.

The advent of Hirota meant a strengthening and extension of Japan's military forces and an effort to bring an end to Japan's diplomatic isolation.

Hitler's march into the Rhine and the complete success of his maneuver showed Japanese imperialism that it need not slacken its pace but hasten it. Britain's support of Hitler and the consequent disruption of France's carefully-laid chain of alliances, in which the Soviet Union had become a link created a situation in Europe extremely dangerous, even critical, for the Soviet Union. Japanese imperialism proceeds on that basis to new provocations on the U.S.S.R.'s eastern borders, growing louder and more boldly the threat of war.

New Support For Newsmen

MILWAUKEE, Wis., Mar. 31.—Heartened by fresh evidence of widespread support, the Milwaukee Newspaper Guild Tuesday pressed forward with increased determination in its strike against the Hearst-owned Wisconsin News for recognition of the guild as a collective bargaining agent for the underpaid News strikers. The strike is now in its seventh week.

The Midwest District Guild, meeting over the week-end at Chicago, adopted a resolution heartily endorsing the strike and promising

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Jobless to Unite in Nationwide Army at Great Washington D. C. Congress Meeting on April 7-10

French Gov't Jails Zeller, Youth Leader

Zeller is 2nd Arrested As Capitalists Prepare For War

A foretaste of how democratic France will be in a war with Fascist Germany is to be had in the arrest of the editor of Revolution (Fred Zeller), who according to press reports has been indicted for urging fraternization of French and German soldiers on the Rhine and thereby "inciting to disobedience and anarchy."

With war hovering closer than ever, the French bourgeoisie made the utmost use of Hitler's occupation of the Rhineland to blur class lines at home, to squelch all discontent among the working class under the chimera of "national unity" against the foreign "aggressor" Sarraut, the "Radical," at the helm of the government has been able to play this game successfully only because of the willing cooperation of the Front Populaire. Like overpriced actors, the leaders of the Socialist and Communist parties leap to the stage in response to any noise that sounds like their cue and declaim their social-patriotic roles.

"Union of the French Nation" So shameless have the Stalinists become that they vie with the reactionaries and the Fascists in applause for the jingo speeches of Sarraut in the Chamber of Deputies on the Rhineland crisis. In L'Humanite they echo his cry: "Union of the French nation for peace." This, of course, is not the peace of the victorious socialist proletariat. It is the robber peace of Versailles which they declare approvingly, was safeguarded when the French government strengthened its line of fortifications in the East.

Though a furious debate rages in the press between the right and the "left" as to who serves best the cause of national unity, they are all united on one thing: the danger of having revolutionists at liberty, free to point out the real cause and nature of capitalist wars, to expose the predatory designs of the capitalist class and to arouse the working class against it as the real enemy which must be defeated by revolutionary struggle.

The Sarraut government, supported by the votes—or at the worst the abstentions—of the Stalinists and Socialists in parliament, cracked down upon Revolution, organ of the Fourth Internationalists, because it broke the common front of treachery in their appeal to the workers, peasants and soldiers of France. (Printed in the last issue of the NEW MILITANT.)

The arrest and indictment of Zeller presages the fury of the repression once war actually begins and indicates that its most vehement sponsors will be found in Stalinist circles. But to the Bolshevik-Leninists and the revolutionary Socialist Youth it will come neither as a surprise nor as a first experience; they have felt the heavy hand of the capitalist terror in their struggle against Fascism.

The Case of Levaque

Levaque, a member of the Central Committee of the J.S.R. has been behind prison bars for more than two months, without indictment and denied release on bail, for his courageous activity against the Fascist and royalist bands. His case will serve to illustrate how the People's Front paralyzes the resistance of the workers to Fascism by signing reconciliation pacts with the Croix de Feu on the one hand and persecuting revolutionists who battle against it, on the other.

Levaque's arrest grew out of incidents surrounding the assault of the royalist, Maurras, of the Action Francaise, on Leon Blum, leader of the S.F.I.O. This attack aroused great indignation among the Parisian workers and on the same night in many parts of the city they proceeded to punish the fascists and royalists without waiting for the inevitable "don't-be-provoked" orders of the People's Front.

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Militants Sweep N. Y. Socialist Primaries

Full details of the results of the New York primaries are not yet known to us as we go to press. But the contest which has aroused the greatest interest in labor ranks—the dispute between the candidates of the Old Guard and those of the Left wing Militants—is already obviously decided in what amounts to a sweeping victory throughout the state for the latter group. It elected the overwhelming majority of its candidates, not only in New York City but also "up state."

The victory of the Left wing cannot but meet with gratification on the part of every progressive worker who has followed the intensely important internal struggle in the Socialist party.

The Old Guard had at its disposal, in the present contest, not only a crew of experienced old line politicians, but the support of the powerful institutions of the conservatives. In addition, its slate was vigorously advocated by the only daily "Socialist" paper in the East, the reactionary Jewish Daily Forward, with a large circulation, as well as by the English-language organ of the conservatives, the New Leader.

For a press, the Militants had only their weekly Socialist Call. In addition, the Left wing had far inferior financial resources. All this was, however, offset by the enthusiastic support given the Militants by the rank and file of the Party and the Young People's Socialist League, who made up for the handicaps by their loyal activity.

The results of the primary elections furnish ample evidence of the healthiness of the break between the Militants and the discredited Old Guard. It is now quite clear that the Socialist workers, including the enrolled voters, are ready to support a Left wing movement, particularly when the "prominent" and "respectable" fossils of conservatism have broken from the party.

The Old Guard built its whole campaign around a Red scare against the Left wing. The letter was labelled "communist," "Trotskyist" and "insurrectionist." But the barrage of the Right wing was of no avail. In point of fact, its campaign was actually a boomerang against it.

The vote showed that the radical and Socialist workers want a vigorous, militant, revolutionary party, and have only contempt for "Red scares." They are relieved at the sight of the decrepit Old Guard separating from the party and thus taking a millstone off its neck.

Finally, the primary elections reveal once more the truth of the good old principle: the way to meet the onslaughts of conservatives and reactionaries is not to be apologetic in defense of one's militant or revolutionary position, not to be on the defensive, not to try to cover it up with "respectable" phrases—but rather to put it forth more boldly, more clearly and consistently.

The extent of the victory of the Left wing in these primaries may be accounted for, basically, by the extent to which it maintained such a course. Its continued advance in a progressive direction depends essentially upon grasping this lesson and carrying it uncompromisingly into action.

Croppers Aid Move Trial Group Forms From Tampa

A united front Defense Committee has been formed to undertake the defense of members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union who have been jailed for offenses ranging from "obstructing the sidewalk" to "assault with intent to kill" as a result of their effort to hold meetings or for merely being present at such meetings.

Jim Ball, negro leader of the St. Peters local of the union, has been convicted of the charge of assault with intent to kill and sentenced to seven years on a prison farm which is the Arkansas equivalent of a Georgia chain gang. He was present at a meeting which was raided by deputy sheriffs who shot two workers in the back as they were going away from the meeting.

Three others were arrested for "rioting." Their "crime" consisted in going to Memphis to report the foregoing event at Union headquarters. Willie Hurst, chief defense witness, was murdered by a band of masked men who staged a fake hold-up after he had refused to sign an affidavit for the sheriff exonerating the real malefactors.

The planters have announced their determination to smash the union at all costs. Three union leaders, McKinney, Sweden and Moskap, are in town now in order to rally support for the union in its fight to free the men under charges and to help lay the basis for a broad defense movement to assist the union in its forthcoming struggle. Among the organizations participating in the defense are the League for Industrial Democracy, Socialist Party, Non-Partisan Labor Defense and the Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners.

NEW YORK, Apr. 1.—It was learned here today that a change of venue had been granted the three defendants who are being tried in Tampa for the murder of Joseph Shoemaker and the kidnapping of Sam Rogers and Eugene Poulnot.

Trial has been postponed to April 13, when it will be resumed at Bartow, a town near Tampa. There have been at least twelve kidnappings of labor men in Tampa and its vicinity within the last six years without a single conviction, without even arousing a mild ripple of interest among the forces sworn to maintain "law and order." There is a local ordinance against shark fishing. Sharks have been fished out of the sea with undigested pieces of clothing in their bellies which were identified as belonging to labor men who had been listed officially as "missing." Many of the crimes committed in the course of Tampa's reign of terror will never be known.

The Ku Klux Klan has just ended its state-wide meeting at Jacksonville with a parade through the business district of the town under cover of night. Several hundred participated in full regalia with a fiery cross at the head of the parade.

Already two men have died under mysterious circumstances after having been questioned by the prosecuting attorney. They were called "suicides" by the police.

The spotlight must be kept on the case in order to prevent a recurrence of terror. Constant pressure must be exerted on Gov. Sholtz to bring the Tampa murderers to justice. Send contributions to Tampa Defense Committee, 112 E. 19th Street, New York City.

Mass Reply to New Gov't WPA Slash

Fighting Policy Is Prime Task of Jobless Gathering

Next week the unemployed movement in this country comes of age. After hard years of preliminary struggle, a great goal, held in mind by far-sighted leaders from the beginning, is to be realized. In a mighty Convention, to be held in Washington, D.C. April 7-10, every major unemployed organization in the country will be united in the Workers' Alliance of America.

From more than half the states of the Union, hard-fighting delegates of the National Unemployed Leagues, the present Workers' Alliance, the Unemployment Councils, the American Workers' Union, the Minnesota Workers' Alliance, and other independent organizations, will gather to forge in common a powerful instrument with which to enforce and advance the demands of the unemployed. Through the new united organization the unemployed of the United States will speak with a single voice loud enough to be heard in the remotest Committee-rooms of Congress and the darkest corners of Wall Street.

Plight of Unemployed

No time could be more fitting than the present in which to accomplish the unification of the unemployed. During the past two months the demagogic Roosevelt Administration has launched a new and vicious attack. The orders have gone out to reduce the WPA rolls by 700,000 by July. The C.C.C. is to be cut by 200,000. The State and City governments administering direct relief are attempting relentless and systematic reductions. Roosevelt, desperately anxious to get a good mark from the bankers, has reduced the proposed budget appropriations for unemployment relief to a pitifully inadequate figure. During the past year, in the face of upsurging profits, the total figure of unemployment has remained practically stationary, and is estimated by the American Federation of Labor at a minimum of 12,500,000.

The unemployed have learned from their own harsh experience that their answer to the united attack of reaction, of the industrialists, bankers, the police and courts and the government, must be itself a united answer. They have learned that division in their own ranks, squabbles and fighting among themselves, only weaken their own position, lay them open to new inroads of the enemy, and squander their energies uselessly.

Rich Years of Struggle

Into the new organization will go the rich fund of experiences gained by the unemployed since the crisis of 1929. There were many lessons to be learned. There was first the most elementary lesson of all: the need for organization, the realization that the bourgeoisie and its state would grant to the unemployed masses cast off from the industrial process only what the organized efforts of the unemployed themselves forced. There were then the long lessons in the methods of struggle, the experiences which taught that no polite committees, no social-service technique, no elaborate petitions would bring results for the unemployed. These, the unemployed discovered, received courteous replies, and accomplished nothing. Instead, the lessons taught, the unemployed must make their own the direct and militant methods of the class struggle—hunger marches, mass demonstrations, solid picket lines.

Then the unemployed began to understand more clearly that their unemployment was no temporary plague, but a permanent and insuperable condition of a rotting social order no longer able to handle the productive system which it had brought into being. From this understanding grew the realization that a longer-term view was needed, together with firmer and more lasting forms of organization. The New

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TROTSKY ON THE STALIN INTERVIEW

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weakening the positions of imperialism and in strengthening the positions of the proletariat and of the colonial peoples in the entire world. An unfavorable relation of forces may compel, in the interests of saving the main base of the revolution, the surrender of many "inches" of soil to the enemy, as was the case in the epoch of Brest-Litovsk, and partly also in the case of the Chinese Eastern railway. And, on the contrary, a more favorable relation of forces places on the workers' state the duty to come to the assistance of the revolutionary movement in other countries, not only morally but also, if need be, with the assistance of armed force: wars of emancipation are an integral part of revolutions of emancipation.

Thus, the experience with Mongolia shatters to pieces the ideology of conservative pacifism which bases itself upon historical frontiers, as though they were the Ten Commandments. The frontiers of the U.S.S.R. are only the temporary front line trenches of the class struggle. They lack even a national justification. The Ukrainian people—to take only one of many examples—is cut in two by the state boundary. Should favorable conditions arrive, the Red Army would be duty-bound to come to the aid of Western Ukraine which is under the heel of the Polish executioners. It is not difficult to imagine the gigantic impulse that would be given to the revolutionary movement in Poland and in the whole of Europe by the unification of a workers' and peasants' Ukraine. All state frontiers are only fetters upon the productive forces. The task of the proletariat is not to preserve the *status quo*, i.e., to perpetuate the frontiers, but on the contrary to work for their revolutionary elimination with the aim of creating the Socialist United States of Europe and of the entire world. But to make such an international policy possible, if not at present then in the future, it is imperative for the Soviet Union to free itself from the rule of the conservative bureaucracy with its religion of "socialism in one country."

WHEREIN LIES THE CAUSE OF WAR?

In reply to Howard's question as to what causes underlie the threat of war, Stalin said in accordance with tradition: "It lies in capitalism." As proof he cited the *last* war which "arose from the desire to divide the world." But remarkably enough, no sooner does Stalin pass from the past to the present, from dim theoretical recollections to real politics, than capitalism immediately disappears, and in its place are to be found individual evil-minded cliques that are incapable of grasping the benefits of peace. To the question of whether war is inevitable, Stalin replies, "In my opinion the positions of the friends of peace are being strengthened. The friends of peace can work openly (!), they base themselves upon the force of public opinion, and they have at their disposal such instruments as, for example (!!!), the League of Nations. This is an asset for the friends of peace . . . as for the enemies of peace, they are compelled to work secretly. This is a liability for the enemies of peace. Incidentally, it is not excluded that precisely because of this (?) they may decide upon a military adventure as an act of despair."

Thus, we find that humanity is divided not into classes, nor into imperialist states warring with each other, but into "friends" and "enemies" of peace, i.e., into saints and sinners. The cause for war (at any rate, for future if not past wars) is not capitalism that breeds irreconcilable contradictions but the ill-will of the "enemies of peace" who "work secretly," while the French, British, Belgium and other slave-owners do their work in broad daylight. But precisely because the enemies of peace, like all evil spirits, work secretly, they may, in a fit of despair, plunge into an adventure. Who needs this philosophic mush? At best it can be of service only to some old ladies' pacifist society.

As we have had the occasion to state before, the agreement between the Soviets and France gives infinitely more guarantees to France than to the Soviets. In the negotiations with Paris, Moscow evinced a lack of firmness, or, to put it more bluntly, Laval fooled Stalin. The events in connection with the Rhineland are an indisputable confirmation that, with a more realistic appraisal of the situation, Moscow could have wrung from France much more serious guarantees, in so far as pacts in general can be considered as "guarantees" in the present epoch of sharp turns in the situation, of continuous crises, break-ups and regroupments. But as we have already said, the Soviet bureaucracy shows much greater firmness in the struggle against the advanced workers than in negotiations with bourgeois diplomats.

But, no matter how he might evaluate the Franco-Soviet pact, not a single serious minded proletarian revolutionist ever denied or denies the right of the Soviet state to seek for an auxiliary support for its inviolability through a temporary agreement with the French or some other imperialism. For this purpose, however, there is not the slightest need to call black white and to rebaptize bloody brigands as "friends of peace." As an example to be emulated one might take, let us say, the new ally, the French bourgeoisie: in concluding the agreement with the Soviets the French bourgeoisie presents this action very soberly without becoming lyrical, without lavishing any compliments and even maintaining a constant undertone of warning against the Soviet Government. However bitter it may be, it is necessary to speak the truth. Laval, Sarraut and their associates have shown a great deal more firmness and dignity in defending the interests of the bourgeois state than did Stalin and Litvinov in the service of the workers' state.

Assuredly, it is difficult to conceive a more vicious stupidity than that which divides the world brigands into friends and enemies of peace! One could still speak, in a certain sense, about the friends and enemies of *status quo*: but these are two entirely different things. *Status quo* is not the organization of "peace," but the organization of the infamous oppression exercised by a minority over the overwhelming majority of mankind. *Status quo* is being maintained by means of constant warfare within the sacred boundaries and beyond their precincts (England—in India and Egypt; France—in Syria; De La Rocque—in France). The difference between the two camps, which are, besides, very unstable, consists in the fact that some of the brigands think it more advisable already today to maintain the existing boundaries of oppression and enslavement with arms in hand, whereas others would prefer to blow up these boundaries sooner. This correlation of appetites and plans is itself continually changing. Italy favors a *status quo* in Europe but not in Africa; yet every assault upon the boundaries in Africa is immediately reflected in Europe. Hitler decided to send troops into the Rhineland only because Mussolini had succeeded in slaughtering several thousand Abyssinians. Where should we enroll Italy: among the friends or the enemies of peace? And yet, France cherishes the friendship with Italy infinitely more than the friendship with the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, England is courting the friendship of Germany.

The "friends of peace" work in the open (who would have thought it!) and have at their disposal "such instruments as, for example, the League of Nations." What other "instruments" have the friends of peace, outside the League of Nations? Obviously, they have the Comintern and the Amsterdam-Pleyel Committee. Stalin failed to mention these auxiliary "instruments" partly because he himself does not attach any great importance to them, and partly because he did not want to frighten his interlocutor unnecessarily. But Stalin does transform completely the League of Nations, whose nose has caved in, in the full view of all mankind, into a bulwark of peace, the prop and hope of nations.

In order to utilize the imperialist antagonisms between France and Germany there was not and is not the slightest need for idealizing the bourgeois ally or the particular combination of imperialists that temporarily screens itself by the sign of the League of Nations. The crime does not lie in this or another practical deal concluded with imperialists but in the fact that both the Soviet government and the Comintern are dishonestly embellishing their episodic allies and their League; are duping the workers with slogans of disarmament and "collective security"; and thereby are transformed in action into the political agency of imperialists in relation to the working masses.

The program of the Bolshevik party drafted by Lenin in 1919 replied to all these questions with remarkable clarity and simplicity. But who thinks about this document in the Kremlin? Today, Stalin and Co. find embarrassing even the eclectic program of the Comintern compiled by Bukharin in 1928. For this reason we think it useful to quote from the program of the Bolshevik party on the question of the League of Nations and the friends of peace. Here is what it states:

"The growing pressure on the part of the proletariat and especially the victories gained by the latter in various countries tend to increase the resistance of the exploiters and engender on their part the creation of new forms of the international unification of the capitalists (League of Nations, etc.), which, while organizing on a world scale the systematic exploitation of all the peoples on earth, aim their immediate efforts toward the direct suppression of the revolutionary movements of the proletariat in all countries.

"All this inevitably leads to the correlation of the civil war within the individual states with the revolutionary wars both of the proletarian countries defending themselves as well as of the oppressed peoples struggling against the yoke of the imperialist powers.

"Under these conditions the slogans of pacifism, of international disarmament under capitalism, of arbitration courts, and so on are not only a reactionary Utopia but also a downright swindle of the toilers aimed to disarm the proletariat and to distract the workers away from the task of disarming the exploiters."

It is precisely this criminal work that both Stalin and the Comintern are fulfilling: they are sowing reactionary Utopias, swindling the toilers, disarming the proletariat.

THE "COMIC MISUNDERSTANDING" WITH REGARD TO THE WORLD REVOLUTION.

Nobody compelled Stalin to satisfy Howard's thirst for knowledge on the question of the world revolution. If Stalin gave the interview as the unofficial head of the Government (and this is indicated by his statement with regard to Mongolia), then he could have simply referred his interlocutor to Dimitroff on the questions of the world revolution. But no, Stalin went into explanations. At first sight it appears entirely incomprehensible why he should have thereby compromised himself so cruelly by his cynical and, sad to say, not at all clever disquisitions about the world revolution. But he is driven onto the slippery road by an insurmountable need: he must break with the past.

What about the plans and intentions relating to the revolution? asks the visitor.

"We never (!) had such plans and intentions."

But, what about . . .

"This is all the result of a misunderstanding."

Howard: "A tragic misunderstanding?"

Stalin: "No, a comic, or, perhaps, a tragi-comical one."

It is embarrassing even to read and transcribe these lines, they are so inappropriate and indecent. For whom is this . . . wisdom intended? Even the pacifist ladies will reject it.

Asks Stalin: "What danger can the neighboring states see in the ideas of the Soviet people, if these states are really firmly placed in the saddle?" Very well, permit us to ask, what about those who are not placed firmly in the saddle? Yet, that is how matters stand in reality. Precisely because its position is precarious, the bourgeoisie fears Soviet ideas, not Stalin's ideas but those ideas that led to the creation of the Soviet state. To soothe the bourgeoisie, Stalin adduces a supplementary argument: "The export of revolution is nonsense. Every country, should it so desire, will itself achieve its own revolution, and if it does not desire it, there will be no revolution. Now, for example, our country desired to make a revolution and made it. . . ." And more of the same, in the self-same, smug, edifying tone. From the theory of socialism in one country Stalin has completely and decisively passed over to the theory of revolution in one country. If a "country" so desires—it will make it, should it not desire it—it won't make it. Now, "we," for example, desired it. . . . But before desiring it, "we" imported the ideas of Marxism from other countries and made use of foreign revolutionary experience. In the course of decades, "we" had our emigre organization in other countries which directed the revolutionary struggle in Russia. In order to give a methodic and an active character to the exchange of experience between countries and their mutual revolutionary support, "we" organized the Communist International in the year 1919. "We" more than once proclaimed as the duty of the proletariat of a victorious country to come to the assistance of the rising peoples—with advice, material means, and, if possible, with armed force. All these ideas (incidentally, they bear the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxembourg, Liebknecht) are written down in the most important programmatic documents of the Bolshevik party and of the Comintern. Stalin has proclaimed that all this is a misunderstanding! A tragic one? No, a comic one. Not for nothing has Stalin recently announced that it has become "merry" to live in the Soviet Union: now even the Communist International has become transformed from a serious personage into a comedian. And how could it be otherwise, if the international character of the revolution is mere and sheer "nonsense"?

Stalin would have made a much more convincing impression upon his interlocutor, if instead of impotently calumniating the past ("we never had such plans and intentions"), he had on the contrary openly counterposed his own policy to the antiquated "plans and intentions" which have been relegated to the museum. Stalin might have read Howard the very same quotation from the program which we gave above, and then made approximately the following brief speech, "In the eyes of Lenin the League of Nations was an organization for the bloody suppression of the toilers. But we see in it—an instrument of peace. Lenin spoke of the inevitability of revolutionary wars. But we consider the export of revolution—nonsense. Lenin branded the alliance between the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie as a betrayal. But we are doing all in our power to drive the French proletariat onto this road. Lenin lashed the slogan of disarmament under capitalism as an infamous swindle of the toilers. But we build our entire policy upon this slogan. Your comical misunderstanding—that is how Stalin could have concluded—"consists in the fact that you take us for the continuators of Bolshevism, whereas we are its gravediggers."

Such an explanation would have dispelled the last shreds of suspicion of the world bourgeoisie and would have definitely established Stalin's reputation as a statesman. Unfortunately, he does not dare as yet to resort to such frank language. The past binds him, the traditions hamper him, the phantom of the Opposition frightens him. We come to the assistance of Stalin. In accordance with our rule, in the given case, too, we openly say what is.

March 18, 1936.

French Gov't Jails Zeller, Youth Leader

(Continued from Page 1)

In one place, on the rue Asseline, where a group of the Action Francaise had assembled to celebrate the attack on Blum, the workers mobilized spontaneously and introduced an unexpected note into the festivities. Immediately the Stalinists of this section, the 14th Arrondissement, issued a disclaimer for any responsibility of this action while at the same time denouncing the Bolshevik-Leninists to the police.

C.P. Rats on Bolsheviks

The contents of this stool-pigeon leaflet, a fascimile of which appeared in Revolution, February 28, were as follows:

"The Communist unit of the 14th Arrondissement warns the workers against impulsive actions very often incited by irresponsible people or provocateurs successively expelled from the Communist and from the Socialist party, who are trying to canalize in a false way the justified anger of the working class.

"Republican defense of liberties and the defense of workers cannot and must not consist in actions or expeditions which usually play the game of the fascist bands."

The police were not slow in taking the hint and immediately arrested an individual named Jonot, a member of the S.F.I.O., who turned out to be a stool-pigeon and squealed out only on Levaque but on some ten members of his party.

It is interesting and characteristic that Populaire which filled its columns with vile tirades against the J.S.R. (Revolutionary Socialist Youth) for their revolutionary policy on war, breathed not a word about the government agent Jonot. Indeed, why should it, when Jonot is an agent for the same government they support in parliament and it was a common enemy he was betraying. The same holds for the National Committee of the S.F.I.O. which acted with undignified haste in expelling Bolshevik-Leninists and took its time in taking action against Jonot. It might be remarked that the People's Front of the district followed suit in "deploring" the incidents at the rue Asseline!

Questioned upon his arrest, Levaque denied his participation in the events in question but stated without hesitation that he approved the action of the workers and had he been present he would have encouraged them and acted by their side. The Stalinists immediately took the opportunity not to support Levaque but to give information to the government to insure a severe sentence. "The J.S.R.," say these rats in L'Humanite, "is under the leadership of Trotskyist elements whose provocative methods we have vigorously fought. Levaque is a member of the Central Committee of the J.S.R."

In Company With Royalists

The baiting of revolutionists, however, is not the private preserve of the Stalinists, which, once begun, must be done in company with those who devote their main energies to it—the Fascists. Thus Action Francaise, organ of the royalist group, takes up the cry of L'Humanite:

"The J.S.R., or workers' militia whose leader is Marcelle Pivert (an error in fact—Ed.) and whose organ is the paper Revolution, are the strong arm men of the S.F.I.O. . . . The J.S.R. admits its participation in the incidents of the rue Asseline. . . . The guilty are therefore known. They admit, they proclaim not only their participation in the crime but their deliberate intention to repeat it and they call for direct action. Has direct action become legal under the Sarraut government? When will the groups signing this press release (quoted below—Ed.) and poster be dissolved?"

What a revealing picture! The thug Maurras, who slugged Blum over the head with a cane, remains at liberty. Levaque, the revolutionist, who supported the workers in their spontaneous action which would make the Fascists wary of any similar action in the future, is cast into prison. Fascists . . . and Stalinists demand the overment action against Levaque's organization!

While the Stalinists disavowed, disassociated . . . and disgraced themselves by making common cause with the Royalists, the Bolshevik-Leninists and Revolutionary Socialist Youth sprang to the defense of Levaque, issuing the following statement to the press:

Solidarity with Levaque

"The royalist assault upon Leon Blum gave rise to a spontaneous reaction in many working class districts. In the 14th particularly, workers of all tendencies and all organizations, swelling with anger demonstrated their intention of punishing Royalist assassins in the scuffle that ensued on the rue Asseline.

"But the Communist party believed it its duty, too late, to disassociate itself from this action and in a leaflet to openly attempt to place the responsibility for the

Unemployed to Unite in Washington on April 7

(Continued from Page 1)

Deal helped to drive home the lessons. Roosevelt's pretty pre-election promises to the "Forgotten Men" raised in the unemployed new hopes and new illusions. But three years of Roosevelt have taught the unemployed what to expect from the promises of the representatives of the bourgeoisie. The unemployed have been learning who are their friends and who are their enemies, that their friends are their class allies, and their enemies the class enemy.

Tactics for the Jobless

The unemployed have been learning the lesson of the inseparable

New Support for Newsmen

(Continued from Page 1)

financial support. Gunnar Nickolson, Milwaukee vice-president was elected permanent chairman of the district guild, and Al Haut of the Chicago Guild was made secretary-treasurer. Plans were made for organizing new guild units in the district, which now includes Milwaukee, Chicago, Rockford, Des Moines, Madison and Indianapolis. **Teachers Association Sympathetic**

As an antidote to an attack on the guild by the Citizens' Law and Order League, stood the resolution supporting collective bargaining of the Milwaukee branch of the Association of Wisconsin State Teachers Colleges, a voluntary association which for 20 years has been recognized by the board of normal school regents as the bargaining agent for class-room teachers and librarians of the nine teachers' colleges in the state.

Unmoved by the Law and Order League's espousal of the Hearst cause, the guild will serve notice Saturday to the News management that its strike lines are unbroken and its support unwavering, with a huge demonstration Saturday noon at the News plant. Then, Saturday night there will be a torch light parade on the South Side of Milwaukee, followed by a mass meeting indoors. Guildsmen will make the necessary contacts with labor organizations and other groups during the week to insure success of the demonstration.

demonstration of the anger of the workers on our organization and to endeavor to direct the investigations of the police to the 'Trotskyists.'

"With the aid of a 'confession' our comrade Levaque, member of the Bolshevik-Leninist group and of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Socialist Youth was arrested.

"We protest against this arbitrary arrest by the Sarraut-Delbos government dictated purely by class interests and political motives, and not even 'justified' by an iota of juridical proof.

"At the same time we declare our solidarity with our comrade Levaque who courageously declared that he fully approved the action of the workers at the rue Asseline, regretting only not having participated in them.

"Our two organizations, the J.S.R. and B.-L.G., who no longer belong to the S.F.I.O., and who, besides, were expelled from it for having practiced, as against the timidity of the Socialist leaders, an intransigent class policy, loudly declare that they approve the action of the workers of the rue Asseline.

"We are the initiators of the slogan of workers militias.

"Our motto of action against the wild dogs of Fascism is: For one eye, both eyes, for one tooth, the entire jaw.

"We remain true to the teachings of Marx, Lenin Trotsky.

"We have nothing in common with those who betray the workers by deceiving them with 'national reconciliation' and dragging them in the tow of Sarraut, the man who declared: 'Communism, that is the enemy.'

"Long live the J.S.R. and the G.B.L.

"Long live the Fourth International."

Intense Campaign

It goes without saying that neither L'Humanite nor Populaire printed this release nor did the C.P. or S.P. respond to the call for a conference for the defense of Levaque. But this conspiracy of silence did not prevent the workers of Paris or of France from hearing about Levaque and joining in the protest. More than 20 organizations have agreed to participate in the defense work, among them sections of the S.R.I. (International Red Aid, same as I.L.D. here—Ed.), 10,000 circulars were distributed and Paris was placarded with posters. Throughout Paris and France, even as far as Geneva, workers' organizations have protested the arrest of Levaque and condemned the treacherous action of the Stalinist and Socialist bureaucrats.

This agitation, although we have no direct information as yet, we are certain will be increased a hundred fold in the defense of Zeller.

unity of their interests with the working class as a whole. Perhaps the most distinctive contribution of the National Unemployed League, along with its insistence from the beginning on the methods of militant mass action, was its initiation of direct cooperation between employed and unemployed workers, in strikes, boycotts, demonstrations and mass picket lines.

And the unemployed have learned also that their movement cannot be effective when used as political kites for political parties or factions, whether of the bourgeoisie or the working class. They have had their taste of organizations built to get votes for ward-healers or to send delegates to fake Congresses; and they have found that neither serves their interests.

In Washington in the unity Convention, the unemployed, represented not by highly paid officials and bureaucrats, but by those who have taken the lead in their own direct struggles, will sum up the results of a number of the chief lessons. The conclusion they have reached is that the next big step for the unemployed requires as a pre-condition aggressive, fighting unity in a single national organization.

Johnson's Treachery

Unity is without question a great step forward, perhaps the greatest which the unemployed movement has yet taken. It would, however, be romantic and dangerous to imagine that unity will solve all problems. Serious difficulties remain, and are present even in the organization of unity. It is a disruptive blow at the entire unemployed movement that the ardent convert to social-patriotism, Arnold Johnson, working under cover during recent months in the National Unemployed League, has attempted to split the NUL by calling a rump Convention behind the backs of the National Executive Committee. His attempt has been sternly repudiated by all the active and functioning Leagues, but he may still try to get together in Washington next week a medley of stooge delegates. His split maneuvering must be exposed and counteracted, in order to wipe out a sore spot of the new organization at the beginning.

Likewise must the Convention be on guard against attempts of the Stalinists to stuff the new National Committee with members from fake "independent" organizations created overnight for bargaining purposes. And even more must the Convention reject Stalinist efforts—so noticeable at every recent Convention or Conference attended by Stalinists—to transform the new Workers' Alliance from the united, fighting class organization of the unemployed into a pale adjunct of the collaborationist People's Front and Stalinist social-patriotism. This must be no Convention of the American League against War and Fascism, or National Negro Congress.

The Convention must look forward to three great immediate tasks, and must prepare the organization for facing them: An aggressive organizational campaign, carrying the Workers Alliance into every state of the Union, and strengthening the locals particularly in the industrial centers; a rapid offensive against the Roosevelt relief program, to forestall the cutting down of work relief, increase the public works program, and raise direct relief by appropriations from the Federal government; and all along the line more direct cooperation with the trade union movement in all fields, especially with the progressive industrial union forces in the American Federation of Labor. Unity gives a basis for putting such a policy into effect on a scale never before possible in the unemployed movement. By carrying it out, the unemployed will play their part in a notable advance for the working class.

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STALINTERN READY TO EMBRACE CHIANG KAI SHEK

By LO SEN

On March 21, 1927, the workers of Shanghai rose in a mighty insurrection. With their own arms and their own forces they defeated and expelled the garrison of Northern mercenaries. Five days later Chiang Kai-shek made his triumphant entry into the city.

On April 5, 1927, in the Hall of Columns in Moscow, Stalin told 3,000 party functionaries that Chiang Kai-shek was "leading the army and cannot do otherwise but lead it against the imperialists."

Seven days later Chiang Kai-shek led his army against the workers of Shanghai and with frightful slaughter crushed the mass movement which had swept him to power.

On April 21, 1927, in his thesis published in Pravda, Stalin wrote that the "revolutionary Kuomintang in Wuhan" (Wang Ching-wei and Co.) was "leading a decisive struggle against militarism and imperialism."

After Shanghai . . . Wuhan

Exactly a month later, on May 21, soldiers led by the Wuhan generals began slaughtering the workers in Changsha and the peasants throughout Hunan province. On July 15 Wang Ching-wei and Co. formally proscribed the Communists and the trade unions and workers' heads fell in the streets of Wuhan, the "revolutionary center" (Stalin), under the axes of the "revolutionary Kuomintang."

A few weeks later, the Wuhan Government, which had been "leading a decisive struggle against militarism and imperialism," capitulated to and united with the government of Chiang Kai-shek at Nanking. The power of the Kuomintang and the generals was established throughout the land and the mass movement was crushed.

That is the record, in brief, of the achievements of the "anti-imperialist united front" in China in 1925-1927.

The Cycle of Adventurism

The Kuomintang power which emerged from that "united front," otherwise known as the "bloc of four classes," has now endured nine years, nine years of unrelenting terror against the workers and peasants, nine years of uninterrupted capitulation to imperialism.

Stalinism in this period played out its own cycle of disastrous adventurism and hopeless experiments with an insurgent peasant movement in the remote interior entirely divorced from the urban proletariat. The working class itself, its organizations shattered, crushed by the terrific defeat it had suffered, remained in a state of depression and political apathy, broken by desperate, heroic, isolated, defensive, economic struggles.

Today, precipitately and without a single backward glance, Stalinism has reverted to the same course which led in 1927 to the most monstrous social catastrophe of our times—the annihilation of a mighty revolutionary mass movement, not by a stronger enemy, recognized as such, but by the forces it had been taught to regard as its own leaders.

Back to the Bloody Past

Removed from the shroud which also covers the bodies of scores of thousands of workers and peasants massacred in its name, the "anti-imperialist united front" is being resurrected today in a form even more vile and necessarily more grotesque than that which it assumed nine years ago. All the old opportunist phrases and slogans, hastily ditched on the morrow of the catastrophe, have been lifted from the past and refurbished for new use. The lessons of the events which those same phrases accompanied nine years ago are left carefully buried with their victims.

In 1925-1927 Stalin-Bukharin taught that the Chinese bourgeoisie was capable of waging a struggle against imperialism. Trotsky warned that the bourgeoisie could and would only struggle the anti-imperialist movement. It took the disasters of 1927 to reveal to Stalin-Bukharin the truth, if not the essence, of this warning.

"The experience of the past development," the declared in a resolution on August 9, 1927, "shows plainly that the bourgeoisie is not capable of solving the problems of national emancipation from the yoke of imperialism . . . that it is not capable of conducting a consistent fight against foreign imperialism and is becoming more and more inclined . . . to a compromise which leaves the domination of imperialism almost completely undisturbed."

But this did not mean that the "bloc of four classes" was anything but perfectly correct or the Comintern leadership anything but impeccable. Nor was it anything else when in the ensuing period it turned on the morrow of defeat to blind putschism and then to remote peasant "soviets" in the deep hinterland. Meanwhile the bourgeoisie ruled ruthlessly with its twin weapons, terror and capitulation to imperialism.

Yet today, without gasp or stammer, the Stalinists greet the belief that "a considerable section of the national bourgeoisie . . . is ever more energetically trying to find a way to resist Japanese imperialism . . ." and, moreover, "are turning for a way out to the toiling masses." (Wan Min).

Offer Chinese Red Army in Return for Resurrection of Disastrous 1927 Bloc

Do we then not tell the workers and peasants that the national bourgeoisie can not and will not consistently fight imperialism? That the fight against imperialism is the fight against the bourgeoisie for the interests of the workers and peasants? That the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry alone are capable of prosecuting a successful national revolutionary war against imperialism? Do we not show them how this was demonstrated to the bloody hilt in 1925-27 and a thousand times over since then?

Do we not call for the independent organization of workers in their unions and party, of peasants in their associations led by the urban proletariat—independent in banner and program of the vacillating and treacherous zigzags of the bourgeoisie or sections of it? That is what we tell them. The Stalinists pursue a different course.

The Stalinist Flip-Flop

"If Chiang Kai-shek really means to take up the struggle against Japan, then obviously the Soviet Government (sic) will extend to him the hand of friendship on the field of battle against Japan." (Mao Tse-tung, Daily Worker, March 30.)

A "hand of friendship" on what terms? As outlined by Wan Min in the special Chinese number of the Communist International for February, they represent a complete abdication of even nominal struggle for the revolution in China. One by one, Wan Min drops all the myths of "Soviet China" of recent years into the bottomless pit of a past, better forgotten.

The Stalinists propose a "People's Government of Self-Defense" into which "all parties, groups, political and military authorities" are to join. They will propose confiscation only of the land of "national traitors" (?) and any "feudal landlords" who won't say they're against imperialism. Workers will be promised "increases in wages . . . Improvement in material conditions." In the areas controlled by the Stalinists' own Red armies, land confiscation will all but come to an end and the "extreme demands" of the workers "will be rejected." They will "refrain from organizing workers' control of industry, the necessary conditions for which do not exist as yet."

"Return the Land"

Thus, the silent, furtive demise of a thousand propagandist legends! The poor peasants who gleaned a modicum of benefit in the so-called "Soviet districts" will go back into the tender embrace of the landlords. As for the workers, they are being deprived of something they never had, except in the imagination of hacks ten thousand miles away. The fictitious "Soviet Government" will remain as a formal label for the Red Army command. The "Soviets" will either disappear entirely or assume grosser, even anti-proletarian forms.

Nine years ago at the height of the mass movement, the Stalinists proscribed Soviets, urged by the Opposition, because they represented "a slogan of struggle against the revolutionary Kuomintang." When the revolutionary Kuomintang was transformed overnight in-

to an instrument of counter-revolution and the mass movement was crushed, the Stalinists came forward with "Soviets" which proved a tragic fiction.

In the period of counter-revolution the Opposition called for a struggle for democratic rights centered around the slogan of a National Assembly. This was denounced by the Stalinists as the uttermost depths of "counter-revolutionary Trotskyism." Today the Stalinists, dumping their "Soviets," want the "People's Government" to convoke a "representative body . . . elected on the basis of democratic liberties."

A Noose for the Workers

Thus once more, as a thousand times in the past, the Stalinists have been compelled to reach out for a political line laid down by "the vanguard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie." Only, as ever, in their hands it is mangled and twisted and becomes not an instrument of proletarian struggle but a noose for the working class. We conceived the National Assembly as a slogan around which the workers could be helped once more to raise their heads and through which they could emerge as an independent political force. The Stalinists, having forsaken the workers, now want an assembly from the top, created through a new series of combinations, a new "bloc of four classes." This marks a new phase of the Stalinist course in China which, through its various periods, has cut an ever-widening chasm between the Stalinist party and the Chinese workers.

At least in form and phrase, the "anti-imperialist united front" of nine years ago was supposed, in some "peculiar" way known only to Bukharin, to result in "proletarian hegemony" in the revolution. The documents of the period are heavily adorned with dissertations on the "perspectives of the proletariat" which, as events proved, only turned out to be perspectives of defeat and disaster.

But today, in the reincarnated version of Dimitroff-Wan Min, all of this phraseology is completely passed over. Wan Min can write a programmatic article without ever touching upon the perspectives of the proletariat or even mentioning the words "trade union" once.

The reason for this is clear and constitutes the main distinction between the bloc of nine years ago and its current reincarnation. In 1925-27 Stalinism actually had its base in the heart of a tremendous mass movement which drew millions of the toiling population into its orbit. Today the Stalinists have no mass base whatever. Their only base rests in the insurgent, mobile armies of soldiers and peasants now operating in the distant west and northwest. In China proper they have none whatever. Any base they acquire as a result of their new line will not be among the workers but possibly in sections of the petty and big bourgeoisie.

Wan Min boldly proclaims: "The Communist Party of China really can and must act as the generally recognized leader of the Chinese people as a whole."

In 1927 under the terms of the bloc the Communist Party fused itself with the bourgeois Kuomintang and restricted the trade union and peasant movements to the limits fixed by the bourgeoisie.

The Red Armies on the Altar

Today, the Stalinists offer their present forces, the Red Armies, up on the altar and declare their readiness to "fuse" the Reds into a "united anti-Japanese army" controlled by a general staff to be set up by the "People's Government."

When the Red Armies, consisting of insurgent peasants and soldiers, were operating in Central China, we declared that unless the movement they represented effected a fusion with the urban labor movement, they were doomed either to extinction or to capitulation to the bourgeoisie. Now after six years of heroic struggle against the Kuomintang armies, featured by exploits of heroism and courage unexcelled in the history of all peasant wars, these Red Armies are to be handed over to the bourgeoisie. That is where Stalinism has led them, for it proved incapable of leading them behind a revived and powerful and independent movement of the workers.

The Stalinists completely disembarrass themselves of any idea of waging a revolutionary struggle in China. They seek instead a military alliance with the Chinese bourgeoisie against Japan, hoping once more that the liquidation of the class struggle in China will help line up the Chinese bourgeoisie in the ranks of the Soviet Union's allies! If the disaster of 1927 and the whole subsequent history proved anything at all, it proved the incapacity of the Chinese bourgeoisie to prosecute a national revolutionary war. It will compromise a thousand times with imperialism against the workers and peasants of its own country. But Stalinism, nurtured at the dry breast of socialism in one country, has lost all faith or interest in the capacities of the proletariat, which it has done so much to drain. Turning once more to embrace the Chiang Kai-sheks, it will seek to destroy the Third Chinese Revolution as it destroyed the Second.

Build the Fourth International

They are offering to do so in advance and we may be sure that the Chinese bourgeoisie will in one form or another, by this or that means, secure the utmost advantage from the promised liquidation of the class struggle without unduly compromising itself in the eyes of its imperialist masters.

There can be little doubt that in the coming critical years in the Far East, drawing toward the inevitable moment of explosion, sections of the Chinese bourgeoisie will zigzag right and left in efforts to retrieve some of the ground lost to imperialism. We must prepare for those turns by preserving the complete programmatic and organizational independence of the Chinese working class. For this the party of the Chinese workers has to be built and the banner of the Chinese workers raised over its own redoubts. We must stand against imperialism and against the Kuomintang betrayers and against those who would lead us once more into the noose of a "bloc of classes."

Skirmishes on the Manchukuo-Mongolian border in the last ten days have assumed the proportions of virtual battles. The morrow of war is not far distant. In China, as elsewhere, we can guarantee a firm revolutionary alliance with the Soviet Union only by waging common battle against the enemies of the Soviet Union and the enemies of the working class. China's national emancipation has become historically identified with the emancipation of the oppressed toilers. Along this front and along no other lies victory.

(Continued on Page 4)

WORLD OF LABOR

London International Labor Conference Endorses Imperialist War Policies

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

On March 20, a joint conference of the Second International and the Trade Union International was held in London to consider the war crisis, aggravated by Hitler's rearmament of the Rhine.

The labor representatives of fifteen European countries, meeting presumably to express the views and interests of the international working class in the face of the gravest war danger, gave proof once again that they represented nothing except the imperialist policies of their respective national bourgeoisies.

The outcome of this Conference was a foregone conclusion: the labor lieutenants of capital merely rephrased in "labor terms" the political formulas of the imperialist brigades who are maneuvering in preparation for the next world slaughter.

Just as in the League of Nations, so at the London Conference the delegates were divided into two camps. One group "insisted" that Hitler's occupation of the Rhineland warranted the strongest action against Germany. This position was most clearly voiced by Vandervelde, the leader of the Second International who demanded immediate sanctions, that is to say, the immediate outbreak of the war. Vandervelde's position coincided in every respect with that of the Stalinists who are the most consistent advocates of national unity and "decisive measures" against German Fascism.

The second group, led by the British labor leaders, with Sir Walter Citrine at the head, saw great hope in Hitler's "peace proposals," and were for negotiations. The British social patriots looking as usual eye to eye with their imperialist masters were all for collective security on the basis of Non-Aggression Pacts, provided . . . that these are extended to include Soviet Russia (of course! of course!).

Only yesterday, these same gentlemen were the loudest in demanding sanctions against Mussolini. But today British imperialism wants not sanctions but negotiations with Hitler. So, while Eden speaks in the Parliament, Citrine does his share at the International Conference.

The British representatives were not the only ones who made a "subtle change" in their views. The French representatives were loud in their verbal demands for sanctions, but, as a matter of fact it is some time now that the French labor lieutenants, with Blum, Faure and associates have undergone a change of heart on the subject of taking an intransigent attitude towards Hitler.

Paul Faure, the secretary of the French Socialist party, has of late, time and again insisted: "One must always negotiate, no matter with whom it is, when it is, and under what circumstances it is." Eden's pronouncements, attacked so bitterly by the French Stalinists in L'Humanite, were acclaimed by the Socialist Populaire as "a confirmation" of the position of the Socialist party. The apparent contradiction between Vandervelde and Blum is skin deep. It is entirely the result of the different political tasks and schemes each has to execute in his particular country.

It follows as a matter of course that the two "opposing" camps had no difficulty at all in drafting a resolution acceptable to both sides. The International Labor Conference overwhelmingly passed a resolution denouncing Hitler's violation of the Locarno Treaty, and urging negotiations with a view to including not only Hitler, but Soviet Russia in a system of non-aggression pacts, etc.

Thus, the same people who did their work so well in the preparation for the World War in 1914, are once again prostituting the Second International, giving the imperialist bourgeoisie guarantees in advance that the European working class will docilely march to the slaughter.

THE HUTCH IN ORGANIC UNITY IN FRANCE

The subtle change in the policy of the French S. P. noted above is the biggest obstacle to the fusion of the C.P. and S.P. that has developed since the time the Stalinists launched their campaign for organic unity.

Blum, Faure and Co. have suffered a "reaction" against the Stalinist ballyhoo for national unity "in action" against Germany. They are now for negotiating with Hitler. The extent of this "reaction" is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the "Revolutionary Left" (Pivert and Co.) have gone on record (of course, with very revolutionary phrases) in favor of the policy of Flandin-Eden. Thus it is that the "left" cover serves the social-patriots to dupe the workers.

The policy of Flandin-Eden has come into a slight contradiction with the policy of Stalin-Litvinov. As a result, the pleasant dreams of a "single party" have been somewhat rudely disturbed. Some time ago the French C.P. sent a com-

munication to the S.P. suggesting that the co-ordinating committees should meet, and that both parties should urge a joint meeting of the Second and Third Internationals. The Executive Committee of the S.F.I.O. turned down the proposal to the great surprise and embarrassment of the Stalinists. Maurice Thorez, the General Secretary of the French C.P., complained bitterly about this developing coldness in his speeches at the Eighth Congress of the C.P. held at Villeurbanne at the end of January.

The Labour Monthly summarizes his remarks as follows: "Maurice Thorez declared himself astonished at the irritable tone adopted by Leon Blum in criticizing these proposals after a long silence, and after comrade Zyromski (Secretary of the Seine Federation) had declared that they 'were a great step forward, and their principles were not in contradiction to those in the socialist statement.'" (March, 1936, p. 146.)

This turn is a severe blow to the Stalinists. But Stalin-Litvinov-Thorez can console themselves with the fact that while their formerly staunch allies have become somewhat lukewarm, they have made new converts to their anti-Hitler policy. Colonel de La Rocque's Croix de Feu (the French Fascists), which now claims 800,000 members, and which was hostile to the Franco-Russian pact, has now declared in favor of the pact, if only "as an inevitable reply to Hitler." (See the Manchester Guardian Weekly, March 20, 1936, p. 226.)

JAPAN

The results of the parliamentary elections held in Japan towards the end of February are a clear expression of a leftward trend on the part of the masses, which in turn is a reflection of the social and economic tension in the country.

The Japanese bourgeois papers have devoted great attention to the leap in the support for the working class and peasant parties, who have quadrupled their votes since the last elections in 1932.

The largest of the left parties is the Sakai Taisuto, a party with a hidebound reformist program. This party resulted from a merger some four years ago between the Sakai Minshuto party and the Uppur Taisuto. In 1928 both these parties, running independent tickets, had five representatives in the Japanese parliament (Sakai Minshuto—4; Nippon Taisuto—1). In 1930 Sakai Minshuto dwindled to two representatives; and the other party gained another representative, having now also two. After the merger, the united party came back to the original strength of five representatives (1932). In the last elections, they elected 18.

Further to the left of this reformist party are "groups" of proletarians and peasants. The largest of these is the Kato Kandzu, which is Stalinist in its tendencies. All these groups elected five representatives. (They had no representatives at all in the 1932 elections, in 1930 they had a single representative, and in 1928—2.)

All the organizations together polled over 600,000 votes. This unprecedented vote, together with the defeat of the Seiyukai party—the most reactionary party of large landowners and powerful monopoly combines of the Mitsu clan—and the victory of the Minshuto party, which is considered as the more "liberal" party, is a clear indication of a leftward shift similar to the movement in Czarist Russia on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War. Reaction in Japan is alarmed. And the military Fascist putsch followed immediately upon the elections.

However, in Japan there is not a sign as yet of the Bolshevik cadres and leadership that obtained in Czarist Russia.

The confusion and weakness in the ranks of the working class make it possible for a bourgeois organ like the Nitsi-Nitsi to scoff at the successes of the radical organizations and to insist that these successes are to be accounted for not by the radicalization of the voters but by the rightward trend of the working class organizations, particularly the Sakai Taisuto. The appraisal of the Nitsi-Nitsi is correct in respect to the rightward trend of the existing organizations. The rightward trend of the leadership at the time the masses are moving to the left has been observed time and again in the last two decades. In Japan this has resulted in a crisis in the ranks of the reformist Sakai Taisuto. The Tokyo paper Asahi predicts that the groups to the left of the reformists will succeed in splitting off sections of the leftward moving workers from the reformists. Both Pravda and Izvestia (February 24) imply that such a split is already in the offing, with the Kato Kandzu as the crystallizing center. The Stalinists in Moscow foresee shortly a good-sized Stalinist party to execute its People's Front maneuvers in Japan.

A LETTER FROM ITALY

Nationalist Maniacs Driving Nation Through War into Collapse and Ruin

According to a recent dispatch from Italy, Vesuvius is again belching forth flames and the inhabitants of Naples, who live under its shadow, fear an impending eruption. Nothing could be more symbolic of the present state of affairs under Mussolini. The Fascist regime caps a fiery furnace of unrest, which not only exerts tremendous pressure upon it, but may, in the not very far future, explode and blow it to bits.

The Ethiopian Campaign

Mussolini ordered the Ethiopian adventure for two reasons. First, as the beginning of his long-promised campaign to secure the colonial empire that Italian capital was cheated of after the last war. Second, as an outlet for the energies of the unemployed and as a means of diverting the domestic discontent created by the crisis into imperialist channels. Colonial expeditions and foreign wars are time-honored expedients of ruling classes to turn the attention of the masses from their misery. Decaying capitalism, whether of the democratic or fascist variety, can solve the problem of permanent unemployment in only one way: by conscripting the jobless into war armies as in Germany, C.C.C. camps as in the United States, or into actual fighting forces as in Italy.

To date Il Duce has failed to accomplish either end. Ethiopia is not yet in his clutches. The war in Ethiopia has been in progress for half a year. While foreign military experts disagree as to the extent of the Italian successes, it is clear that the Ethiopians have not been subjugated; Abyssinia remains unconquered. Although the Italian armies have advanced steadily into the interior and scored numerous victories, they have not met the Ethiopians in any decisive engagements nor have they penetrated beyond the dangerous mountain passes into the heart of the country. With the rainy season close at hand, the campaign must come to a halt. At least another year will be necessary before the Fascists can claim Ethiopia as their own.

The Situation at Home

Meanwhile life does not stand still either at home or in the international arena. Far from ameliorating the conditions of the masses, the war has aggravated their sufferings. Patriotic fervor is a poor substitute for bread and clothing. The internal situation grows more acute with every passing day. Storm clouds of dissatisfaction with the apparently hopeless policies of the government are gathering, not only among the workers in the cities and country, but among other classes of the population, extending even into the directing circles.

In order to carry on the war, Mussolini is being compelled to tighten the straitjacket Fascism clamps upon the national economy. First the big banks were put under rigid governmental control;

now Il Duce threatens to do the same to the key industries needed for armaments. Italian capitalism is being forced to sacrifice its last measure of freedom to the Fascist state in order to preserve the existing regime, and, above all, its own existence. Finance capital must pay a heavy price for its police protection. That is one reason why it "prefers," if possible, bourgeois democracy. It is cheaper in the long run.

Mussolini's recent edicts concerning the nationalization of the banks and of key industries are not in the least steps towards socialism, as bourgeois commentators have claimed. They represent the final flowering of state capitalism, the consummation of the marriage between monopoly capitalism and state power. The whole of Italian economy must be put on a military basis, not only to ensure its perpetuation, but as preparation for the world war ahead. "The wheels of destiny," declared Mussolini, "run fast. The inevitability of the nation's being called on to face another war . . . must guide all our actions."

According to all reports, the application of sanctions has severely crippled Italian economy. The small industrialists have suffered heavily from the imposition of sanctions. They have been shut out of their foreign markets and find it increasingly difficult to obtain necessary supplies and raw materials.

The Plight of the Masses

The burdens of the war, however, have fallen most heavily upon the working and consuming masses. Even before the war, Italian standards of living were among the lowest of all capitalist countries in Europe. Since the war the cost of living has increased over fifty percent and the end of the process is not yet in sight.

The following letter recently received from an Italian comrade throws a glaring light upon the conditions of the workers. We quote in part:

"In answer to your request for information about the present situation in Italy, and especially life among the industrial workers, I send you the following from my own observations in Naples, an industrial center and the scene of the embarkations for Ethiopia.

"First, a few figures concerning wages and living conditions. As you know, the average wage of the Italian worker under Fascism has been among the lowest in all Europe. With the worker's card obtained by membership in the Fascist syndicate (and without such a card a worker is virtually blacklisted and finds it almost impossible to secure a job), workers are paid a minimum of 133 cents an hour (reckoning the lire at 8 cents). A skilled worker may earn as much as 223 cents an hour. However, modern industry does not require many skilled workers, and only about ten percent can be placed in this latter category. The average wage, from the statistics I was able to gather on the spot (official

statistics are notoriously unreliable) for an Italian worker may be placed at about 16 cents an hour.

"The average weekly earnings of a factory worker would, then, amount to about \$6.40. Women workers earn from 74 to 10 cents an hour. Clerical workers, stenographers, etc., get from \$16 to \$32 a month. Engineers get from \$64 to \$96 a month. Department heads up to \$112 a month.

"As an instance of the earnings in the upper levels, here is the monthly pay envelope of a shop foreman superintending the work of 40 skilled mechanics. This man is about 45 years old, has been in the service of the same firm for 13 years, and represents a sort of labor aristocracy.

Salary	.....	\$ 70.00
Overtime (about 85 hours this month)	.....	39.00
Total monthly salary	....	109.00
(from which is deducted):		
Income Tax (8%)	.....	9.25
Dues to Fascist Syndicate	.....	.40
Total direct taxes	.....	9.65
Net income for month	.....	99.35

"When there is no overtime, his net income falls to \$63 a month. "Fascist officials proudly point to the fact that Italy was one of the first countries to adopt a forty-hour week. This is, of course, a complete fraud from the worker's standpoint. Since the forty-hour week was instituted without any corresponding increase in hourly pay, it was not wanted by the workers, who find themselves unable to earn enough to support themselves and their families, unless they are 'lucky' enough to work many hours overtime. It is nothing but the Fascist version of your Hoover's 'share-the-work' program."

"Bearing in mind that the average weekly pay envelope of an industrial worker is \$6.40, let us look at the prevailing prices for the necessities of life. (Since this data was collected, prices have gone up by about 25 percent without any raise in wages.)

Bread (1 pound)	.....	\$ .063
Macaroni (1 pound)	.....	.091
Meat (1 pound)	.....	.475
Butter (1 pound)	.....	.510
Vegetables (1 pound)	.....	.109
Eggs (1 dozen)	.....	.960
Milk (1 quart)	.....	.120
Coffee (1 pound)	.....	2.800
Sugar (1 pound)	.....	.240
Oil (1 quart)	.....	.650
Cheese (1 pound)	.....	.524
Salami (1 pound)	.....	.725
Light and Gas (1 month)	.....	4.800
Rent (1 month—2 rooms and kitchenette)	.....	16.000

"The daily requirements of a family of five for decent living without amusements or clothing I estimate to be about \$2.18 a day, or \$15.26 a week. With the average income of the wage-earner at \$6.40 for a forty-hour week this family has to do without meat, butter, eggs, wine, coffee, sugar, cheese, salami, or oil. This will give you an idea of the deprivations endured by the workers and their families.

SPANISH REVOLUTION REACHES CRITICAL STAGE

Workers Misled as Capitalist Class Conspires Against Them

By ALFREDO ROJAS

The Spanish revolution has arrived at that critical juncture, so often seen in previous revolutions, when all sections of the bourgeoisie conspire to rob the proletariat of the fruits of its struggle and are aided in their maneuvers by the cowardice and confusion of the official leadership of the proletarian organizations.

The city and land workers still forge ahead, coming ever more into direct conflict with the "left" bourgeois government of Azana. Within the last week alone, the land workers of Spain have confiscated large estates in three provinces.

Dividing the Landed Estates

The biggest movement on the land is in the province of Badajoz where, after sixty thousand workers had surveyed the estates, but then returned to their villages and contented themselves merely with drawing up plans for dividing the estates into small parcels and apparently had been persuaded to wait for the government's land-buying program, two days later 25,000 families marched back into the estates, divided them up, and are already tilling the soil.

In the province of Seville thousands of land workers went on strike, driving many landowners from their estates; government guards sent to drive off the workers killed four but had to retreat.

In Gerona province workers are confiscating estates.

In Malaga workers attempting to seize estates were attacked by government guards, two of them being murdered. These are merely fragmentary reports from capitalist press sources, and indicate a country-wide move on the estates.

How much of this move is purely spontaneous, is indicated by the statement given to the United Press on March 29 by Juan Simeon Vidarte, secretary of the Socialist Party executive in Badajoz. He declared that the workers were simply surveying the estates but would wait for the government to parcel them out legally. Vidarte flatly denied that the workers were taking possession of the lands. Two days later came the news that 25,000 families had taken over the estates.

Strike Movement Aggressive

The workers in the cities are also on the move. Strikes are widespread throughout Spain, in almost every case resulting in resounding victories. Typical of the feeling of the workers is the ultimatum presented to the bosses by the powerful metal workers' organization of Barcelona. Striking for wage increases and a 44-hour week, the workers notified the bosses that unless their demands are shortly granted, they will occupy the factories and run them on a socialist basis.

In Valencia, the various trade unions, hitherto sharply divided, have united to force the bosses to rehire all workers discharged on political grounds during the last few years. The Azana government has not attempted to enforce the law for rehiring, and Valencia's example shows that the proletariat is beginning to take the matter into its own hands.

Still Clinging to Azana

While the land and city workers are thus coming into ever sharper conflict with the republican government, the Socialist and Communist leadership is hanging onto the coattails of the Azana government, having got the best of the bargain in the February 16 national elections by being given an absolute majority of the seats on the joint republican-workers' slate, demanded a similar joint slate for the municipal elections which take place on April 12. The Communist party immediately came out for such a coalition. After a sharp disagreement within the Socialist ranks, the left Socialists demanding an independent proletarian course in the municipal elections, the Right Wing Socialists were victorious and the Socialist party agreed to enter a joint slate.

The apologists for the coalition with the bourgeoisie in the February 16th elections defended the coalition on the grounds that it was solely for amnesty and restoration of democratic rights. This excuse no longer holds for the April 12 coalition. The "left" government, in fact, is curtailing democratic rights. Spain is under a modified form of martial law decreed by Azana. The government has prohibited all outdoor meetings and congregating on the streets. It has sent guards and troops to put down the land workers. It is with this bourgeois government that the April 12th coalition is being made.

Catholics Boycott Elections

What makes the coalition even more ludicrous is the fact that the Catholics and Monarchists and other reactionary groups have announced that they will boycott the municipal elections. They are boy-

cotting because they know they have no chance of victory. But this boycott means that if the Socialist Party, which is by far the main party of the proletariat, were to conduct an independent campaign, it could sweep the country.

Instead of the proletariat taking advantage of the situation, it is the republican bourgeoisie which seeks to reap a harvest. The republican press does not criticize the reactionaries for the boycott, using it as proof conclusive that the reactionaries refuse to submit to the will of the majority. On the contrary, the government is coquetting with the reactionaries' demand that the government call off the municipal elections.

In this move, it is very likely that there is a secret understanding between Azana and the reactionaries. Knowing that the rights cannot win the elections, and fearing that the proletarian organizations, even if they do not conduct an independent campaign may nevertheless force through a proletarian majority on the joint election slate, the reactionaries may have withdrawn in order to give the Azana government a pretext for forcing through a bourgeois majority on the joint ticket.

The Threat of Postponement

This is borne out by the way the question is posed in the republican press. "La Libertad," republican organ, declares that "the tactic of the rightists in abstaining creates a problem that deserves serious consideration by the government." It gives as the reason why the government may perhaps decide to call off the elections, that there is a possibility of a break between the republicans and the proletarian organizations over a location of seats on the election slates. "Can such a question cause a division in the Popular Front?" asks this bourgeois spokesman. "We do not believe it, we do not expect it, but it is necessary to consider this possibility. United, the victory will be as decisive as that of February 16. But the government should reflect whether it is not convenient for the republican regime to make a postponement. Today the local governments of Spain are composed of left elements (i.e., bourgeois republican majori-

ties from 1931-A.R.). To leave them continue in their present status would mean to prolong the victory of February. But whether the government decides to postpone the elections or to hold them as decreed, the Popular Front should continue united on the same republican aspirations as those which were victorious in February. Any other conception (i.e., that of revolutionary class struggle—A.R.) would be premature."

In other words, the republican bourgeoisie, aided and abetted by the Stalinists and the Right wing Socialists, threaten to postpone the elections unless the workers' organizations concede the bourgeoisie a majority in the elections!

Army Held in Readiness

In order to frighten the already cowardly proletarian leadership into granting the republican bourgeoisie's demands, every section of the bourgeoisie is making dire threats. The republican press becomes the end of the Republic if the workers are not reasonable. If there is any danger of the republic from the left, the army will step in, declare capitalist press dispatches. President Zamora is quoted "from reliable sources," as prepared to establish a government of national concentration, if there is any danger of a revolution.

Thus all sections of the bourgeoisie conspire to consolidate the bourgeois state power. The only answer to this bulldozing is the independent concentration of proletarian power in the Workers Alliances. Only this power can prevent a debacle. But instead of breaking with their already treacherous "left" bourgeois allies, the Communist and Socialist leaders are trailing them.

A Ray of Hope

The one ray of hope is that the spontaneous drive of the masses is reinforcing a sharp differentiation in the ranks of the Socialist leadership. Outstanding among the left-Socialist figures is Javier Bueno, leader of the Asturian rebellion, freed from prison by the workers after the national election.

At numerous mass meetings, Javier Bueno has declared his lack of confidence in the Popular Front, and has urged the workers to build the Workers Alliances, embryo of the soviets, as the indispensable instrument of both the immediate and future struggles.

A Letter from Italy

(Continued from Page 3)

I could safely say that over half the inhabitants of Naples are hungry half the time.

"This is by no means all. For five months now, workers have been forbidden to quit their jobs on penalty of losing their syndicate cards. They can however as before be fired at the will of their employers. This system of labor conscription has been given an appearance of equality and a legal covering by the provision that the bosses must first get permission to discharge from the Fascist syndicate, but in my experience I have not known of any cases where permission was refused. It is a mere formality and subterfuge. This has all the advantages of chattel slavery without any of its disadvantages. And the Italian workers are asked to support the war and enlist in the army in order to abolish slavery in Ethiopia!

"Why do the workers endure such intolerable conditions? They cannot for the time being do otherwise. The pervasive system of espionage and the governmental terror make it impossible for them to speak out openly against their oppressors or to strike at them. They bear their burdens with clenched teeth and closed fist.

The Opposition Movement

"So far as I have been able to ascertain, there is almost no organized opposition working underground against the regime among the workers. There were a number of small revolutionary groups, organized in groups of five, operating in the utmost secrecy a few years ago. But police agents succeeded in worming their way into them; broke them up; and the revolutionaries are now in prison or on the penal islands.

"Many of the older workers remember the occupations of the factories during 1921-22 and retain their Socialist convictions. The younger generation, however, I regret to report, that has been brought up under the present regime and stuffed with Fascist propaganda, are greatly confused by Mussolini's demagoguery. They have had no Socialist education, are taken in by his anti-capitalist utterances; and more or less believe that the empty fist he waves at the capitalists will be brought down upon them and used to crush them. But they will learn from their own bitter experience what Fascism really is.

"I wish I could convey to you the extent of the espionage system. It is the cement that holds the regime together. Spies are everywhere.

where in the factories, in the restaurants, etc. Agents provocateurs are constantly at work ferreting out opponents of the regime. People are extremely distrustful of one another and especially of strangers.

The application of sanctions by England has given the government a heaven-sent opportunity to direct the wrath of the masses against England. But this patriotic fervor is beginning to die down, despite the frantic efforts of the Fascists to keep it at white heat. People are beginning to wonder and ask: How long can this last? Where will it end? What are we getting out of it? Mussolini's only answer is: tighten your belts and prepare for another and bigger war.

"There are rumors of friction between the army high command and the Fascist party tops. There is no question but that cracks are appearing and widening in all directions within the regime, although as yet they are carefully covered up.

"In my opinion, the critical time will come with the return of the troops from Ethiopia. Mussolini now has over 300,000 men under arms in Africa and a million in Italy. He cannot demobilize them without the greatest dangers to himself. Perhaps, it will not be necessary for him to do so. The new world war is so perilously close.

The prolongation of the Ethiopian campaign, the efforts of the effects of the economic sanctions, the heavy expenses of the war, the growing discontent among all ranks of the people, the tenseness in the international situation undermine the stability of the Fascist state and drives Mussolini on to increasingly desperate measures. If Duce's days are numbered, but "whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." Into what bloodier adventures will he drag the Italian people before his doom is sealed?

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A DUBIOUS ALLY FOR STALINISM

HOW THE "OLD GUARD" BECOMES A "FRIEND OF THE SOVIET UNION" AS SOON AS LITVINOV PLAYS LEAGUE OF NATIONS POLITICS

By MAX SHACHTMAN

What is cheaper and easier nowadays than to be a "Friend of the Soviet Union"? Is there a labor politician so lacking in astuteness as not to understand that merely by avowing himself a "friend" of Russia he automatically acquires from the international Stalinist officialdom an extensive measure of immunity and support for what may well be (and usually is) his entirely reactionary policy? There are many left who remain obtuse on this score, but their number diminishes daily.

Among those who have recently caused the number to diminish is the new recruit to the "friends" of the Soviet Union, a man who also bears the name of "John Powers." Powers, in addition to his literary work for other reactionary papers, not only writes every week the international news column of the New Leader, official organ of the Socialist party's "Old Guard," but is in a fair way of becoming the leading theoretician of his faction.

Up to quite recently, Powers has not made the slightest effort to conceal his rabid hatred of the Soviet Union, of communism, of everything for which the Russian revolution stands in the minds of Marxists. Even if rather less sensationally, he has been to the estates of Adolph Ochs and James O'Neal what Harry Lang was to the estates of William Randolph Hearst and Abraham Cahan. It goes without saying that especially since the sharpening of the Socialist party's internal struggle between the Left wing and the Old Guard, hardly a week has gone by in the New Leader without a venomous and malicious attack on the "Militant group" from Powers' pen. Between the pages of the New York Times and the columns of the Old Guard press he has laid down a drum-fire attack upon every progressive and revolutionary current in the Socialist movement. No social democratic idea so reactionary, no current so sterile, no record so bankrupt, but that Powers has come pugnaciously to its defense.

Support for "Democratic" Capitalism

Of all the ideas prevalent in the Second International, few are as deceptive, treacherous and fraught with calamity for the world's working class as the doctrine that the proletariat must support the "democratic" capitalist nations in a war with the Fascist countries. Between 1914 and 1918, identically the same conception converted most of the Socialist parties into cannon-fodder suppliers for their respective capitalist fatherlands. Nothing having changed in the Old Guard of the Second International, Powers is consequently to be found today among the teachers of social-patriotic doctrine. Let a war break out tomorrow between Fascist Germany and "democratic" imperialist France for a new re-division of the world, and Powers is certain to range himself on the side of the French butchers. The fact that Italy, Poland and Yugoslavia would, in all likelihood, be counted in the French "democratic" front, would make no difference to Powers. For it should be remembered that his predecessors of 1914 were not made less jingoistic in their support of the Allies because of the fact that the Czar and the Mikado were also "making the world safe for democracy."

The League of Nations is today merely a pseudonym for the so-called "democratic" countries. Jointly dominated by France, the gendarme of Europe, and England, slave-owner on six continents, its principal pre-occupation in world politics in our time has been (and is) the preservation of the unprejudiced status quo. The status quo—the state of things as they are—means not only the infamous Versailles treaty (which formed part of the yeast on which Hitlerism rose to power) but also the oppressive rule of bankrupt capitalism over tens of millions of workers and hundreds of millions of colonial serfs.

The support given the League of Nations, from the very beginning, by the Second International has merely been another way of supporting the continued existence of capitalism, thinly covered with references to the alleged potentialities for peace residing somewhere in the

League's sub-soil and requiring only the tender and patient care of social democratic cabinet ministers for their eventual emergence into full flower.

The Soviet Union's affiliation to the League has had the same effect in the ranks of the working class as the continued support of "the thieves' kitchen at Geneva" by the Second International. An even more damaging effect, however, and that precisely because the Soviet Union today still stands for the great traditions of the Russian revolution in the minds of the masses, and its action could only serve to give the League of Bandits a neat credit rating where it had formerly had none.

To the same extent that the Stalin-Litvinov policy in the League of Nations has brought confusion and demoralization into the working class, it has earned the Soviet bureaucracy the approbation of the Second International. Why not? The more "realistic" Stalin becomes, that is, the more violently he tramples under foot the teachings of Marx and Lenin and the interests of the world revolution, the more confidently the rulers of the Second International feel that he is one of them.

But even more than this is involved. Having brought Soviet nationalism to its logical culmination in social-patriotism, Stalin makes it possible for the patriots in the Second International to trade on the revolutionary reputation of Russia in their base work of mobilizing the proletariat for the coming war. What is new in the situation now as compared with 1914, therefore, is that now, with the aid of Stalinism, the Second International can perform its reactionary role in the name of "defending the Soviet Union."

Where lies one of the greatest, if not the greatest hope for a genuinely proletarian movement and struggle against the impending imperialist war? For that world peace which only international socialism can assure? In the sweep to the Left of the militant Socialist elements in the Second International, in their logical evolution to the position of consistent revolutionary Marxism. In a number of countries, these elements are moving at greater or lesser speed, with greater or lesser clarity, away from the classic conceptions of social reformism, and especially away from the latter's capitalist patriotism. And the clubs with which the Right wing bureaucracy seeks to beat them back, are being taken more and more from the arsenal of Stalinism.

Powers offers a concrete instance of how this is being done. In the attempt to smash the Militant Group, he calls upon Stalin-Litvinov for aid and invokes their conception of the "defense of the Soviet Union" to buttress his reactionary position.

Let us quote extensively from him, so that we may see the full significance of the growing rapprochement between the Right wing of the Second International and the bureaucracy of the Third.

Powers' "Concern" for Russian Revolution

"Litvinov's speech before the Council of the League of Nations in London on Tuesday," he begins (New Leader, March 21, 1936), "emphasized again the extent to which Soviet Russia is committed to collaboration with the League and her military allies, France and Czechoslovakia, against Hitler Germany's war plans. For Soviet Russia to pursue any other policy would be to neglect criminally her very life interests and to jeopardize the conquests of the revolution. After Hitler's speech announcing the advance of German troops into the demilitarized Rhineland, there could be no more doubt of the aims of German policy. What Hitler offered to Europe was a 25-year peace guarantee in the West in exchange for a free hand against Russia. The militarist-Fascist bandits of Germany have the temerity to suggest openly that if permitted to despoil and dismember Russia, they will not attack the rest of Europe. Litvinov emphasized this point very well and exposed completely the true character of Hitler's objectives.

"In the light of the very real and formidable danger confronting Soviet Russia both from Germany and Japan, no Socialist aware of the realities of the situation and possessing a sense of responsibility can criticize Soviet Russia for its policy of collaboration with the League and of any countries whose interests coincide with Soviet Russia's in the task of checkmating Hitler's war conspiracy. The interests of self-defense justify fully the sharp change in Soviet Russia's foreign policy from ill-founded, bitter opposition to the League of Nations to 'class collaboration' with the League and any bourgeois governments whose own interests dictate the necessity of collaboration with Soviet Russia. We have no hesitation in saying that those Socialists and Communists of the Left who assail Russia's legitimate policy of self-defense are, speaking objectively, doing the work of Hitler and Fascism."

The argument that the working class movement is weak and must seek assistance for its cause outside its own immediate ranks, that it must therefore support the League, "however inadequate," is arguing in a vicious circle. The proletarian movement is weak precisely because it supports the institutions of its class enemy. The way to keep it weak, to keep it unself-reliant, is to teach it to continue supporting enemy institutions. The labor movement internationally has indeed been brought to the edge of a treacherous swamp. It stands with one leg on firm soil; the other rests on the surface of the swamp. By that very fact it is unbalanced, and consequently weak. The Old Guard of the Second International, ardently assisted by Stalinism, keeps warning the working class that it is not in a firm position by itself and that the way to strengthen itself is to lean more heavily on the swamp. And the heavier it leans in that direction, the closer it comes to toppling over into the swamp and being entirely engulfed by it.

The Trotsky-Borah Amalgam

The reason for Powers' newly discovered passion for the Soviet Union becomes clearer a week later. In the March 28 issue of the New Leader he lets fly a new attack on Norman Thomas and the Socialist Militants. The latter are, according to Powers, "a curious combination of 'Left wing' communism and primitive, parochial American isolationism." His column, according to its headline, is devoted to "some comments on the Trotsky-Borah policy advocated by Thomas."

As is evident from the headline, Powers and Co. have learned quite a bit from the art of Stalinist politics. Just as Trotsky is always bracketed in the C.P. press with "White Guards and counter-revolutionists," the Old Guard has learned to bracket the Left wing with everyone and everything that is abhorrent to conservative socialism. What, for example, have Trotsky and Borah in common, especially on the question at issue, the League of Nations? Borah stands, presumably, for American isolation in principle, for the preservation of American capitalist rule free from commitments in Europe, so that it may pursue a world imperialist policy with the maximum of latitude. Trotsky is opposed to the League of Nations on grounds common to every revolutionist, namely, because it is an association of imperialist brigands, and his opposition is entirely in conformity with his irreconcilable antagonism to capitalist rule in the United States, regardless of whether the latter is in the League or not.

The position taken by Norman Thomas, in spite of those of its aspects which are not consistent with his main argument, and therefore not thoroughgoing, is nevertheless infinitely closer to the revolutionary stand than the position of the Second International. In fact, the two move in opposite directions. Thomas, for example, declares that "only a socialist appeal presents real hope." If this means that the struggle against war can be conducted effectively only by means of an independent, militant working class movement, it is unassailable. The pontiffs of the Second International, however, who have worked with might and main to demoralize the proletarian movement, take the position that because the working class is prostrate and confused, the only way of "preventing" war is to get behind the capitalist war-mongers, or at least a section of them.

The Old Guard has long ago lost any belief in the ability of the working class not only to emancipate itself, but even to fight its daily battles under capitalism. The working class is to be saved from capitalism and its ravages, by supporting . . . capitalism and its institutions. "By deriding the League of Nations, the only international instrument for collective action available," Powers reproaches Thomas, "... he helps lend encouragement to the enemies of international cooperation and gives aid and comfort to Hitler."

The League, in Powers' mind, is the "only international instrument for collective action available," for one simple reason: He has not the slightest belief that the world proletarian movement, be it organized in the Second or Third International, is available for collective action or action of any other kind in its own behalf!

The Second International is preparing feverishly to play the same role in the coming war that it played in 1914. When Powers writes that its ends are "the maintenance of peace, if at all possible, and the mobilization of the nations and peoples against any military aggression by Hitler Fascism," he means: when war does break out, we will mobilize the proletariat for the trenches where it may be slaughtered in the interests of the "democratic" bandits, which ought to be at least as much consolation to the workers as it was in 1914-1918 to die for "republican" France, "poor little" Belgium and "democratic" America.

The Third International not only takes the same line of policy, but supplies the old school of social-patriots with a new argument which they did not have the benefit of twenty years ago: "Defense of the Soviet Union." Under cover of this entirely correct slogan, all kinds of scoundrels, who either never gave a damn about the Soviet Republic or who have been systematically undermining its revolutionary foundations, are fostering the poison of chauvinism in the body of the working class.

Whoever offers an antidote to this poison, whoever seeks to dispel it from the ranks of the proletariat, to make the latter healthy and strong and able to rely on and fight for itself, is now dismissed by both the old line bureaucracies by being labelled . . . a Trotskyist.

What significance must the Left wing Socialist necessarily attach to the fact that the reactionary and corrupt Old Guard of his party now attacks him in the same terms, with the same arguments, and even with the same shibboleths and labels, as the Stalinists have always attacked the revolutionary internationalists whom they finally expelled from their party?

Old Guard -- C. P. Draws Closer

The Stalinists, having completed their development towards social-patriotism, find that they have a decreasing attractive power for the Left wing Socialist workers—because they are travelling in opposite directions. For the same reason, the Stalinists find an increasingly common program—in theory and in action—with the reactionary wing of the Second International. Like draws unto like. For the same reason, those who are being so generally covered with the label of "Trotskyism" by the reactionary bureaucracies, even if not always very accurately and warrantably, must inevitably draw together also. Coming from different directions though they have, traveling though they do at different paces, they are finding their road towards the revolutionary proletarian struggle against war and Fascism, and against the whole system of capitalism from which these twin evils inexorably arise.

The political alliance between the Old Guard social democrats and the Stalinists, not organizationally expressed only because of considerations of an essentially secondary order, only foreshadows that healthier and truly progressive coming together of all the revolutionary forces who understand the situation and know how to draw the proper conclusions from it.

JAPAN, CHINA & THE U.S.S.R.

The Far Crisis in the Far East

IS IT REVERTS TO «BLOC OF FOUR CLASSES» IN CHINA

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SPEAKER

H. R. ISAACS

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QUESTIONS DISCUSSION
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