

Marshalling Europe

They're called the "Marshall Countries"—the sixteen victim nations. But the workers' struggles in France and Italy proclaim the new Resistance.

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London.

THE Tory successes in the recent municipal elections cannot be seen only in a national setting. They are a part of the general turnover to the Right in the official politics of all the "Marshall countries" (as they are now so delightfully termed in semi-official diplomatic utterance: Why not "Morgan's Empire" or, more simply and plainly, "US dependencies"?). They are part of the same trend as the de Gaulle-Vichy forty percent vote in France, when two years ago de Gaulle had been driven out of French politics and only came back this year to found his Rally with the American Ambassador on the platform of his foundation meeting at Strasbourg. The successes of the Right in the local elections in Britain and France have been openly acclaimed in the American press as victories for the Marshall Plan. "The first dividend on the Marshall Plan" was the New York *Times*' crudely cynical comment on Labor's defeats at the British municipal elections. The "cold war" in Western Europe has already been won, declares Walter Lippmann.

The net is beginning to draw closer around the sixteen victim nations; and the mass struggles of the workers in France and Italy against home fascism and foreign domination already begin to recall the character of the resistance

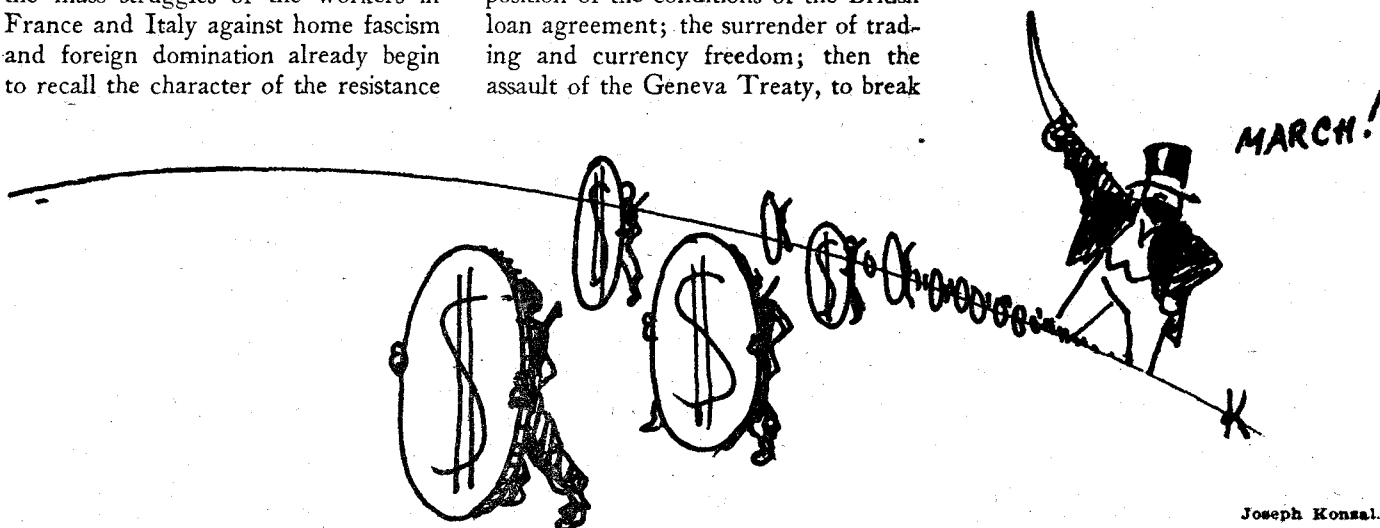
movements, just as in Greece the continuity of the liberation battle against the same oppressors under a shift of patronage is obvious. Yet there are still innocents who affect to see only altruistic philanthropy of soft-hearted American millionaires in the Marshall Plan, and profess amazement at the suggestion of any incursion into domestic politics.

What began as economic and financial intervention now begins to take on a more and more openly political character. The innocents will do well to remember the principle which Hitler laid down long ago in *Mein Kampf*: "A shrewd conqueror will always enforce his exactions only by stages. . . . The more numerous the extortions thus passively accepted, so much the less will resistance appear justified in the eyes of other people if the vanquished nation should end by revolting against the last act of oppression in a long series. And that is especially so if the nation has already patiently and silently accepted impositions which were much more exacting."

Messrs. Marshall and Harriman have evidently studied the textbook of the Master to advantage. First the imposition of the conditions of the British loan agreement; the surrender of trading and currency freedom; then the assault of the Geneva Treaty, to break

down the structure of imperial preference; then the humiliation of the Paris Report, written and rewritten under American dictation; then the Means Test of the visiting American Committees of 215 Congressmen flying over to inspect the resources of their new European estate; then the acceptance of the new Marshall proposal of an American "Supervising Agency" nominated by the President, with "local offices" in each Western European country (pardon, "Marshall country"); until finally in the official press of the vanquished countries the very idea of "national independence" begins to be scorned as an obsolete myth. The London *Economist* writes (November 15): "Some of the conditions foreshadowed in Mr. Marshall's statement do represent some infringement of national independence. And so they should." How quickly the accents of Vichy are learned in some quarters. Let Hitler make the comment for the *Economist*:

"A people who have lost all strength of character—which is always the case with every nation that voluntarily submits to the threats of an opponent—will not find in any of these acts of



Joseph Kinsal.

oppression, if one be enforced apart from the other, sufficient grounds for resistance."

LET us finish with the hypocrisy and soft-soap camouflage of philanthropy and face the facts. The aims of the Marshall Plan are openly political and strategic. The Harriman Report states: "The interest of the United States in Europe cannot be measured simply in economic terms. It is also strategic and political. We all know that we are faced in the world today with two conflicting ideologies. One is a system in which individual rights and liberties are maintained. The opposing system is one where iron discipline by the state ruthlessly stamps out individual liberties."

Here the issue is plainly stated: "Individualism," *i.e.*, capitalism, versus socialism or communism. The report goes on to declare that the task is to defeat "the Communist tactic" and proceeds: "Therefore the countries of Western Europe must be restored to a position where they may retain full faith in the validity of their traditional approaches to world affairs."

"Traditional approaches to world affairs," *i.e.*, capitalism and imperialism. The issue is seen as Western capitalism versus communism. Therefore the dollars are held out as a bait to the Western European countries where the peoples have plainly shown their desire to change the social order.

Marshall's position is summarized as follows by Stuart Gelder in the London *News-Chronicle* (November 17): "Mr. Marshall does not believe that America can preserve her independence without fighting another world war for it if, through the economic disruption of Europe and Asia, Communists seize power in the whole of the Eastern Hemisphere. He believes this will occur if Europe and China collapse through economic and political exhaustion, and that Communist domination over half the earth is the alternative to the Marshall Plan."

Bevin's role from the standpoint of the State Department is defined by the same correspondent: "Without Bevin," said one of the State Department's top-planners to me this week, "Marshall would have been gesturing to an indifferent world. We regard it as proof of Britain's right to call herself a Great Power that one of her leaders saw that Marshall's imagination and American economic strength were the last defense of crumbling

democracies against the inevitable rise of dynamic communism."

"Another world war." "The last defense against the inevitable rise of communism." That is the perspective of the Marshall Plan. That is the perspective of Bevin. The lineup is tolerably clear. On the one side, the peoples of Europe and Asia, with communism in the vanguard, struggling for freedom and social justice, and "inevitably" advancing to communism if left free from American intervention. On the other side, American imperialism, as "the last defense" of capitalism against communism, backing reaction in Europe and Asia, with stooges of the Bevin-Blum-Schumacher type to do its work.

For this purpose the dollars are held out as a bait. For this purpose Britain must be bled white to maintain two millions in the armed forces or supplying them, while ever greater shortages are imposed on the people. The Emergency Budget, the municipal elections and the emergence of Mosley all fall into place as phases in this world battle planned by American imperialism.

Why must additional taxation of £208,000,000 be imposed by an Emergency Budget, of which roughly three-fourths falls on the workers and lower incomes and only one-fourth on a small proportion of the increased profits of the rich? Why must food subsidies be pegged, while prices rise, and subsidies on clothing be removed, thus ensuring a further rise in prices? Why must £200,000,000 be withdrawn from capital construction, with the main blows falling on housing (the waiting lists for housing are now higher than at the end of the war), schools, hospitals, new factories or industrial reequipment? . . . "Saving Western Civilization"?

Yes. We are paying for the honor of "saving Western civilization" — the civilization of Buckingham Palace, Royal Weddings, Waldorf-Astoria Hotels, Hearst and Hollywood — and severed heads in Greece. We are paying for the honor of being "the last bastion" in Europe against communism. Has not Bevin proclaimed to "my dear Americans" at the Savoy Hotel that "we won't let you down," that "Britain is a great bastion in Europe" for "Western civilization," that "standards of life may go back" for the workers, but "we won't fail"?

Has not the British Ambassador in New York declared that the Labor government represents the "banner"

for Europe of the "alternative to the lead formerly given by Russia"? Has not Sir Hartley Shawcross declaimed to the Foreign Press Association in New York that Britain will never be "tyrannized or subjugated by either of the competing extremes of state socialism or unbridled capitalism," and then had to correct his slip by explaining amid laughter that by "state socialism" he meant, of course, "communism"? And has not Sir Oswald Mosley joined the happy throng to proclaim the pure gospel of Bevin, that Britain must link up with America "to preserve the remnants of Western civilization," calling for "a Western union to save the world from the barbarians"?

What a chorus! What unanimity! In the holy unanimity of this sacred cause, taken over from Hitler, can we be surprised that a Labor government should call out the police to protect Mosley and fascism from the anger of the people, when British soldiers are being employed to protect the Nazi police state of terror and torture in Greece? Can we spread plague abroad and expect to escape it at home?

THE signs are indeed at danger. The present course of the government is not only shaming and discrediting the Labor movement and driving large sections of the people into the arms of Toryism. It offers no perspective save increasing cuts, and, at the end of all the cuts, according to Cripps' own statement, "economic strangulation" or helpless dependence on the dollar. And President Truman's address has shown that interim dollar aid is to go first and foremost to Germany, Austria, Italy and French reaction, not to Britain; and that Britain is to be left first to sink to deeper bankruptcy and impotence, with prospective exhaustion of the final gold reserves (which are already being used up as rapidly as the old dollar loan), in order to be reduced finally to the position of a completely dependent American satellite.

The choice between surrender and independence will be more difficult than now. The time to fight is now. Only the speedy awakening of the labor movement can change the present course, prevent a Tory comeback, organize production to raise standards, end the ruinous alliance with American reaction, and go forward with the free progressive peoples for economic recovery and peace.