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BEHIND STALIN'S MOVES

THE BALANCE SHEET OF THE FINNISH EVENTS

by **LEON TROTSKY**

THEY COULDN'T FORESEE

"We" foresaw the alliance with Hitler - write Shachtman and Burnham - but the seizure of Eastern Poland? the invasion of Finland? - no, "we" couldn't foresee these events. Such completely improbable and utterly unexpected events necessitate, they insist, a complete upheaval in our politics. These politicians laboured under the impression apparently that Stalin needed an alliance with Hitler in order to roll Easter eggs with him. They "foresaw" the alliance (when? where?) but couldn't foresee what it was for and why.

They recognise the right of the workers' state to manoeuvre between the imperialist camps and to conclude agreements with one against another. These agreements should, obviously, have as their goal the defence of the workers' state, the acquisition of economic, strategical and other advantages, and, if circumstances permit, the extension of the base of the workers' state. The degenerated workers' state attempts to gain these ends with its own bureaucratic methods, which at every step come into conflict with the interests of the world proletariat. But exactly what is so unexpected and so unpredictable about the Kremlin's attempt to get as much as it could

from its alliance with Hitler?

If our ill-starred politicians failed to foresee "this" it is only because they fail to think a single question seriously through to the end. During the protracted negotiations with the Anglo-French delegation in the summer of 1939, the Kremlin openly demanded military control over the Baltic states. Because England and France refused to grant this control, Stalin broke off negotiations. This alone clearly indicated that an agreement with Hitler would secure Stalin at least control over the Baltic states. Politically mature people the world over approached the matter precisely this standpoint, asking themselves: Just how will Stalin accomplish this task? Will he resort to military force? And so on. The course of events depended, however, a great deal more on Hitler than on Stalin. Generally speaking, concrete events cannot be predicted. But the main direction of the events as they actually unfolded contained nothing essentially new.

Because of the degeneration of the workers' state, the Soviet Union turned out at the threshold of the second imperialist war to be far weaker than it need have been. Stalin's agreement with Hitler had as its objective the securing of the U.S.S.R. from a German assault and, generally, securing the U.S.S.R. from being drawn into a major war. While seizing Poland, Hitler had to protect himself on the East. Stalin was compelled, with Hitler's permission, to invade Eastern Poland in order to avail himself of some supplementary guarantees against Hitler on the Western boundary of the U.S.S.R. As a result of these events, however, the U.S.S.R. acquired a common frontier with Germany, and by virtue of this very fact the danger from a vic-

torious Germany became much more direct, while Stalin's dependence on Hitler was greatly increased.

The episode of the partitioning of Poland had its development and sequel in the Scandinavian arena. Hitler could not have failed to give some intimation to his "friend" Stalin that he planned to seize the Scandinavian countries. Stalin could not have failed to break into a cold sweat. After all, this signified complete German domination of the Baltic Sea, of Finland, and hence constituted a direct threat to Leningrad. Once again Stalin had to seek supplementary guarantees against his ally, this time in Finland. However, he met with serious resistance there. The "military excursion" dragged on. Meanwhile Scandinavia threatened to become the arena of major warfare. Hitler, who had completed his preparations for the blow against Denmark and Norway, demanded that Stalin conclude an early peace. Stalin had to cut his plans short, and renounce sovietising Finland. These are the salient features of the course of events in the European Northwest.

SMALL NATIONS IN IMPERIALIST WAR

Under the conditions of World War, to approach the question of the fate of small states from the standpoint of "national independence," "neutrality," etc., is to remain in the sphere of imperialist mythology. The struggle involves world domination. The question of the existence of the U.S.S.R. will be solved in passing. This problem which today remains in the background, will at a certain moment come to the forefront. So far as the small and second rate states are concerned, they are already today pawns in the hands of the great powers. The sole freedom they will retain, and this only to a limited extent, is the freedom

of choosing between masters.

Two governments struggle for a while in Norway: The government of the Norwegian Nazis, covered by the German troops in the South, and the old social democratic government with their King in the North. Should the Norwegian workers have supported the "democratic" camp against the fascist? Following the analogy with Spain, it might at first glance appear as if this question should be answered in the affirmative. In reality this would be the crudest kind of blunder. In Spain there was an isolated civil war; the intervention of foreign imperialist powers, however important in itself, nevertheless remained of secondary character. What is involved in Norway is the direct and immediate clash between two imperialist camps in whose hands the warring Norwegian governments are only auxiliary tools. On the world arena we support neither the camp of the Allies nor the camp of Germany. Consequently we have not the slightest reason for justification for supporting either one of their temporary tools within Norway itself.

The very same approach must be applied to Finland. From the standpoint of the strategy of the world proletariat, Finnish resistance was no more an act of independent national defence than is the resistance of Norway. This was best demonstrated by the Finnish government itself which preferred to cease all resistance rather than have Finland completely transformed into a military base of England, France and the United States. Secondary factors like the national independence of Finland or Norway, the defence of democracy, etc., however important in themselves, are now intertwined in the struggle of infinitely more powerful world forces and are completely subordinate to them. We must discount these secondary factors and deter-

mine our policy in accordance with the basic factors.

The programmatic theses of the Fourth International on war gave an exhaustive answer to this question six years ago. The theses state: "The idea of national defence especially if it coincides with the idea of the defence of democracy, can most readily be utilised to dupe the workers of small and neutral countries (Switzerland, in particular Belgium, the Scandinavian countries....)." And further on: "Only petty-bourgeois blockheads (like Robert Grimm) from a god-forsaken Swiss village could seriously believe that the World War into which he will be drawn is a means for defending the independence of Switzerland." Other petty-bourgeois equally stupid imagined that world war is a means for defending Finland, that it is possible to determine proletarian strategy on the basis of a tactical episode such as the invasion of Finland by the Red Army.

GEORGIA AND FINLAND

Just as during strikes directed against big capitalists, the workers often bankrupt in passing highly respectable petty-bourgeois concerns, so in a military struggle against imperialism, or in seeking military guarantees against imperialism, the worker's state - even completely healthy and revolutionary - may find itself compelled to violate the independence of this or that small state. Tears over the ruthlessness of the class struggle on either the domestic or the international arena may properly be shed by democratic Philistines but not by proletarian revolutionists.

The Soviet Republic in 1921 forcefully sovietised Georgia which constituted an open gateway for imperialist as-

sault in the Caucasus. From the standpoint of the principles of national self-determination, a good deal might have been said in objection to such sovietisation. From the standpoint of extending the arena of the socialist revolution, military intervention in a peasant country was more than a dubious act. From the standpoint of the self-defence of the workers' state surrounded by enemies, forceful sovietisation was justified: The safeguarding of the socialist revolution comes before formal democratic principles.

World imperialism for a long time utilised the question of violence in Georgia as the rallying cry in mobilising world public opinion against the Soviets. The Second International took the lead in this campaign. The Entente aimed at the preparation of a possible new military intervention against the Soviets.

In exactly the same way as in the case of Georgia, the world bourgeoisie utilised the invasion of Finland in mobilising public opinion against the U.S.S.R. The social-democracy in this case too came out as the vanguard of democratic imperialism. The unhappy "third camp" of the stampeding petty-bourgeois brings up the rear.

Along with the striking similarity between these two instances of military intervention there is, however, a profound difference - the present U.S.S.R. is far from being the Soviet Republic of 1921. The 1934 theses of the Fourth International on War declare: "The monstrous development of Soviet bureaucratism and the wretched living conditions of the toilers have extremely reduced the attractive power of the U.S.S.R. for the world working class." The Soviet-Finnish war revealed graphically and completely that

within gunshot of Leningrad, the cradle of the October revolution, the present regime of the U.S.S.R. is incapable of exercising an attractive force. Yet it does not follow from this that the U.S.S.R. must be surrendered to the imperialists but only that the U.S.S.R. must be torn out of the hands of the bureaucracy.

"WHERE IS THE CIVIL WAR?"

"But where is the Civil War in Finland which you promised?" demand the leaders of the former opposition, who have now become the leaders of the "third camp." I promised nothing. I only analysed one of the possible variants of the further development of the Soviet-Finnish conflict. The seizure of isolated bases in Finland was as probable as the complete occupation of Finland. The seizure of bases presupposed maintaining the bourgeois regime throughout the rest of the country. Occupation presupposed a social overturn which would be impossible without involving the workers and poorer farmers in civil war. The initial diplomatic negotiations between Moscow and Helsinki indicated an attempt to solve the question in the way it was solved with the other Baltic states. Finland's resistance compelled the Kremlin to seek its ends through military measures. Stalin could justify the war before the broadest masses only by sovietising Finland. The appointment of the Kuusinen government indicated that the fate awaiting Finland was not that of the Baltic states but that of Poland, where Stalin - no matter what the amateur columnists of the "third camp" scribble - found himself compelled to provoke civil war and to overthrow property relations.

I specified several times that if the war in Finland was not submerged in a general war, and if Stalin was

not compelled to retreat before a threat from the outside, then he would be forced to carry through the sovietising of Finland. This task by itself was much more difficult than the sovietising of Eastern Poland. More difficult from a military standpoint, for Finland happened to be better prepared. More difficult from a national standpoint, for Finland possesses a long tradition of struggle for national independence from Russia, whereas the Ukrainians and the White Russians were fighting against Poland. More difficult from a social standpoint, for the Finnish bourgeoisie had in its own way solved the pre-capitalist agrarian problem through the creation of an agricultural petty-bourgeoisie. Nevertheless the military victory of Stalin over Finland would unquestionably have made fully possible an overthrow of property relations with more or less assistance from the Finnish workers and small farmers.

Why then didn't Stalin carry out this plan? Because a colossal mobilisation of bourgeois public opinion began against the U.S.S.R. Because England and France seriously posed the question of military intervention. Finally - last but not least in importance - because Hitler could wait no longer. The appearance of English and French troops in Finland would have meant a direct threat to Hitler's Scandinavian plans which were based on conspiracy and surprise. Caught in the vise of a twofold danger - on one side from the Allies and from the other, Hitler - Stalin renounced Sovietising Finland limiting himself to the seizure of isolated strategical positions.

The partisans of the "third camp" (the camp of the stampeding petty-bourgeois) now piece together the following construction: Trotsky deduced the civil war in Finland from the class

nature of the U.S.S.R; inasmuch as no civil war occurred, that signifies the U.S.S.R. is not a workers' state. In reality there was no necessity whatever for logically "deducing" a possible civil war in Finland from a sociological definition of the U.S.S.R - it was sufficient to base oneself on the experience in Eastern Poland. The overturn in property relations which was accomplished there could have been achieved only by the state that issued from the October revolution. This overturn was forced upon the Kremlin oligarchy through its struggle for self-preservation under specific conditions. There was not the slightest ground for doubting that under analogous conditions it would find itself compelled to repeat the very same operation in Finland. That was all I pointed out. But conditions changed during the course of the struggle. War, like revolution, often develops abrupt turns. With the cessation of military operations on the part of the Red Army, naturally there could be no talk of unfolding of civil war in Finland.

Every historical prognosis is always conditional, and the more concrete the prognosis, the more conditional it is. A prognosis is not a promissory note which can be cashed on a given date. Prognosis outlines only the definite trends of the development. But along with these trends a different order of forces and tendencies operate, which at a certain moment begin to predominate. All those who seek exact predictions of concrete events should consult the astrologists. Marxist prognosis aids only in orientation. I made reservations several times as to the conditionality of my prognosis as one of several possible variants. To clutch now, as the rock of salvation, at the tenth rate historical fact that the fate of Finland was temporarily

determined on the pattern of Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia rather than the pattern of Eastern Poland can occur only to sterile scholastics or -- the leaders of the "third camp."

THE DEFENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION

Stalin's assault upon Finland was not of course solely an act in defence of the U.S.S.R. The politics of the Soviet Union is guided by the Bonapartist bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is first and foremost concerned with its power, its prestige, its revenues. It defends itself much better than it defends the U.S.S.R. It defends itself at the expense of the U.S.S.R. and at the expense of the world proletariat. This was revealed only too clearly throughout the entire development of the Soviet-Finnish conflict. We cannot therefore either directly or indirectly take upon ourselves even a shadow of responsibility for the invasion of Finland which represents only a single link in the chain of the politics of the Bonapartist bureaucracy.

It is one thing to solidarise with Stalin, defend his policy, assume responsibility for it -- as does the triply infamous Comintern -- it is another thing to explain to the world working class that no matter what crimes Stalin may be guilty of we cannot permit world imperialism to crush the Soviet Union, re-establish capitalism, and convert the land of the October revolution into a colony. This explanation likewise furnishes the basis for our defence of the U.S.S.R.

The attempt of the conjunctural defeatists, i.e., the adventurers in defeatism, to extricate themselves from their difficulty by promising that in the event the Allies intervene they will change their defeatist policy to

a defeatist one is a contemptible evasion. It is in general not easy to determine one's policies according to a stop watch, especially under wartime conditions. In the critical days of the Soviet-Finnish war, as has now become known -- the Allied general staffs reached the conclusion that serious and quick aid to Finland could come only through destroying the Murmansk railway by bombing it from the air. From the point of view of strategy this was quite correct. The question of intervention or non-intervention by the Allied air forces hung by a hair. From the same hair apparently, the principled position of the "third camp" also dangled. But from the very beginning we considered that it was necessary to determine one's position in accordance with the basic class camps in the war. This is much more reliable.

NO SURRENDER TO THE ENEMY OF POSITIONS ALREADY WON

The policy of defeatism is not punishment of a given government for this or that crime it has committed but a conclusion from the class relationships. The Marxist line of conduct in war is not based on abstract moral and sentimental considerations but on the social appraisal of a regime in its reciprocal relations with other regimes. We supported Abyssinia not because the Negus was politically or "morally" superior to Mussolini but because the defence of a backward country against colonial oppression deals a blow to imperialism, which is the main enemy of the world working class. We defend the U.S.S.R. independently of the policy of the Moscow Negus for two fundamental reasons. First, the defeat of the U.S.S.R. would supply imperialism with new colossal resources and could prolong for many years the death agony of capitalist society. Secondly, the

social foundations of the U.S.S.R., cleansed of the parasitic bureaucracy are capable of assuring unbounded economic and cultural progress, while the capitalist foundations disclose no possibilities except further decay.

What unmasks the noisy critics most of all is that they continued to consider the U.S.S.R. a workers' state at a time when Stalin was destroying the Bolshevik party; when he was strangling the proletarian revolution in Spain; when he was betraying the world revolution in the name of "People's Fronts" and "collective security." Under all these conditions they recognised the necessity of defending the U.S.S.R. as a workers' state! But no sooner did this same Stalin invade "democratic" Finland, no sooner did bourgeois public opinion of the imperialist democracies - which covered up and approved all Stalin's crimes against the communists, the workers and the peasants - raise a howl to the skies, than our innovators immediately declared: "Yes, this is intolerable!" And following Roosevelt they declared a moral embargo against the Soviet Union.

Educated witch-doctor Burnham's reasoning on the theme that by defending the U.S.S.R. we thereby defend Hitler, is a neat little specimen of petty-bourgeois fatheadedness which seeks to force contradictory reality into the framework of a two-dimensional syllogism. By defending the Soviet Republic after the Brest-Litovsk peace did the workers support Hohenzollern? Yes or no? The programmatic theses of the Fourth International on war which deal in detail with this question, establish categorically that agreements between a Soviet state and this or that imperialist state do not place any restrictions upon the revolutionary party of that state. The interests of the world rev-

olution stand above an isolated diplomatic combination, however justifiable the latter may be in and of itself. By defending the U.S.S.R. we struggle far more seriously against Stalin, as well as Hitler, than do Burnham and Co.

It is true, Burnham and Shachtman do not stand alone. Leon Jouhaux, the notorious agent of French capitalism, also waxes indignant over the fact that the "Trotskyists defend the U.S.S.R." Who should be indignant if not he! But our attitude toward the U.S.S.R. is the same as our attitude towards the C.G.T. (General Confederation of Labour): we defend it against the bourgeoisie despite the fact that the Confederation is headed by scoundrels like Leon Jouhaux who deceive and betray the workers at every step. The Russian Mensheviks likewise are howling: "The Fourth International is in a Blind Alley!" because the Fourth International still continues to recognise the U.S.S.R. as a workers' state. These gentlemen themselves are members of the Second International, which is led by such eminent traitors as the typical bourgeois mayor Huysmans, and Leon Blum, who betrayed an exceptionally favourable revolutionary situation in June 1936 and thereby, made possible the present war. The Mensheviks recognise the parties of the Second International as workers' parties but refuse to recognise the Soviet Union as a workers' state on the ground that at its head stand bureaucratic traitors. This falsehood reeks with brazenness and cynicism. Stalin, Molotov, and the rest, as a social layer are no better and no worse than the Blums, Jouhaux, Citrines, Thomases, etc. The difference between them is only this, that Stalin, and Co. exploit and cripple the viable, economic foundation of socialist development, while the Blums cling to the thoroughly rotted foundation of capitalist society.

The workers' state must be taken as it has emerged from the merciless laboratory of history and not as it is imagined by a "socialist" professor, reflectively exploring his nose with his finger. It is the duty of revolutionists to defend every conquest of the

working class even though it may be distorted by the pressure of hostile forces. Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones.

April 25, 1940.

Workers Power or = Hitler

June 1940 will be remembered as a month crowded with events, fraught with big changes in the relations between the Great Powers. In one month has been encompassed the destruction of the might of France, the declaration of war by Italy, new moves by Russia in the Baltic and the Balkans, the proclamation of a new Monroe doctrine by Japan and the rearmament drive in America.

In a few weeks the inflated bubble of French imperialist pretensions to world hegemony has been burst by the bayonets of German imperialism. The French bourgeoisie dragged the Trojan horse into the citadel of Paris, not like the defenders of Troy out of ignorance but with malice aforethought. They have placed Paris under the heel of Hitler lest the capital fell into the hands of the working class.

Beside this unprecedented act of treachery on the part of the French ruling class, the corruption and venality of their forebears, the apostles of capitulation in the Franco-Prussian war of 1871-72 pales into significance. The French bourgeoisie surrendered to Hitler not only because of their fear of the working class but also of their conviction that it would be better to come to terms with Hitler than to place themselves at the mercy

of the ruling class of Britain whose turn was next on the list of victims. Apparently evaluating the prospect of their "beloved ally" as not being too rosy, the French bourgeoisie preferred to act as agents of Hitler while he settled accounts with Britain.

Meanwhile, the complacency of the decrepit English ruling class has received staggering shocks. Even Spain has been allowed to occupy Tangier with "the consent" of Britain and France. Sir Samuel Hoare sent on a mission of appeasement to Spain, is met by "unofficial" demonstrations demanding the return of Gibraltar. Taken with the tone of the Spanish press and the declaration of non-belligerency on the part of Franco, the attitude of Spain appears remarkably similar to that of Italy preceding Italian intervention. At a suitable opportunity, a formal declaration of war with an attack on Gibraltar either by the Spaniards or picked German shock-troops is the most likely outcome of the position on the Iberian peninsula.

Despite the vituperation at the intervention of Mussolini, the situation in the Mediterranean is extremely critical and this has been further aggravated by the defection of France. Blows rain in on the British Lion from all directions. Japan is blockading

Indo-China and Hong Kong and is demanding an embargo on all arms sent to China. As the NICHU NICHU SHIMBUN describes the situation, "The Golden Opportunity" for Japanese imperialism has arrived. Japanese imperialism, economically even weaker than French, has been enabled by the preoccupation of their rivals, to threaten all their Pacific possessions and interests. The American capitalists, although gnashing their teeth, are compelled to smile ingratiatingly at Japan while they prepare for the greater menace in the Atlantic. America, the most highly industrially organised, and potentially the greatest military force in the world, is compelled to take this path, but only temporarily. Japan will be attended to later.

America finds herself in this predicament through the same miscalculation which has resulted in the destruction of the French Empire and the desperate state of the British. The "great democracies" had laboured under the delusion that their potential resources and their financial overlordship of almost the entire globe, their access to the resources of the whole world, guaranteed victory. Given time, safe behind the impregnable barrier of the Maginot Line and the Channel, they would proceed at their leisure, perhaps at a slightly quickened pace, to organise their resources and with the aid of the blockade, to the destruction of Germany. Meanwhile the arms racketeers, munition manufacturers and the big financial sharks were to reap the profits. A nice comfortable war - that was the idea which they held.

But Germany utilised the surplus labour wrung from the German workers for seven years at 12 to 14 hours a day, to transform it into tanks and bombing planes. It was in this way that the relationship of forces was changed and

Germany was enabled to score her "miraculous" victories. America looked on approvingly at Britain and France plunge into the war hoping to prevent the recrudescence of a new German expansionism and simultaneously to encompass the enfeebling of British and French imperialism. "The Moor was to do his duty and then be cast aside." But Germany's plans succeeded too well. She has overrun France and threatens to overrun Britain as well. The great British Empire built in 400 years threatens to fly into fragments in less than 400 days. The prospect not only of a hostile Germany but a hostile Europe stares America in the face. It is this which has set the pace for American rearmament at a speed which would make Hitler's titanic exertions seem like a crude blacksmith's forge.

Even if Hitler succeeds in occupying Britain and all Europe, even if he holds sway over the colonies, there would not be a long period of tranquility. All Europe would not be a big enough field for German economy. The planet itself would be the measure. But all those nations held under the totalitarian heel of national slavery and social oppression would mean that Hitler's empire would be based on sand. The time has passed when empires could be established on the basis of an undeveloped national consciousness. 20th century Europe is not the Asia of the 18th century. With the development of capitalism, national consciousness has correspondingly developed. Moreover, the echoes of the European battle will awaken the slumbering giant of the Indian and colonial masses.

On Hitler's eastern flank there still remains, despite Stalin, the problem of the mighty collective state now extended to comprise 200 millions.

This problem would have to be settled before German imperialism could reach stability. The very existence of such a power in Europe would be a constant threat to Hitler's unstable domination. Despite the efforts of Stalin and of Hitler himself to postpone it, the clash would come sooner or later. Stalin is taking advantage of Hitler's preoccupation in the West to attempt to strengthen himself. But from Hitler's point of view, these are merely loans on account like that of Tsechen to Poland when Czechoslovakia was invaded. He will present his account later.

If Britain should hold out for a long period America will enter the war on the side of her new protege, Britain, now in the process of being reduced to

the status of the 49th state of the U.S.A.

Look which way one may, the horizon is full of flames and convulsions. There is no solution along the path of imperialism. Permanent war with all that it entails opens as a prospect before the peoples of Europe and of the whole world. There is but one way for humanity out of this perspective. The workers of Europe will not be able to endure this endless massacre, the famines and epidemics. Whichever way events turn the workers will be compelled in sheer self-preservation to take the road of revolution and establish the Socialist United States of Europe. That is the only road to peace and a new life for humanity.

The Lesson of France

The cessation of hostilities on the part of France was due not so much to the ferocity of the German onslaught, devastating though it was, as to the internal weakness of France, which has been poised on the verge of civil war for many months - a civil war held in check only by the German threat.

The military occupation of Northern France and Paris by German troops, far from preventing insurrection in France will hasten the crisis and indeed, the setting up of a government pledged to fight finance capitalism, remains the strongest weapon for the defence of France from the invader who will fear the contamination of his own troops by revolutionary ideas. In this situation the Stalinists will indubitably seek to exploit the situation by putting forward a policy of an alliance be-

tween the middle class and the workers, an alliance which will work out in practice as a coalition between the corrupt agents of finance capital who lead the centre parties and the equally corrupt leaders of the Trade Unions, the Socialist and Stalinist parties.

The treacherous abandonment of Paris to the Germans, underlines yet again the nature of bourgeois "patriotism." Having at heart the integrity of their property, fearing the effects of bombardment, not on civilian lives but on their precious buildings and industrial undertakings, the city was abandoned and its worker population cold-bloodedly handed over by the French bourgeoisie to the Gestapo, which now co-operates with the French police in the suppression of incipient proletarian revolt. Though the bourgeoisie of

Germany and France be at one another's throats over the distribution of the world's wealth, they are at one in the conduct of the class war against the French workers.

Thus the French bourgeoisie followed in the footsteps of the Danish and Norwegian governments and of Leopold of Belgium. The workers cannot but draw the correct deduction that the boss class is incapable of conducting even its own wars of acquisition because of its solicitude for its property, that even if the present war could be considered as a "war against Hitlerism" the bourgeoisie is totally incapable of leading the war.

Once before it was proved that with the Prussians at the gates of Paris where the bourgeoisie was prepared to permit the triumphal entry into Paris of enemy troops, only proletarian revolt expressed in the Paris Commune prevented that outcome. This is the meaning of the slogan: **THE MAIN ENEMY IS AT HOME.** This slogan must be hammered into the consciousness of the workers because it has now become the central slogan of revolutionary struggle.

Today Lenin's words are more apposite than ever before:

"A revolutionary class in a reactionary war cannot but desire the defeat of its government.... Revolution in wartime is civil war; and the transformation of war between governments into civil war is, on the one hand, facilitated by military reverses ("defeats") of governments; on the other hand, it is impossible really to strive for such a transformation without thereby facilitating defeat..

Turning the present imperialist war into civil war is the only correct

proletarian slogan. It is indicated by the experience of the Commune, it was outlined by the Basle resolution (1912) and it follows from all the conditions of an imperialist war among highly developed bourgeois countries. However difficult such transformation may appear at one time or another, Socialists will never relinquish systematic, insistent, unflinching preparatory work in this direction once the war has become a fact..

Only along this road will the proletariat be able to break away from under the influence of the chauvinist bourgeoisie, and sooner or later, in one form or another, will it take decisive steps on the road to real freedom of peoples, and on the road to Socialism."

The fall of Paris opens a new chapter in contemporary history. The German bourgeoisie, having bitten its veins and sucked its own blood for this last supreme effort, exploited the threat of revolt in France to offer a separate peace to the French bourgeoisie. Panic stricken by the turn of events, both the Kremlin and Washington are preparing to intervene. The Kremlin which gave to Hitler, by means of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, the opportunity to fight his war on one front, is now confronted with the fruits of that opportunist step for, with the collapse of the Western Front, Hitler once again has only one front to fight on, this time the Eastern Front. Our warnings that the greatest danger to the Soviet Union arose from Stalin's policies is fully justified and it remains in the present catastrophic situation to redouble our energies in calling for the defence of the Soviet Union against capitalist aggression in spite of Stalin.

In this situation it becomes necessary to prepare for a transformation of the

position on the home front. While there are no objective signs that the bourgeoisie will find it necessary to pounce on the left, precautionary measures must not be neglected. The coming back into favour of the French and British Stalinists will eventuate from a rising tide of revolt in France and from the intervention of the Soviet Union on the side of Britain. It is from the Stalinist machine and the labour bureaucracy that the main threat to the revolutionaries will come, because they have a much more realistic appreciation of the explosive character of the policies of our tendency than the bourgeoisie which sees a mere handful of "Trotskyists"

and draws empirical conclusions totally at variance with the laws of historical development.

Today, in the Second Great World War, the banner of international socialism is held aloft by the Fourth International. Like the Bolsheviki of 1914, we fight for the establishment of world socialism as the sole way of banishing war and rebuilding shattered Europe. Every genuine militant worker must reject the treacherous policy of Popular Frontism and class collaborationism and rally to the only banner that can lead the working class to a world of Socialism and Peace.

Kremlin's Role in Europe's Catastrophe

by

LEON TROTSKY

The capitulation of France is not a simple military episode. It is part of the catastrophe of Europe. Mankind can no longer live under the regime of imperialism. Hitler is not an accident; he is only the most consistent and most bestial expression of imperialism, which threatens to crush our whole civilisation.

But in line with the general causes of the catastrophe inherent in imperialism, it is impermissible to forget the criminal, sinister role played by the Kremlin and the Comintern. Nobody else rendered such support to Hitler as Stalin. Nobody else created such a dangerous situation for the U.S.S.R. as Stalin.

During a period of five years the Kremlin and its Comintern propagandised for an "alliance of democracies" and "peoples' fronts" with the aim of preventive war against "fascist aggre-

ssors." This propaganda, as witnessed most strikingly in the example of France, had a tremendous influence upon the popular masses. But when war really approached, the Kremlin and its agency, the Comintern, jumped unexpectedly into the camp of the "fascist aggressors." Stalin with his horse-trader mentality sought in this way to cheat Chamberlain, Daladier, Roosevelt and to gain strategic positions in Poland and the Baltic countries. But the Kremlin's jump had immeasurably greater consequences: not only did it cheat the governments but it disoriented and demoralised the popular masses in the first place in the so-called democracies. With its propaganda of "peoples' fronts" the Kremlin hindered the masses from conducting the fight against the imperialist war. With his shift to Hitler's side Stalin abruptly mixed up all the cards and paralysed the military power of the "democracies." In spite of all the machines

of destruction the moral factor retains decisive importance in the war. By demoralising the popular masses in Europe, and not solely in Europe, Stalin played the role of an agent provocateur in the service of Hitler. The capitulation of France is one of the results of such politics.

But it is by no means the only result. In spite of the Kremlin's territorial seizures, the international position of the USSR is worsened in the extreme. The Polish buffer disappeared. The Rumanian buffer will disappear tomorrow. Mighty Germany, master of Europe, acquires a common frontier with the USSR. Scandinavia, a place of weak and almost disarmed countries is occupied by this same Germany. Her victories in the west are only preparation for a gigantic move toward the east. In the attack on Finland the Red Army, decapitated and demoralised, again by Stalin, demonstrated its weakness before the whole world. In his coming march against the USSR, Hit-

ler will find support in Japan.

The agents of the Kremlin begin to speak once more about the alliance of the democracies against the fascist aggressors. It is possible that as the cheated cheater, Stalin will be forced to make a new turn in his foreign politics. But woe to the peoples if they again trust the dishonest agents of the Kremlin's chief! Stalin helped convert Europe into bloody chaos and took the USSR to the very brink of the abyss. The peoples of the USSR now cannot help but feel the greatest anxiety... Only the overthrow of the Moscow totalitarian clique, only the regeneration of Soviet democracy can unleash the forces of the Soviet peoples for the fight against the inevitable and fast approaching blow from imperialist Germany. Hence Soviet patriotism is inseparable from irrec- oncilable struggle against the Stalinist clique.

MEXICO CITY, June 17.

Congress Cannot Lead

The greater the military reverses, the louder our ruling class proclaims its democratic mission. To the long list of countries for whose freedom Britain is fighting, is now added France. All are to be freed except their own slaves. Each successive reverse which Britain has suffered in the military field has been followed by a new wave of political repression in India. The latest victim of British "democracy" in India is Mr. Bose, an ex-President of the Indian National Congress and the leader of its left wing. The arrest and incarceration of all anti-imperialists continues unabated under the pretext of fighting Hitlerism.

Totalitarian or democratic, imperialism fundamentally remains the same. Those who have raised once again the cry for a "Peoples' Government" which, they claim would turn the present war of reaction into a war for freedom, are careful not to divulge the fact that there has not been a single Peoples' Government yet which has freed its colonial slaves, or even attempted to. Not even on its death-bed did the Peoples' Government of Spain grant freedom to Spanish Morocco thereby generating troops for Franco. The Popular Front regime in France continued with the policy of exploitation of its colonial slaves adminis-

tered by its predecessors and ruthlessly crushed the Neo Destour Party in Tunis striving for National liberation. The "Peoples' Government" for Britain now being projected by the Communist Party will be no different from its continental predecessors. Capitalist Britain cannot give freedom to India and the colonies. This war was not entered for nothing. It was this very Empire that was at stake.

Though Churchill has shed none of his imperialist aims, he sees however, the necessity for a change in policy in relation to the nationalist leaders in view of the extremely critical situation on the international field. Whitehall is acutely conscious of the need of arriving at a settlement with the leaders of the Indian National Congress.

It is significant that the news of the capitulation of the French bourgeoisie was followed immediately by the Viceroy inviting Mr. Gandhi to an interview. The interview however, ended without any settlement being reached. This was probably due to the fact that the native bourgeoisie has raised its price for capitulation. The great cotton magnates and financiers of Bombay cannot but look with concern at the policy of appeasement adopted by Churchill's government towards Japan, their principal competitor for the Indian market. The capitulation at Tientsin and the evacuation of Hong Kong may well be followed by further retreats. Would Britain resist if Japan insisted on the removal of the protective tariffs which alone enable the Indian mill owners to exploit the Indian market? Considerations such as these have raised in an acute form the problem of the Central Government which determines the financial policy of India. As the Central Government is constructed under the Constitution

of 1935, the Congress leaders can never hope to secure a majority as against the representatives of the Princes, communal bodies and other direct agents of imperialism. In the interests of its own safety, Indian capitalism has been forced to increase its demands. That is the significance of the resolution of the Working Committee of the Congress of July 6, demanding "complete independence" and the formation of a provisional National Government as a first step towards it.

The coming period is likely to be one of intense negotiations, numerous interviews and varied journalistic speculations. But the present deadlock must end. It is no longer possible for the Congress leaders to keep up the pose of supporting the war in private while opposing it in public. The service they have rendered in the past has been invaluable to the imperialists. Holding in their hands the undisputed leadership of the masses, they have held in check the rising tide of revolt throughout the country. They denounced the war in phrases, but they refused to oppose it in action. They threatened Britain with a new Civil Disobedience movement but they postponed it to some distant future. A series of wordy resolutions against the war hid the actual and daily support which they gave to its prosecution. But more is required of them now. The Congress leaders must now directly participate in the war preparations. They must act now as they did in the last war. The "Great Betrayal" is on the order of the day.

From this point of view last month's resolution of the Working Committee of the Congress acquires great significance. In this resolution, which followed the news of the French disaster, the Congress leaders renounced once and for all, the sacred principle of

"non violence" as a method of preventing "external aggression" and "internal disorder." By declaring its new faith in violence the Congress leaders have taken one more step on the road of direct participation in the imperialist conflict.

The objective situation therefore poses once more before the Indian masses the problem of revolutionary leadership. The dead weight of the reactionary leadership of the Congress capitalists prevents the release of the revolutionary forces rapidly accumulating in the factories and villages. A new wave of strikes threatens the industrial areas. Among the peasantry in spite of the incarceration of almost all the leaders, the struggle against exploitation grows in intensity. The HINDU, highly respected organ of Indian bourgeois opinion, carried a report in an April issue, which gives a glimpse of the intensity of class warfare and the growth of militance among the peasantry: "Two passenger trains were held up on the East Indian Railway by peasant agitators, who, shouting slogans and with Red Flags, posted themselves on the track before the oncoming trains, which were compelled to pull up. Some of the peasants boarded the trains and, when asked to get out explained that the train and tracks belonged to them. About 20 peasants have been arrested on various charges."

Incidents such as these, while testifying to the intensity of mass feeling against the imperialist system, point to the absolute necessity of a revolutionary alternative to the Congress leadership.

The DAILY WORKER has recently launched a campaign to advertise the so-called "Communist" Party of India as the revolutionary party of the Indian masses.

"The policy of the Party," says the DAILY WORKER of June 28, "is attracting large masses of the people, who in the struggle for Indian freedom have become more and more disillusioned with the vacillating leadership of Gandhi-Nehru." What is this policy which they counterpose to the "vacillating" policy of the Congress leaders? "General strikes in the major industries together with country wide no-rent campaign and no-tax agitation" But the counter revolutionary role of Stalinism becomes apparent when we ask ourselves who is to lead this movement. According to the DAILY WORKER "The main task is to create a situation in which the Congress as a whole will give the call for struggle and will as a whole move into action."

Can anyone believe that the "Congress as a whole" will call for a general strike? In the Working Committee of the Congress there is not a single socialist. Patel, Desai, Rajagopalachari, Prasad - have never made any secret of their alliance with the landlords and capitalists. To imagine that these people can lead a general strike in the major industries is to believe that they will cut their own throats. Even the followers of Mr. Bose, who by no stretch of imagination can be called socialist, have declared that it is necessary to drive the present leaders out of Congress before it can be used as an instrument of struggle. The workers of Bombay who faced the bullets of the Congress Government, the hundreds of peasants of Behar and United Provinces imprisoned by the pre-war Congress Governments will laugh at the Stalinist suggestion. Under the slogan of "Unity in the Congress" the Comintern has sacrificed the struggle of the toiling masses for freedom and social liberation and handed them to the mercies of the Indian national bourgeoisie.

Only the Indian working class is capable of advancing a bold revolutionary agrarian programme, of rousing the tens of millions of Indian peasants and uniting them in struggle against their British and native oppressors. If the Indian bourgeoisie advances one step along the road of struggle against the arbitrary rule of Great Britain the working class will support this step. But to do so the working class must have its hands free to struggle. It will support such a step only by its own methods: mass meetings, bold slogans, demonstrations, strikes, and where necessary more combative forms of activity, depending on the relation of forces.

The alliance of the workers and poor

peasants is the only reliable alliance which can secure the victory for independence and freedom and assure the success of the Indian revolution.

But to advance this programme, to build alliance, a revolutionary party basing itself on the vanguard of the working class must be built. Such a party does not at present exist in India. Declaring its complete independence from the policies of the native bourgeoisie, such a party would patiently explain the role of the Second and Third Internationalist parties, the parties of betrayal, corruption and defeat. This party must be and can only be, the party of the Fourth International.

Stalinists Arrested for Trotsky Attack

Twenty one Stalinists are in the hands of Mexican police and General Jose-Manuel Nunez, head of the police, announced that complete light has now been shed on the May 24 attack on Leon Trotsky's house, a cable from Mexico City to the New York Times, June 19, announced.

Four others, all members of the Communist Party, were being sought as the organisers of the attempted assassination.

General Nunez announced that the attack was financed by the Mexican Communist Party, and that the organisers were David Alfaro Siqueiros, his brother Alfredo, Antonio Pujol and Pedro Zuniga Camacho, Mexican Stalinists who were in Spain during the civil war.

General Nunez also announced that Nestor Sanchez Hernandez, in whose possession was found one of the police uniforms used by the attackers, had confessed he took part in the attack, and that David Siqueiros was the leader of the attack who wore the uniform of a Mexican Army major.

Hernandez is also quoted as saying that Robert Sheldon Harte, one of Trotsky's guards, was in league with the assailants, but since this confession, the body of Sheldon Harte has been found, riddled with bullets. The past murderous activities of the G.P.U which has assassinated close coworkers of Comrade Trotsky one after another, suggest that one more victim has been added to their list.