

THE INDIAN REVOLUTION

August 8, 1942, witnessed a new and higher stage in the development of the Indian revolution. Forced by the pressure of the masses below, as his adherents in America have admitted, Gandhi was compelled to formally initiate a campaign against the British Government. Within the course of a day, the movement had gotten out of the hands of the Gandhists. This is shown by several circumstances. First the stultifying cult of non-violence went completely by the board. Particularly in the cities, but to some extent in the rural areas, the Indian masses began attacks on the railways, police stations, courts, et cetera. Secondly, the attack was directed not only against the English sahibs, but also against wealthy Indians. Particularly significant is the pulling of bourgeois and officials from automobiles with the admonition, "learn to walk", "This is democracy". Despite the failure of the National Congress to call for a general strike there were widespread strikes. In this first stage, of course, all the above actions were spontaneous. There does not appear to have been any taking over of the lapsed Gandhist leadership by any other organized political force. This is a weakness, as spontaneous outbreaks, unless they lead to a conscious political attack, tend to dissipate themselves. However, the historical significance of such a tremendous happening, that in a course of a few hours Indian masses should even spontaneously break away from the leadership of the Indian bourgeoisie, cannot be over-estimated.

Of particular importance is the fact that this occurred in the midst of imperialist war. This sharply marks off the present events from those of 1920-22 and 1930. The very existence of the imperialist war by itself gives an added significance to the August 8 events. August 8 represents several crises. It is a crisis in the imperialist war front, and thereby a blow to both camps of capitalism. This may not be so obvious in the case of Japanese imperialism. Apparently the events in India favor a military victory of Japanese imperialism. But this is only a short sighted view. An Indian revolution would not only strike a mortal blow at British imperialism but it would be a most unrelenting enemy of the Mitsuis and Mitsubishis.

CRISIS FOR BOURGEOIS AGENTS

As already pointed out, August 8 represents the crisis of Gandhism. But, in addition, August 8 also represents a crisis for bourgeois democracy. For three years Churchill and Roosevelt have unctuously intoned the sacred litany of the various freedoms of democracy. August 8, 1942, stripped priestly robes from both these gentlemen. All the apologists of "democracy vs. fascism" cannot spill enough ink to obscure the fact that August 8, 1942 has done more to shatter their lie structure than any other event during the present imperialist carnage.

August 8, 1942 represents a tremendous crisis also for Stalinism. For more than a year the masses of the Soviet Union have had dinned into them the doctrine of the "second front". "Socialism in one country" became translated into capitalist democracy for the next twenty years. The cynical

attitude of the Stalinist beaurocrats in disregarding the world proletariat and oppressed masses and relying on one or other imperialism was accentuated. Then came August 8. The Indian Stalinists were found even to the right of Gandhi. All this must have and will have its repercussions inside the Soviet Union. The workers there will begin to wonder why it is that a second front of a revolutionary alliance between the Soviet Union and the proletariat and colonial revolutions abroad is turned down for a non-existent imperialist second front. August 8, 1942 marked not only a crisis for Gandhi but for Stalin as well.

From tightly censored India, little word has come in the past few weeks. But it is possible to predict confidently that the same forces which led to the explosion of August 8 will not and cannot stop there. The pressure of imperialism upon Indian economy, tremendously aggravated by war conditions must lead to an extension of the Indian revolution to the countryside. Above all, it must lead to the leadership of the whole movement by the proletariat. Significant in this connection is it that no important social force in India has raised the slogan of the constituent assembly. The proletariat is mute without a party. The bourgeoisie only asks for an Indian majority on an imperial council.

SPARK FOR NEW OCTOBER

What is to be done now? The important task for the ICC remains the giving of all possible material and political aid to the building of a real Marxist party in India. Without this any events in India will remain a mere flash in the pan. In addition to the general task for the ICC, there are specific tasks for its sections. Upon the Leninist League of Scotland and the Militant Workers Group of Australia falls a high historic task, that of directly combating British imperialism and stifling every endeavor of that imperialism to crush the Indian revolution. Upon the Red Front of Germany devolves the task of opposing the entry of Nazi legions into a revolutionary India. And upon the Revolutionary Workers League, U.S.A., there is also a great responsibility. Located in the country which is one of the chief antagonists of British rule in India, a country which is intriguing day and night to oust British rule in favor of its own, it becomes necessary for the RWL to expose these machinations before the American masses. This, it must and should do in its own name, wherever possible. Meetings must be held in all cities possible to denounce not only the British rule but the role of Wall Street in India.

If these things are done, then the Indian revolution can and will be a spark that will set aflame the whole structure of imperialism, break the imperialist war front, spread the conflagration not only throughout the colonies but to the metropolis as well and usher in another October period that will once and for all put an end to all exploitation, oppression, poverty and war.