

SOCIALIST APPEAL

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EDITORIAL

'PEACE' IN EUROPE

The end of the war in Europe, or rather the end of the struggle for imperialist mastery in Europe has come. A wave of relief swept over the population in Britain. But despite all the atrocity propaganda there was very little of the manifestations of jingoism and chauvinism.

But it is only one part of the imperialist conflict which is at an end. The flagrantly gangster conflict for supremacy in the Pacific is still to go on with its toll of human lives and sufferings.

The Labour leaders have come forth with statements that the victory over the Axis will lead to a just and lasting peace; the Stalinists talk of "permanent peace" on the basis of the Yalta Agreement.

There could be no more base deception of the working class. During the last world war the Labour leaders announced that it was a "war to end wars"; a war to save democracy. And its results? The plunder and oppression of Europe by Versailles which Lenin described as the most unjust treaty in history. Far from ensuring the victory of democracy it led to the rise of fascism in Europe and the most terrible slaughter of the peoples in the whole of history.

In reply to the self styled "practical" politicians and "realists" who argued that the vista of peace and prosperity lay before the workers after the last war, Lenin warned that unless the workers seized power, they would live through a third world war.

What Lenin said then is even more true today. If capitalism should survive this war a new world war within the next decade is inevitable. Despite the fact that the "aggressors" will be crushed as no nations have been crushed in history, the "united" nations are spending and are preparing to spend more money on armaments than ever before.

In the budget of the Soviet Union the expenditure on armaments for 1945-46 is to be greater than even when Russia was fighting for her life against Germany. America has announced a programme for maintaining the biggest navy and airforce that the world has seen. In enfeebled Britain, crippled economically by the war, capitalist politicians and their Labour lackeys talk of programmes of "preparedness"—vast schemes of military training and arms expenditure.

For what reason are these preparations being made?

Because of the rivalries in Europe, in Asia and all over the world between British imperialism and American imperialism; between the Stalinist bureaucracy, fearful of the inevitable new onslaught on the Soviet Union by its "allies".

The shadow of coming events is shown by the disagreements at San Francisco. Throughout history the competition for markets, and the antagonisms this provoked led to arms expenditure which in its turn inevitably led to war.

Meanwhile, the aftermath of the war is preparing famine in Europe and in Asia.

But already the protest of the masses against the capitalist system is manifesting itself. The movement in North Italy, the elections in France—everywhere we see a swing not only of the workers but of the middle class towards the Left, towards socialism and communism.

If the Stalinists and the Labour leaders should succeed in stemming the revolutionary wave, as their forerunners did after the last war, we will see not a new blossoming of democracy, freedom, peace and plenty, but the most frightful reaction, a new and worse form of Fascism, misery, insecurity and unemployment for the masses, and new wars; and because of the further decay of capitalism, on a far more intensive scale.

More than a hundred years ago Marx wrote that the development of capitalism means the concentration of capital into fewer and fewer hands at one pole, with the accumulation of misery, ignorance, toil and degradation at the other pole for the working class. This war has further accelerated this process.

The Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution is the only party which tells the workers the truth about the perspectives that lie ahead, that offers no false promises and prepares them for the battles that are yet to come. In the struggles that lie ahead, the workers will come to see that their problems are bound up with those of the workers of other countries; that only the Fourth International unites the workers of all lands on a common programme which can lead to a socialist Europe and world.

Long live the Fourth International!

A New Versailles Treaty

BY V. SIMMS

The war in Europe is at an end. German workers who have suffered under the jack-boot of the Nazis are to be the main victims of the victorious allies. Once again vindictive and inhuman conditions are to be imposed on Germany.

THE VERSAILLES TREATY

At the end of the last war, the French, American and British imperialists holding Germany and the German people responsible for the war, attempted to extract tribute from Germany. The economic clauses of the Versailles Treaty were:—

1. All German vessels of the merchant navy exceeding 1,600 tons, half the number between 1,000 tons and 1,600 tons, one quarter of trawlers and other fishing boats were to be handed over to the Allies.
2. All German overseas possessions and colonies were to be taken over by the Allies.
3. All German investments abroad to be transferred to the Allies.
4. German coal-mines situated in the Saar Basin to be ceded to France.
5. For 10 years Germany was to deliver coal free of cost, up to 20,000,000 tons annually for the first 5 years, and up to 8,000,000 tons annually for the second 5 years to France.
6. Part of the reparations to be paid in coal to France 7,000,000 tons annually for 10 years; 8,000,000 tons annually to Belgium; from 4,500,000 tons to 8,500,000 tons to Italy, and an unspecified shortage to be made good to Luxembourg.
7. Germany to accord most favoured nations treatment to the exports from allied countries to Germany for five years.
8. In addition, Germany to pay compensation to cover the damage to Allied property estimated at £3,000,000,000.

The effect of these impositions was to undermine the German and European economy in three ways. Firstly, German exports which were not paid for because the reparations demanded payment in kind from Germany, which made it impossible for Germany to buy

the raw materials and foodstuffs from abroad. Secondly the German coal and steel industries were crippled by the seizure of Alsace-Lorraine. Thirdly, lack of coal and rolling stock threw the German transport system into chaos.

Physically exhausted by the war of 1914-18, unable to maintain even the pre-war production, the German capitalists joined with Allied "humanitarians" to extract the last ounce of energy and blood from the German working class, who faced utter ruin and starvation. This misery reached its climax in the inflation of 1923.

Unable to obtain the promised coal from Germany, French troops occupied the Ruhr, and added burdens of occupation were thrown on the backs of the German masses. Because of the failure of the German labour leaders and Stalinist leaders to give a revolutionary lead to the German workers, the revolutionary upsurge of the German people was destroyed. This led directly to the victory of fascism.

The Allies helped the rise of Fascism because it was the only means of saving the capitalist system.

But what must be remembered is that not only did it mean misery for the peoples of Germany, but for the people of Europe and Britain as well. German economy is an indispensable part of European economy. Germany is the industrial heart of Europe, and the other countries are dependent upon Germany for machinery, capital goods, equipment, etc. In addition to which, Germany was a great market for the goods produced by the more backward countries in the rest of Europe. Reparations meant that Germany could not afford to buy back the goods they produced. The lower standards for the Germans means lower standards for the other countries too, because of the

competition of German goods produced by cheap labour. Reparations meant unemployment for the Welsh miners, the Scottish shipyard workers, and the British engineers. If the workers of this country believe that by reducing the economy and living standards of the German people, they will better their own standards of life they are very much mistaken.

MORE DRASTIC TERMS THIS TIME

History is about to repeat itself. Today these are the plans of the Allied imperialists:

1. All German heavy industry and any other branch of industry which can be transformed to the production of armaments is to be smashed.
2. Germany to feed her own population with severe restrictions on the export of foodstuffs to Germany. If the food production of Germany is inadequate, no help will be given to feed the population.
3. Territorial compensation to Poland, France, and possibly Holland.
4. Compensation and reparations to be calculated for the damage caused to property and persons by an Allied economic Commission.
5. Rebuilding of part of Europe and Russia with German slave labour.
6. Seizure of all equipment and plant in various industries.
7. Seizure of all foreign investments of Germany.

These provisions are far more drastic than the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles. According to Varga, the Soviet economist, the reparations Russia will demand alone would be ten times the total reparations to all the allies provided by the Treaty of Versailles. Translate this to mean enslavement of the German people for decades to come. Shamelessly, Kuczynski, the Stalinist statistician describes this as a just

expiation for the guilt of the German masses.

The Bolsheviks and the Foundation Conference of the Third International condemned the Versailles Treaty and called for a peace without indemnities and without annexations. Today, the Labour traitors in Britain, the renegade Stalinist "communists" are demanding an even more revengeful tribute from the German masses.

We warn the workers, as the Communist International of Lenin did: the effect of these terms will spell disaster to the entire European populations. Today more than ever, Europe is a unified economy. The entire productive relations of Europe are connected with intricate threads and Germany occupies the key position in this system. From Germany, radiate goods so much needed by Eastern Europe and the Balkan countries. The destruction of German heavy industry, the loss of German coal, iron, steel and chemicals would mean, not only misery for the German masses, but for the people of the entire continent.

The payment of reparations to the allies could only be made in the form of goods and services. That would mean German coal, machinery and chemicals being sent to France, Britain and other countries without any corresponding returns. While the German masses will be reduced to destitution, the British working class cannot escape the consequences. Once again unemployment will reign in the coal fields of South Wales; shipyard workers will be thrown on the dole; while the bosses will continue to use German goods both for domestic consumption and exports.

The employment of German slave labour to rebuild Europe will strike at the root of the organised working class movement. During the famous miners struggles in the nineteenth century in Britain, the capitalists attempted to smash the organisation of the miners by importing cheap Belgian labour. Organised opposition from the workers of both countries struck this weapon from the hands of the bosses. Today once again, the capitalists, in the name of justice, want to do the same thing with regard to German labour. Already in Belgium, German prisoners are used to break strikes. In the London area, where the discontent of the British workers is reaching a climax, to prevent any explosion, German workers are to be employed. If this pernicious system of slave labour is allowed, the British working class will place itself at the mercy of the capitalists, and one by one their hard earned rights of a century of struggle will be undermined.

Even if the logic of this argument is admitted, some say, the reconstruction of Europe is necessary. Why not make the German masses bear the burden? The answer to this question is simple. If, out of this war, the European working class emerges defeated; with capitalism triumphant, no plans, no indemnities, will stop Germany once again becoming a nerve centre of capitalist reaction.

Instead of rebuilding to satisfy the needs of the masses, only feverish preparations for a third world war will proceed. In the meanwhile, the present economic chaos and poverty, accompanied by the evils of inflation, will be deepened and inflict insufferable misery on the entire population of Europe. Capitalist reconstruction of Europe in the end means only reconstruction for war.

But, if out of the sufferings of the masses and devastation wrought by the 6 years of massacre, the workers emerge victorious, Germany will again occupy a key position to provide the necessary economic cultural leadership in a socialist Europe. A socialist Germany would speedily rebuild and reconstruct Europe. Russia would be supplied with machinery to rebuild her industry, and the German workers would gladly aid in this task.

In fraternal co-operation, the workers of Britain and Europe can rebuild a socialist Britain and Europe, banishing all future wars and increasing the material and cultural standards for all.

THE "PEACE" AFTER VERSAILLES



Unemployment... Hamburg workers asleep sitting up.

ALLIES IN CYPRUS

The Committee for Cyprus Affairs in London has issued a report of an outrage committed by the police in the British colony of Cyprus on March 25th, Greek Independence Day. They opened fire on a peaceful demonstration in the village of Lefkonico.

The government statement alleged that "following violent dispute between opposing parties an illegal procession had taken place. The police intervened to prevent a serious clash between the parties and the demonstrators were repeatedly asked to disperse. They refused to do so and the police opened fire... Two persons were killed and another nine wounded, five of whom were taken to hospital."

Eyewitness reports, plus a statement signed by the Mayor and all organisations in the village, including Trade Unions, Churches, sport associations, etc., tell a different story. The procession was held in accordance with a permit issued to the local High School, and was therefore quite legal. It consisted of all organisation in the village, headed by the High School. After a ceremony of thanksgiving in a Church a meeting was held, during which representatives of the Unions asked to be allowed to speak. This led to disagreement, and the meeting peacefully broke up.

The unions proceeded to their premises: but at a small distance from them were met by armed police, who ordered them to disperse. Their leaders asked to be allowed to enter the premises and disperse inside. This request was not replied to—the police immediately opened fire on the unarmed demonstration. The first to fall dead was a 12-year old schoolboy. Two people were killed and 12 wounded.

Though an official enquiry was ordered, the policemen responsible for the shooting are still at liberty, one has even been promoted. The government gagged the Press, instructing all the editors to print nothing but official accounts of the matter, until the enquiry had started. In protest the entire Greek press, two Turkish newspapers and the English paper "Cyprus Post" suspended publication on March 28th.

A joint statement of three workers' and peasants' parties points out that this atrocity is "the result of the existing anti-liberal laws and orders by which the Cyprus people have been deprived of elementary liberties."

An indication of the regime was given by the delegate from Cyprus to the World T.U. Conference, who said that more than 5 people may not gather without permission from the authorities, which is not granted when the Government thinks it might be criticised; and that the Press cannot publish news from the Soviet, American, French and other radios, but only from the B.B.C. and Cairo.

Five-sixths of the population are Greek, and the desire to be united with Greece is strong. But some time ago a correspondent to the "Daily Telegraph" wrote that Greek nationalism is on the wane, and the masses are looking more towards a dictatorship of the proletariat as the solution to their problems: he also said that in addition to the Stalinist party there exists "a dissident Communist party, Trotskyist in inspiration."

D.J.

ROOSEVELT AND THE C.P. TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

In the "Daily Worker" of April 14th 1945, R. Page Arnot wrote a tribute to Roosevelt which he entitled "DEMOCRAT, FIGHTER AND PEACE BUILDER". There he told the workers that:

"With over 17,000,000 unemployed on the bread line, with desolation spreading through the country, Roosevelt proclaimed the New Deal. By the National Recovery Act of 1933, he prohibited child labour, fixed an 8 hour day and a minimum wage, and instituted public works on a vast scale."

"... He fought the most reactionary capitalists and got rights for the Trade Unions."

"The Trade Union movement advanced by leaps and bounds. Trade Unionists recognised in Roosevelt an ally."

So much for R. Page Arnot. However, it is unfortunate for the Communist Party that some of us have long memories, although the various changes of C.P. policy have taxed them to the utmost. Let us turn up R. Palme Dutt's book "FASCISM AND THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION" published in 1934.

Turn to page 247: "The New Deal," says Palme Dutt, the policy of the Roosevelt regime expressed in the National Recovery Act and associated measure, represents the most comprehensive and ruthless attempt of finance capital to consolidate its power with the entire strength of the state machine over the whole field of industry, to hold the workers in subjection under extreme and intensified exploitation with a universal lowering of standards..."

Is that how Roosevelt fought the reactionary capitalists, Mr. Page Arnot? And how did the Trade Union movement advance by leaps and bounds and Trade Unionists recognise in Roosevelt an ally? Was it in the way Palme Dutt expressed it when on page 248, he declares:

"... It (the New Deal) effects a universal reduction of the real wages of all workers, such as to make the guaranteed wage standards, already fixed at very low levels, in practice the cover for a general lowering of wage standards, as even

the American Federation of Labour has now begun to complain."

TODAY THE C.P. LEADERS SAY THE ROOSEVELT OF 1933 WAS A DEMOCRAT.

YESTERDAY THE C.P. LEADERS SAID THE ROOSEVELT OF 1933 WAS A PRO-FASCIST.

Can any intelligent worker trust a party with leaders who, in eleven years can change their opinions so completely as this?

W. W.

Belgian Trotskyist Paper Suppressed

"La Voie de Lenin" ("The Road of Lenin"), organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party, Belgian Trotskyists, was banned during March of this year. The paper was declared illegal following the Editorial in the March 31st issue, entitled "Solidarity with the German Proletariat." The Editorial called upon the Belgian workers to oppose the Allied Imperialist and Stalinist policy of vengeance and oppression against the German working class. It attacked the Belgian puppet Government for its support of the Allied Imperialist plans.

It further indicted the Stalinist regime in the Russian occupied countries. The Editorial states:

"One thing is certain here and now; if the German people did not find the strength to revolt against Hitler, no terroristic measures will prevent them fighting tomorrow against the slavery that is intended to follow their subjugation."

The experience of the Hitlerite occupation should be a warning to the 'Allied' leaders. For four years the most powerful Nazi apparatus of oppression did not succeed in breaking the resistance of the occupied peoples.

How are we to believe that it is possible to destroy tomorrow a people of eighty millions who have attained the highest degree of civilisation and national conscience, who have shown so often in the past

an incomparable capacity for struggle and for organisation?"

The non-fraternisation order of the Allied High Command has already proved a failure. Already we can cite cases of American soldiers sent to prison for six months for fraternising with German civilians. And Roosevelt dreams of an occupation lasting fifty years!

The Belgian workers, for their part oppose all participation of 'their' government in this policy of vengeance and oppression directed against the German proletariat."

The Editorial ends on the following note of internationalism:

"Complete solidarity with the German workers. This must be our watchword." There were protests from Belgian Liberal and working class papers.

NOW ON SALE!

GERMANY—The Key to the International Situation

By LEON TROTSKY. December, 1931

INTRODUCTION by TED GRANT 6d.