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# IMPERIALISM AND THE 'PEOPLE'S' WAR

Unless one understands that this is not a "peoples war" regardless of how many people participate in the war and in spite of the fact that many millions of the people will be killed, one cannot fight against fascism and for a lasting peace. This is an imperialist war, like the first world war, only worse: with more acute pangs of decay capitalism.

Earl Browder, Stalinist leader in America, writing in the Oct. 25, 1942 New Masses says, "It is not any supposed disappearance of these innate imperialist tendencies from the United States and Britain that makes it possible to characterize this war as a People's War of national liberation, but the fact that the war, breaking out of the bounds of imperialism, has presented all nations, even the imperialist powers, no alternative between destruction at the hand of the Axis or victory on the condition of alliance with the Soviet Union and the liberation of nations, the abolition of the colonial system."

Only Browder could jumble together so many errors in so few words. If this is a people's war of national liberation, whom are we to fight? It is true we will have to fight the Axis if we desire national liberation for the oppressed masses and national minorities. But it is equally true that we must oppose the leaders of the United Nation bloc, the British and the United States, if we want national liberation for the colonial masses. It is not England, with the support of the Roosevelt group, that prevents the freedom of India? The British are using troops in India to hold down the Indian revolution, a sufficient number that if released could drive the Japanese out of Burma. The Chinese are using over a million troops to hold in check the Red Armies of China; enough troops if released to drive the Japanese out of China. This is the policy of the United States for whom the Nationalist Government is just a puppet.

The same can be said of the masses in Africa and in South America and other parts of the world. The United States and England are trying to use the war to hold in check the national liberation of these peoples. Facts a mountain high prove this, and the slimy words of Browder cannot alter this. If one wants to fight for the "Peoples War of National Liberation" one must not only fight the Axis powers, but also the two leading nations of the United Nations bloc.

## FALSE DEFINITIONS

Let us follow Browder's argument a little further. He says that even though imperialist TENDENCIES exist in the United States and Britain, there are other "facts" that make for a peoples war. But there are more than imperialist tendencies in these countries. These countries are IMPERIALIST countries in every respect.

What are these "facts" that Browder speaks of? That, "all nations, even though imperialist powers, have no alternative between destruction at the hands of the axis;" or "victory on the condition of an alliance with the Soviet Union, and the liberation of the nations, and the abolition of the colonial system."

These so-called "facts" or "conditions" are ludicrous.

In the first place Imperialism is not measured by superficial characteristics. A "socialist" writer, Smith, made a similar error at the turn of this century when he wrote a book on "Imperialism" and labelled every aggression in history as "Imperialism". Browder commits the opposite error. He labels the war a "People's War" simply because Imperialism uses the CLOAK of demagoguery, simply because it adopts some of the FORMS of a people's war.

## POLITICS AND ECONOMICS

But imperialism is measured in terms of economics. The breakdown of capitalism has reached the most alarming stage of all history. This FACT alone is worth more than all of Browder's fancies. The breakdown of capitalism has necessitated AGAIN, after an interlude of 25 years a NEW REDIVISION of the earth for markets, for spheres of influence and investment. These are the REAL facts. The simple circumstance that the masses of the world are considerably disillusioned with the empty talk of "save the world for democracy" and that the Imperialists must use even more left-wing demagoguery - such as "the Century of the Common Man", the "Four Freedoms", "The Atlantic Charter", etc. - these simple things do not in one whit alter the true character of the war.

The age of national liberation UNDER CAPITALISM is long long past. The Russian Revolution proved this conclusively. The whole history of the succeeding 25 years when not a SINGLE colonial country on earth was able to throw aside the fetters of imperialist domination, proves it even more conclusively. Domination of a colonial nation has changed from one power to another many times in small countries; i.e. Ethiopia, but NOT ONCE has imperialist domination been overthrown entirely.

It is quite true that American Imperialism has developed new FORMS of domination; instead of outright military occupation it is most frequently content to have ECONOMIC OCCUPATION and to rule through puppets like Varga, Trujillo, Batista, and Giraud. But again, the basic factors of imperialism are still there - export of capital and through it the exploitation of the colonial masses for the benefits of the home capitalists. Let the 5 cent a day wages in Liberia and the 25 cent a day wages in Porto Rico testify to American Imperialism. Let the vast empire of Britain, bled white under the Lion's Whip, testify to the classic imperialist role of John Bull.

If further testimony be needed let us just check the personnel of the Imperialist camp: Stettinius of J. P. Morgan, Nelson of Sears Roebuck, Knudsen of General Motors, young Rockefeller of the Oil Oligarchy, Bullitt of the Boston Bankers, Morgenthau, Forrestal and a host of other agents of finance capitalism, Willkie, the errand boy of J. P. Morgan, Jeffers, czar of Union Pacific, Wilson, head of General Electric, and so on and so forth.

It is no novelty for Stalinism suddenly to have discovered the virtues of Imperialism. On October 31, 1941, Molotov discovered the same "virtues" in Germany that he now discovers in the United Nations. "Germany", he said, then, "is in the position of a state striving for the earliest termination of the war and for peace, while Britain and France... are in favor of continuing the war and are opposed to the conclusion of peace."

The Stalinists hailed the invasion of Poland by Hitler, just as they today hail the invasion of North Africa by the Allies. At that time the invasion of Poland was a generous act that brought "peace and order to the territory of former (!) Poland". And when the Nazis marched into Norway they had the full support of the Norwegian Communist Party, which remained for some time the only legal party in Norway outside of the Quislings.

Browder's main argument of course is the fact that the Americans are allied with the Soviet Union. But does that change the character of imperialism? Is the war being fought on the Soviet program or on the Wall Street program? Does the Soviet Union dictate the policy (e.g. on the second front) or does Wall Street?

Browder has the whole thing turned upside down. It was not the governments of Washington and London that made a right about face. It was Stalinism that came crawling to the Allies after the Soviet Union was invaded by the fascist hordes. With or without an alliance of the Soviets with the United Nations, the Soviet Union is FORCED to fight a war of survival against the axis - (as well as the other imperialists, which Stalinism still denies).

If the United Nations have not yet attacked the Soviet Union it is only because of two factors: first they prefer to deal with one enemy at a time, and secondly - even though the Soviet Union and the Social Revolution are the MAIN enemies, - the policies of Stalinism have so weakened the revolutionary strength of the world working class and the Russian masses (through the 20 year pact and such articles as those written by Browder) that this battle can be postponed for a little while yet.

## "WAR OF SURVIVAL"

Browder says the "imperialist powers" must fight a war for survival, therefore they must form an alliance with the Soviets, liberate the nations, and abolish the colonial system. But so too must the Axis imperialists fight a war of survival against the United Nations as much as England and the United States; but it does not follow that the Axis must have an alliance with the Soviets (even though Hitler used Stalinism in the first part of the war) nor does it follow that the Axis will liberate the Nations or abolish the colonial system.

Browder says, that is part of "...the problem of winning victory for the United Nations, including capitalist and socialist countries,....it is clear that we do not place the abolition of imperialism in our program for victory."

If the leadership of the United Nations are imperialist nations and the Axis are imperialist nations, then it should be clear even to a child that a victory of either side CAN ONLY BE AN IMPERIALIST VICTORY.

If the Peoples War (?) in the United Nations imperialist war camp dominated and if this were a war of national liberation it would be short work to free India and release the million troops holding in check the Chinese Red Army. To give up extra-territorial "rights" AFTER the Japanese have already taken these robber rights is like a bankrupt capitalist in the 1929 depression who "give up" the right to live as high and wild as he did before.

The number one Stalinist stooge in the United States says, "according to our understanding of imperialism, its abolition requires the abolition of capitalism itself". This is absolutely true. But like the social-democrats of the first world war, Browder is wise enough to add a few correct sentences, with Marxian "clarity" in order to cover up his betrayal.

But in trying to cover-up his foul crime against the working class, he leaves clues that anyone can see. In plain English, Browder says he wants a United Nations victory under American and British Imperialist leadership with the continuation of imperialism and CAPITALISM AFTER THE WAR. Browder wants a CAPITALIST PEACE.

Historical conditions and the facts of the day prove that PEACE; a lasting peace from fascism, hunger, unemployment, starvation and new wars can only be had on the basis of SOCIALIST PEACE. If you have a capitalist peace of the United Nations you have not destroyed FASCISM. You have only defeated its growth in a couple of nations on the basis of DECAY CAPITALISM; and as this decay sets in other "victorious nations" FASCISM will grow and march toward Greater power, until stopped by a victorious proletarian revolution.

Nov. 10, 1942

## the CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY in India

The rumblings of revolution in India and the sympathetic stirrings of the masses of all Asia have struck terror into the hearts of the rulers of society and their lackeys. To dam up this tide, or at least to channelize and direct the revolutionary storm (the philistines think this is possible!), the bourgeois apologists and socialist traitors have come forth with slogans for national liberation, freedom and independence. In India even the native bourgeoisie through its Congress Party calls for a Constituent Assembly, visualizing through this instrument the establishment of a "democratic" capitalism and a bourgeois republic.

It is not accidental that the Allied powers are so anxious today to have a "democratic" constituent assembly and parliament set up in Germany and other parts of Europe. In every case this policy rests upon the hope of arousing the masses to overthrow the existing rulers, make way for the would-be rulers, but to stop there, not to touch the socio-economic system itself, not to damage capitalism and imperialism.

For similar reasons, Wall Street favors a constituent assembly in India--as a club that will smash British rule, so that the dollar and American trade can penetrate freely. That is what American Imperialism means by a "free" India.

The opportunists and liberals cannot conceive of the coming revolution as anything but a bourgeois revolution, to develop industry and trade, remove the semi-feudal relationships in the village, create an independent peasantry owning its own land - in a word, to establish an independent capitalist nation in India, with its own national bourgeoisie that will perpetuate the exploitation and oppression of the masses, but for its own benefit. The Constituent Assembly is their road to this "orderly", "democratic", state.

### CHARACTER OF THE INDIAN REVOLUTION

Abstractly, since the bourgeois national revolution has not yet taken place in India, its occurrence should be a progressive step forward in comparison to the present situation. But it is an unreal and impossible conception. History has outdated it. Imperialism will not permit it.

Modern imperialism has spread its tentacles to the four corners of the earth. The economic and financial power of the imperialist overlords has so interpenetrated the colonies, taken so dominant a control of agricultural, industrial, commercial and financial life, has so weakened and reduced the native bourgeoisie,

landlord and feudal elements, and at the same time has so intertwined their interests with each other and with those of imperialism, that a social revolution cannot help but strike at the very roots of the whole structure - imperialist and capitalist relationships that crush the masses to the point of destruction.

The revolution cannot stop at the point of an independent capitalist nation. As soon as it gets under way the recipients of its blows against the landed estates, the taxes, the debt structure, the conditions on the plantations and in the factories, and against the foreign army of occupation, will be the imperialist masters, and with them the native bourgeois and landlord forces.

Capitalism today is a closely interrelated world system. On a world scale it is rotten with decay. A bourgeois nationalist revolution in the colonies, if unable to go beyond the capitalist stage, would be still-born, unable to cope with the problems of society. The revolution will pass through many complicated agrarian and national phases, but it will go on to a proletarian revolution. Nothing else is on the order of the day.

But precisely because of the backward and relatively undeveloped economy, the proletarian revolution must take into account the specific situation in the country, the particularly the immense majority of peasants. The policy of the revolution must fit the special agrarian and democratic demands. The vast masses of the peasantry scattered in hundreds of thousands of villages constitute an intermediary class unable to follow an independent policy of its own. They must be won as allies to the proletariat, which though small in numbers, will prove the decisive leavening force in the struggle for the new society.

#### MARCH SEPARATELY, STRIKE TOGETHER

In the present epoch of capitalism in its death throes, the struggle for the right of self determination, for independence, is progressive if coordinated with the social revolution because it involved a struggle against imperialism. The proletariat participates in this struggle with the aim of winning the leadership of the struggle from the hands of the reactionary native bourgeoisie.

The fight for independence can have a healthy and positive meaning only insofar as it is advanced as an auxiliary to the class struggle, in order to win the peasants and petty bourgeoisie as allies to the working class, and to neutralize sections of the bourgeoisie. The slogan of the right of secession can be of use against British imperialism only on the basis of independent political and organizational action by the Indian workers and their party. Given this policy of independent action, and alliance with

the peasantry is possible in the struggle for soviet power; a goal which can be achieved only against the national colonial bourgeoisie whose concept of independence extends only to its own interests.

Insofar as the petty bourgeoisie and even the national bourgeoisie are able or are driven into struggle with British imperialism, the workers and their Party will follow the strategy of marching separately and striking together with these forces, but maintain political and organizational independence in order to drop this auxiliary policy as soon as their betrayal makes it necessary, and to fight at all times the reactionary aims of the bourgeoisie and its subservience to one or another of the imperialist powers.

An expression of this policy of marching separately and striking together is around the slogan of the constituent Assembly. In general, we may say that the attitude of revolutionists to this tactical problem is governed by the question: will agitation for the Constituent Assembly advance the revolutionary struggle or not at the specific moment. Naturally, the answer and the approach will differ, depending on the situation. Let us consider it first in regard to Europe.

#### THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IN EUROPE

In Spain in the 1936-37 revolution a slogan for a constituent assembly could only have been reactionary, since the Spanish revolution had already passed the democratic phase. Such a slogan could not hope to arouse the masses. Furthermore, in bourgeois democratic (Loyalist) Spain there was no point in calling for a constituent assembly to establish what already existed. The problem was posed on a far higher plane: a soviet Spain or a fascist Spain.

In Europe as a whole today the masses have already gone through the period of bourgeois democracy, of national capitalist states. The Draft Program of the R.W.L., written in 1939, therefore quite correctly says:

"In fascist or countries of extreme reaction the advancing of the slogan (for a Constituent Assembly) by the reformists and "liberals" is a historical anachronism serving no revolutionary purpose. Bourgeois democracy, which must not be confused with democratic demands, is no solution for the problems of Fascism, altho the bourgeoisie can revive it for short periods, to head off the class struggle. It cannot solve the problems of the working class. The masses are already far beyond that stage. The attempt to establish a constituent assembly in fascist countries can lead only to still further disillusionment and demoralization within the masses. We fight at all times - especially under fascism - for democratic rights, for the social revolution; we fight against the democratic stage of national revolution or its establishment."

What, however, should be our policy on the Constituent Assembly in the colonial countries? We can best answer this by considering the question in two periods.

## THE ASSEMBLY IN THE NON-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

The colonial masses who have had no experience with even formal bourgeois democracy, cannot view it in the same way as the European proletariat who have seen the old hag give birth to the monstrous offspring that now destroys their very lives.

Even though bourgeois democracy and national capitalist states are out-lived, decadent, unable to solve the major problems of society, the colonial masses still follow their bourgeois leaders. The consciousness of the masses lags far behind the hidden underlying social changes. This has been the case throughout history. The American Revolution started without any idea of "Independence". Even after the fighting began the leaders of the colonists addressed George III as their "Most Gracious Sovereign", and considered themselves "his faithful subjects". The French Revolution began with no idea of ending the monarchy: two years of revolution were necessary before Louis XVI was deposed. And how many understood the character of the Russian Revolution?

In the colonies, in the pre-revolutionary period, or after a defeated revolution (as in China after 1926-27), the slogans for democratic rights can therefore find a fertile soil in the consciousness of the masses. Especially the idea of the constituent assembly, the democratic representation of the entire people, is elementary, simple, and apt to embrace really vast popular strata. It can become a rallying cry of the masses, a slogan to develop a mass movement against imperialism.

Discussing China of that period, Trotsky wrote in the "Problems of the Chinese Revolution":

"The democratic slogans contain for a certain period not only illusions, not only deception, but also an animating historical force... The Slogans of formal democracy win over, or are capable of winning over, not only the petty bourgeois masses, but also the broad working masses, precisely because they reveal to them the possibility, essentially illusory, to oppose their will to that of the generals, the country squires, and the capitalists. The experience of the Russian Revolution shows that the proletariat... can draw behind it the peasantry fling it against the front of formal democracy embodied in the Constituent Assembly, and switch it to the rails of soviet democracy. In any case, these results were not obtained by simply opposing the soviets to the Constituent Assembly, but by drawing the masses towards the soviets while maintaining the slogans of formal democracy upto the very moment of the conquest of power and even after it."

(Trotsky argued against the "leftism" of the Stalinists who counterposed the soviets to the Constituent Assembly; his arguments apply equally well against the rightism of the present-day Cannon Trotskyites, who counterpose the Assembly to the Soviets, and propose the Assembly in place of the soviets).

Obviously, the slogan for a Constituent Assembly and democratic slogans in general can be progressive only to the extent that they become a basis for action,

not talk. Furthermore, they must be properly subordinated to the goal of the Social Revolution, to the slogans of arming the workers and peasants, the 8 hour day, the confiscation of the land, the revolutionary solution of the needs of the people. To make the Constituent Assembly the center of the struggle, that is, to elevate democratic rights above the class struggle, is to drown the useful aspects of the struggle for the Assembly in a swamp of democratic illusions, to deceive and tie the hands of the masses, and in the end to negate even the struggle for democratic rights.

## IN THE REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION

India today sees her opportunity in Britain's difficulties. This is true not only for India's weak and cowardly bourgeoisie, but even more for the workers and peasants, who are forcing the pace. Under conditions of revolution, the gap between consciousness and social reality begins to close up, the masses are on the march, the problem of rallying the masses takes on new forms. The fundamental questions of the road to power pose themselves; in relation to them the Constituent Assembly occupies only a minor tactical position, even though on the surface it may at times seem to fill a primary place.

The Marxists raise as immediate slogans for action, the call for soviets, seizing the land, nationalizing the banks, industry and transport, establishing workers militias and a Red Army, arming the people, and so on.

On the other hand, the slogan for a Constituent Assembly has now been pushed forward by the Indian bourgeoisie and its Gandhis and Nehrus as a slogan in opposition to soviets, to sabotage and derail the revolution. Marxists expose the character and aim of the bourgeois agitation for the Constituent Assembly, and point out the need for action now, without waiting for the Assembly. As Lenin said in April 1917: "Life and the revolution make the Constituent Assembly recede into the background".

It is not at all inevitable that the Indian revolution must go through the parliamentary, constitutional stage. No one can say in advance just what stages and forms the revolution will pass through, how long these will last, or which will be telescoped and combined with others. If in the revolutionary situation no mass movement develops for the Constituent Assembly, as is the case now, revolutionists will take advantage of this to press all the harder for soviets and for revolutionary action.

But if a mass movement does develop, as is likely, revolutionists should participate in it - wresting the leadership from the bourgeois forces. Revolutionary participation will take the form of a demand for universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage, lowering the voting age to 18 years, and a demand of the authorities in power to immediately call the Constituent Assembly. They will expose the bourgeois propaganda for a Constituent Assembly, point out that even if convened it will be useless if the bourgeoisie controls it. They will explain to the masses that only the arming of the workers and peasants, the

building up of the soviets, the strengthening of revolutionary power, will force a call for the convening of the Constituent Assembly under the control of the people.

The experience of the Russian Revolution is of value in this connection. There, the demand for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly grew constantly. The conflict about the Assembly occupied a large place between February and November. The first Provisional Government, following the February stage of the revolution, promised the convocation of an Assembly. But it did not set a date, justly fearing that once convoked it might prove uncontrollable. The promise itself, however, acted as a spur to the demand, a movement in which the Bolsheviks participated fully, using the resistance to summoning the peoples representatives as a big point in rallying the masses against the bourgeoisie. Lenin wrote:

"Shall a Constituent Assembly be called?...Yes, and as soon as possible. Yet, to make it successful, and to have it convoked, one condition is necessary: increase the number and strengthen the power of the Soviets...organize and arm the masses. Only thus can the Assembly be assured." And "Our party...recommends the peasants...take possession of the land at once... The Constituent Assembly will work out the final laws with regard to the soil... It is out of the question to wait until the Assembly is called. We do not in any way dispute the right of the Assembly to determine in detail the final laws regarding the handing over of the land to the whole people and the forms of its administration."

Later on, in August, after the consolidation of army rule, Lenin envisaged the probability of bourgeois forces dominating the Assembly: "Unless a new revolution takes place in Russia...the Constituent Assembly either will not be convoked at all, or it will be a 'Frankfurt talkfest', a feeble and useless collection of petty bourgeois mortally frightened by the war and by the prospect of the bourgeoisie 'boycotting the government'..."

Pressed, the government finally set a date for the Assembly and opened the election campaign. The Bolsheviks presented their own candidates and their own program. They saw that the Kerensky "military measures in the village obviously threaten with fraudulent fixed elections to the Assembly", and that the Kerensky convoked body would be packed. But, occurring in a time of extreme class tension, the elections provided a great opportunity to the Bolsheviks to counterpose their program to the bourgeois program. (Nor did the Bolsheviks wait for the Constituent Assembly - the conquest of power through the soviets occurred six weeks before the Assembly convened).

In Russia the elections aroused great popular interest. Other possibilities may occur in India. Where there is no real mass movement, the bourgeoisie might even, to mention an unlikely extreme, try to "sneak in" an Assembly, through hasty fixed elections based on the units of the Congress Party. A revolutionary party could correctly boycott such elections as being unrepresentative and establishing a "government" unable to cope with the needs of the people.

In Russia the Assembly, elected before the conquest of power, did not convene till after. It is not excluded that in India it may be convened by the bourgeoisie, even under conditions of dual power. Under such circumstances it could at best return a vacillating, compromising petty bourgeois majority. Under bourgeois pressure it would lay down a reactionary counter-revolutionary program. Or, under pressure of the masses, it might adopt a "liberal" program of concessions. In either case the masses would soon learn the futility of this last hope of a bourgeois solution. The Assembly would solve nothing; a crushing blow would be delivered to parliamentary illusions, clearing the road for a revolutionary solution. Revolutionists might boycott or participate in the Constituent Assembly, depending on which tactic would better advance the revolutionary struggle; but even participation would be with the aim of exposing the Assembly, of agitating for soviets and a new revolution. Under no circumstances can the Constituent Assembly stand in the way of revolutionary action and the soviet conquest of power.

By its very nature, the Constituent Assembly is a form of bourgeois state rule. Its organization and structure lead to this. The structure on which it rests, and from which it is elected, usually exists beforehand, at least in part, in the local, regional and national bourgeois organs of government. While the task of electing delegates to an Assembly that will lay down laws and policies for a new social or political order is a new function for these organs, the weight of bourgeois ideology, the electoral procedure and rules, the apparatus involved, all operate as tremendous obstacles to the revolutionary forces. More. With the bourgeoisie in power, or even under dual power, the structure lends itself to bourgeois and military pressure, to packing with right wingers. The Assembly itself, in convention assembled, will mirror this set-up by adopting a bourgeois program and delegating power to some body, or itself proceed as the executive arm.

But the revolution throws up many altogether different organs, soviets, local peasant committees, cooperatives, military units, etc. If, as in Russia, the conquest of power occurs before the Assembly convenes, the new state could, if necessary, go thru with the Assembly. It need not repeat the error of the Bolsheviks in allowing to convene an Assembly whose members had been elected long before, on the old basis. It could reorganize the whole election machinery, substitute more representative organs, and possibly eventually incorporate the Assembly with many modifications in a subordinate role into some part of the temporary peasant structure.

The main point to remember, however, is that the role of the Constituent Assembly in this period is basically reactionary, that the slogans of democracy must be the fulcrum of agitation and that even the demand for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly must be subordinated to the demand for Soviets and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

# 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 Mitsubishi.

## 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.

## NOTES ON THE WAR in NO. AFROCA

The United Nations drive in North Africa, as a prelude to a Second Front in Europe has great importance. As we pointed out several months ago, that the main theatre of war after Stalingrad would be North Africa, it is necessary to deal with those factors of the campaign that the kept press refuses to deal with. In the first place, the acts of American Imperialism against France, Vichy France, was the same as the acts of Japanese imperialism against United States at Pearl Harbor. It was a stab in the back without warning. It was treacherous action against a nation that had good relations in the State Department. Pearl Harbor is considered betrayal, while the invasion of North Africa is considered a masterful stroke. As we have said before, it depends upon whose imperialist shoe is pinched. Let us not fall in the trap of the imperialist propaganda. We condemn all the imperialist acts--as well as point out the sluggish sleepiness of the bourgeois democrats in the countries that allowed such an attack.

## FRANCE AT NAZI MERCY

As soon as the American forces revealed their power in French Africa, and the British campaign against the Rommel forces gained momentum, the Fascists sent troops into Unoccupied France, thereby tearing up the 1940 treaty. This was hailed by Stalin and all the exploiters representatives as proof that the United States action in Africa relieved the pressure on the Red Army. Nothing is farther from the truth. The closing in of winter on the major sections of the Russian front slows down German power to strike. The reorganization and attempt to find more men and material to carry on, because of the blood letting in Russia is another reason. And above all, the German fear of changing class relations, of social unrest in France, that could not be held in check by the small forces of occupation, forced the transfer of large forces to western Europe. Europe proper can only be held in check from social revolution by more Nazi forces this winter.

## FRANCE AND THE AMERICAN INVASION OF AFRICA

It was not the American invasion of French Africa that brought about the crisis in the Petain regime. Rather, it was the developing class struggle against Laval, and his forced labor policy that laid the basis for disintegration at the top, among the government representatives. This enabled American imperialism to divide and gain forces for their cause. This social unrest in France and in Italy laid the basis of the British campaign in North Africa from Alexandria, and the American campaign from the west.

## THE FOUR FREEDOMS

Now that Willkie and others have spoken, the Roosevelt regime comes out to say that the Atlantic Charter is in realith a world charter and includes Asia. This is contradicted by their action in the Pacific among the native forces of the Islands where they have armed forces, and in their action

in the Indian revolution to say nothing about their action in support of the Chiang Kia Check dictatorship against the Chinese Masses.

But the north African campaign really brings this farce to a head. Where the Americans took over power, they assured the French exploiters that they would return these possessions to France after the war. They stated that they only want to pass through to get at Hitler. But what about the native masses who have been exploited under the iron heel of French Imperialism? This shows that these peoples of Africa and Asia, as well as Latin America are not included in the "Atlantic Charter". It is a white man's imperialist "charter" against the exploited masses and also against the Axis powers--that is all.

Regardless of the African Front and its importance, and above all the developing Indian Revolution, which will cast aside the best plans of all the imperialists, the key to the world situation still remains the battle front in the Soviet Union, the defense of the Soviet Union, and the extension of the October Revolution.

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