

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MAY 22 1946

Bulletin of the Provisional International Contact Commission

Volume 8 No. 5

10 cents

CONTENTS

Revolutionary Perspectives - Spring 1946

Starvation Menaces World Masses

Can There Be A Democratic Army ?

Situation In Belgium

May Day Manifesto

International Notes

Issued by the Revolutionary Workers League for the International
Contact Commission.

Affiliates

REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN
Central Committee of the Red Front of Greater Germany
Revolutionary Workers League of the U. S.

Mail address of publishers

DEMOS PRESS

708 N. CLARK STREET, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Labor Donated

REVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVES-SPRING 1946

1- The imperialist victory of the Allies is being followed by a typical imperialist "peace". The salient characteristics of this "peace" are:

a- A world economic crisis. The U.S. is temporarily still living in boom times but such a condition will rapidly change. American capitalism, as the major victor in this war, is living off the misery of billions of humanity's oppressed, but the enormous increase in its productive potential by the war (from 70 billion to 199 billion of actual production), plus the inevitable curtailment of production under a "peacetime" capitalism are already laying the visible seeds of the future crises, diplomatic struggles and military conflicts.

b- Revolutionary and pre-revolutionary struggles by an ever-increasing number of workers and oppressed. In the few months since V-E Day there have been major struggles of the oppressed in Indonesia, China, Egypt, Palestine, Burma and India - just to mention a few. In Greece the counter-revolution, led by Xists and Royalists who are murdering hundreds of proletarians with impunity, is now on the march. With American imperialism as its bulwark the reaction is everywhere sharpening its sword. In the background, while social-democracy, Stalinism and the centrists are attempting to take the steam out of the impending proletarian Revolution before it develops.

c- Capitalist reconversion has created - or rather brought out - the sharp contradictions of the capitalist system. Total world production is being systematically curtailed. In the midst of hunger and death, scarcity is being organized on much lower levels than wartime production. The capitalist system can produce only for murder. It can not produce for the needs of humanity. The big war-time market of the capitalists of the world - the war machine of their governments - is now gone. But the war greatly increased the imperialists productive potential. Even with Japan, Germany, Italy, Franco and other lesser powers eliminated as serious rivals in the great economic game, there is nowhere near enough markets for the surplus in stored goods, stored capital and in productive potential. England, for instance, must find a market far surpassing her prewar market or else crisis will develop rapidly. America, as the banker of the world, and as the only nation with its productive machine intact, is reaping the harvest. Its capital and goods are flowing into the veins of world economy; but the market is not limitless. Furthermore as each nation gains partial recovery it will cut into the American outlets. In addition, too, the markets are not yet secure by any manner of means from the "ravages" of revolution which threaten the economic lifeline of Uncle Sam.

d- There is a sharpened struggle within the "bloc" of victorious powers itself. As far as the U.S. and Britain are concerned this struggle goes on beneath the surface, but it is furious and determined. Wall Street is undermining its ally at every turn. Even the promise of a four billion dollar loan to bolster a badly-weakened Britain is given only on condition that the Empire

system takes no other step to its death knell. The sterling bloc is being systematically shattered and American Imperialism is making sharp inroads into the economy of Australia, New Zealand, India and other places. But if the struggle between these two powers is more hidden than open, the struggle of both of them against the Soviet Union is bursting forth into violent flames and gigantic proportion. As part of the world-wide counter-revolution of American and British Imperialism, there is a sharpening of propaganda, diplomatic and other moves against the degenerated workers state. The imperialists are consolidating their counter-revolutionary activity under the facade of the United Nations Organization. Temporarily, due to the treacherous policies of Stalinism, the Soviet Union is being held hostage within this new League of Brigands. It is part of an instrument whose knife is sharpened to cut its own throat.

e- A number of fascist forces and fascist parties have temporarily been defeated. For the moment imperialism is utilizing social reformist and centrist agencies to control the working class. Throughout the world there has been a momentous growth of the "left arm of capitalism", particularly the Stalinists. In every country they are playing as treacherous a role as Noske and Scheideman. Within the labor movement these are the props which hold capitalism up. They are a halter around the neck of the Revolution. Fascism, however, has not been defeated. New forms of it will emerge; the victorious powers are merely waiting for the most propitious moment, when the energies of the proletariat are completely dissipated, to bring forth its "right arm".

UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION

2- The UNO and the International Bank are the major cleaks under which American Imperialism will carry out its foreign policy and its world domination. If the plans of the Wall Street government materialize, UNO will be more like Metternich's Holy-Alliance of 1815-48, than the former League of Nations. After the defeat of Napoleon, European reaction organized itself under the banner of the Holy Alliance, to maintain despotic monarchies and reaction throughout the world. The Holy Alliance was not merely an instrument to fight off external enemies; it was a weapon used to intervene in the internal affairs of the various nations. Its spies and secret agents covered the important parts of the world; and whenever necessary Metternich mobilized the armies of Czarist Russia, Austria and others to checkmate national revolutions. The UNO will unquestionably function in the same manner. That it is interested in internal affairs is quite evident by the subjects brought up in its debates - Greece and why Britain remains there with a large army; the regime in Bulgaria; and many others. Plans are being perfected for an International Army; and with such an army naturally will go a spy system. It is no accident that the U.S. plans to increase its international propaganda and to combine its spying forces under one head. Unquestionably these functions will be channeled into or coordinated with machinery planned for the UNO - particularly if the Soviet Union gets out of this nest of counter-revolution. At one stage or another such an eventuality seems inevitable. The UNO is an instrument for counter-revolution pure and simple. It will divide up the world into trusteeships and other forms for the maws of world imperialism. Incidentally too it will give some buffer concessions to Stalinism. But the UNO will vigorously oppose any changes in the world brought about by the efforts of the masses themselves. It will become the champion of "law and order" on an international scale - if, that is, the

plans laid down for it materialize. One thing is certain, however, the UNO is NOT an instrument of peace. It is a closed door behind which preparations for the new war and implementation of the policy of counter-revolution takes place.

ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES

3- American Imperialism today overshadows the whole world. American dollars are being siphoned into every country both to gain new economic bases for Wall Street and to prop up tattered economies which are rocking on the brink of revolution. The redivision of the earth, as a result of the 2nd world war (remember the promises, incidentally, of "no territorial aggrandizement!") is much less of a solution, as we have indicated above, than ever before in history. Productive potential is more at variance with the markets of the world than ever before in history. Consequently despite this "victory" of American Imperialism the conflicts between the powers will grow worse, not better; only this time the conflict will be on a grander scale and will be between greater blocs of nations than ever before. The United States bloc (domination) at present includes North, Central and South America (with the exception of Argentina), the whole Pacific - Japan, China, and innumerable islands, and parts of North Africa. Other territories, however, are being sucked into this bloc by the sheer economic weight of Uncle Sam. Britain, at present still holds a top position as far as the number of people and square miles in its empire directly, but her position is shaky and declining. The Soviet Union gained quite a few buffer areas as a result of this war, the Baltic, Balkans (exclusive of Greece), parts of Manchuria, Poland, Kurile Islands, the eastern half (but least industrial half) of Germany and many other spots. In the relations between these powers it is the United States which has the greatest weight at the moment. (Conditions would alter radically if the Soviet Union experienced a political revolution that would overthrow Stalinism and reorient the S.U. toward world revolution). The British Empire is in decline and at the mercy of the dollar. The Soviet Union, operating on the Stalinist nationalist policy, has great internal weaknesses, - the problem of reconstruction (90 billions destroyed), replacement of manpower (20 million men made dead or wounded or removed in some other form from the labor force), and above all its isolated position as a degenerated transition economy surrounded by desperate and declining world capitalism.

4- Under these circumstances America can again cloak her war preparations and her counter-revolutionary role in shibboleths about being a "peace-loving" nation. Obviously American capitalism can afford to wait longer than the others, who need immediate remedies. America is at present "twisting the lion's tail", egging Britain on to political, diplomatic and eventually military struggles against the S.U. In a similar manner Britain attempted to push Germany in the same direction, prior to the war. The major capitalist enemy of the Soviet Union, however, is the United States. The MAIN driving force for war and counter-revolution is to be found here in our country. Consequently the role of the proletariat in the U.S. becomes the most decisive of all the sections of the world working class. The "peace" moves of Uncle Sam must be exposed for what they are. American troops are occupying millions of square miles of territory - China, Japan, parts of France, Germany, North Africa, a whole slew of bases in the Pacific and in the Atlantic. Compared to the STRATEGIC occupations of Uncle Sam, the Russian occupation in central Europe and Asia are second-rate. American Imperialist armies, navies and air forces encircle the globe ready to

fight any place at any time, with the most favorable military position for such a fight of any power. And America intends to keep that position. Its armies will stay in China for at least 18 months, according to General Marshall. General Hershey is demanding a permanent draft. The Washington government is rattling the saber in all its propaganda. It is even utilizing Churchill and his anti-Soviet position as a weapon to arouse American public opinion to the "dangers" of war - dangers which it itself creates and which it carefully attempts to hide as defensive moves. The U.S. is not putting forth its position openly; it can wait. But it supports reaction everywhere, and it utilizes other powers for its ends.

ROLE OF THE SOVIET UNION

5- The Soviet Union, like all other powers, faces a major economic problem in the post-war period. The war has cost her an enormous loss in manpower and in destruction of productive facilities. With the end of the war, however, she is unable to get adequate credits - particularly from the U.S. - to replace some of her industrial machine. In addition too there is the constant threat of new intervention and encirclement by the imperialist powers. A Marxian leadership in the Soviet Union would attempt to resolve this problem by all out aid to the world Revolution, by stimulation and leadership to the struggles in India, Europe and elsewhere. But Stalinism, despite a re-aroused flare for left wing phrases, still functions on a reformist plane. Everywhere its parties become part of the bourgeois state or at least no worse than a loyal opposition to it. As a consequence of this position the foreign policy of the Soviet Union suffers enormously. Economic difficulties and lack of credits force Stalin to strip conquered territories of their industrial machine and other valuables, thus incurring the wrath of the native population and creating unfavorable world-wide reaction to Soviet policy. The possibility of intervention against the Soviet Union forces Stalinism to attempt to gain still more buffer territory, to avoid encirclement. The latest steps by Stalinism in Iran and Manchuria are part of this world-wide policy. In Iran Stalin hopes to get oil and to establish sufficient bases to put the squeeze on Turkey for control of the Dardanelles. The present "independence" of the Dardanelles means that they are under British control, since Turkey is essentially a satellite for John Bull. Britain and the U.S. can thus pose as proponents of the status-quo with USSR as aggressor. In Manchuria Stalinism has stripped the country of a great amount of machines and is maintaining a number of important bases. To the whole world, however, the propaganda of Allied Imperialism gives the Soviet Union an appearance of Hitler-like aggression. This latest concretization of the policy of "socialism in one country" creates harmful sentiment against the Revolution everywhere. Internally Stalinism may be on the verge of a crisis. The world press has been hinting of a possible change in the Soviet government for some time. Speeches by Polish General Anders and by Ernest Bevin hint that Stalin is no longer his own master, that the military bureaucrats control him in very much the same way that the Army controlled the civilian administration in Japan prior to the present war. Unquestionably there will be, or is, some militant reaction by the proletariat of Russia against the new five year plans, the new over-emphasis of producers goods and the consequent continued low standard of living and suffering. Resolution of the conflict in the Soviet Union may not come for some time; on the other hand any of a number of events may set the fuse at any moment

- revolution abroad, or some other factor. The five year plans of Stalin will not, in any case, be realized - no matter what fraudulent statistics Stalin puts forth to show that they are. The stratification of the population, the enormous concessions to the manager caste and to other reactionary sections of the Soviet Union, will affect the economic plan. As Soviet economy grows and becomes ever more interrelated, with one part interdependent on other parts, it is ever more necessary - for completion of the plan - to have social peace. But the very existence of the Stalinist bureaucracy indicates that no such peace exists, that peace is maintained in the Soviet Union only by means of the sword, the N.K.V.D., and the slave labor camp. Sooner or later this bauble will burst. Its effect on the economy will be felt much sooner. We may witness again, before long, attempts at new Moscow Trials and other desperate measures by the bureaucracy to extricate itself. The Marxist policy to the Soviet Union remains the same: we defend the remnants of October against any and all imperialist powers and their satellites, we press for Political Revolution inside the Soviet Union. but wherever the Red Army marches against the Revolution, or uprising of the people, in any foreign country, we call for military resistance to it and proposals that will speed the Political Revolution.

UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

6- Under the present circumstances a United States of Europe in any form seems excluded. But that does not mean that the "dream" of M. Briand may not again be put forth in the very near future - particularly if the imperialists can liquidate the power of the Soviet Union. Mr. Truman and Mr. Atlee are both proponents of this idea. But a United States of Europe under capitalism would merely be an attempt to take the anarchy out of the scarcity of production, and reorganize Europe on a lower standard of living in a more ORDERLY manner. By eliminating conflicting currencies, trade practices, and various economic barriers, by making a number of rivers tariff free and traversible for all powers, the Imperialists hope to avoid economic crises and the resultant social cataclysm as long as possible. But such a United States of Europe can only be organized by the force of arms. Undoubtedly Truman will attempt to take some steps in that direction in the various "peace" conferences now being projected - such as creating free access to various waterways, a number of custom unions and stabilizing various currencies so as to facilitate regular trade inside Europe. We must emphasize, however, that the projected United States of Europe under capitalism - even if it ever does come into being - can only be based on an economy of scarcity, and an ORGANIZED reduction in the standard of living.

ECONOMIC CRISIS

7- Six months after VJ Day there is more starvation, more hunger, more death than ever before in our generation.

Hundreds of dead are being picked up daily in the streets of Europe. The situation in Asia is probably much worse. But the actual deaths from starvation do not in the least give the full picture. On February 6, 1946 the Emergency Economic Committee for Europe stated that 140 million people in Europe must live on a calory quota of 2,000 per day and that another 100 million must live on 1,500 calories daily. Since then there has been a further reduction. The same committee insists that at least 2,650 calories are necessary to prevent disease

and famine. Thus 240 million people in Europe alone are slowly being starved to death. Again, the situation in Asia is unquestionably much worse. It is certainly no exaggeration to say that at least a billion human beings are today in the process of slow starvation. Humanity will pay an enormous toll for this in the future.

The picture drawn by the Emergency Economic Committee is not thorough or rounded. For even if the people of Europe could be given the full quota of calories there would still be a great deficiency in fats, vitamins or minerals. And over and above all this there is a shocking lack of coal, clothing and shelter.

According to John Corson in a recent issue of the Nation: "though these countries have been liberated their people continue to suffer. Reports accumulate of hunger, cold, distress, starvation and death. International collaboration has not yet fed or clothed these people as well as the Germans did."

Eight million homeless nomads are living in the Berlin area alone, according to the London News Chronicle. Dozens of millions of others are roaming the earth, without food, shelter or any kind of economic security. Transportation is so thoroughly disrupted everywhere that even though production of food is 97% of the 1935-39 average, hunger will be rampant everywhere. Clinton Anderson, United States Secretary of Agriculture, estimates that we need 30 million tons of food for distribution abroad to keep the population eating at the rate of 2,000 calories a day - a slow starvation rate.

Under the capitalist system and its vicious UNRRA this will be an impossibility. The UNRRA agreement provides that 90% of the money contributed by any nation for relief must be spent within that nation. Thus Britain is supposed to provide millions of tons of food for relief abroad, while its own people are meagerly fed. The result is obvious - Britain just isn't providing the food and UNRRA finds itself with a pronounced shortage.

The economic crisis is reflected in many other things. Reconstruction is a slow, tedious and painful process. Russia has 90 billions of wealth destroyed. France, Britain, Italy, Germany, Japan, have all been hit hard. Railroads still do not run. Roads need repairing. Homes must be rebuilt. Europe and Asia need capital to rebuild. Every nation on earth is knocking at the door of Wall Street begging for that capital. Britain has already negotiated a 4 billion dollar loan. France has sent aged Leon Blum to the United States to beg for 2½ billions. Under the profit system the powers that be refuse to expropriate the wealth of the rich in order to reconstruct society. On the contrary, the very reconstruction is planned in such a way that the rich in each country will grow even wealthier.

All of Europe and Asia is suffering with higher prices, black markets, low wages. Prices in China are hundreds of times what they were prior to the war. France has devalued the franc to less than half of what it was worth previously, and on the black market the franc is worth far less. The situation is strikingly portrayed by the fact that 5,000 transport workers in Japan asked for and received a 500% increase in pay. Prices must have risen enormously for the Japanese capitalists to have granted this raise. Runaway inflation is rampant throughout the world. 7 Millions of a total of 35 million Poles were lost in the war. Such is the crisis in Europe.

Only the United States, in the capitalist world, has avoided hunger and crisis so far. American Imperialism is feasting off the misery of the rest of the earth. It is the banker and warehouse for all the other powers. But this "exceptional" position can not last for long. The economic contradictions within the American scene (dealt with elsewhere in this plenum) will soon equalize the misery and hunger the world over.

REVOLUTION AND PRE-REVOLUTION

8- The class struggle is on the march. Strikes, revolt, revolution. Demonstrations in Japan. Shipyard workers stop for 8 hours in Denmark. Negro workers in Dakar, French West Africa, organize a general strike. Taxicab drivers in Brazil strike against new police regulations.

Two hundred dead, 1200 wounded in a Revolutionary demonstration in Bombay India. One dead, 100 wounded in student demonstrations in Cairo, demanding that British Imperialism move out. Dozens killed in the struggle between Jews and British in Palestine. A full scale war in Java by the Indonesian people against British and Dutch imperialism (both adequately supplied by the United States with the instruments, training and cash for this counter-revolutionary endeavor). The Indian revolution flared up again.

In China there was civil war for months. Momentarily there is a relative "peace". But the issues are clear and the direction of Chinese society is obvious. The Stalinists, under the pressure of the masses, have expropriated 15 million dollars worth of factories as well as 300 kilometers of railroad in the Kalgan area. The factories are reopened under government control. Unquestionably masses in other parts of China are demanding a similar "solution" to their problem. Paper agreements worked out by General Marshall can not cancel the class struggle.

In Seoul, Korea, giant demonstrations demand complete independence. In France, constant and continuing strikes. The same for Italy. Strikes in the U.S.

Readers Digest for February carries an article on the failure of American occupation in Germany and the growth of underground movements and hostility.

The Revolution is definitely on the order of the day all over the world. Similar facts can be adduced for every country. Nothing can check the revolt of the masses.

THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

9- Against this growing tidal wave American imperialism is throwing loans, UNRRA "relief", the United Nations Organization, the world bank to stabilize currency, and various and sundry intrigues in each country. Primarily the present intrigues include utilization of reformist forces to quell the storm, as well as open military dictatorship in other areas. The counter-revolution is well planned and organized. It has been thought out for years and years by Roosevelt, Churchill and their ilk. It has millions of troops at its command and billions in dollars. But the counter-revolution, too, has many weak spots. Such weak spots include revolt of the Indian sailors at Bombay, strikes of the Royal Air Force, strikes of American soldiers in every part of the world, as well as civilian strikes for higher wages everywhere. The ability of the Allies to wage military struggle

against native populations has not yet been tested adequately. In Java the British have been forced to withdraw a number of Indian divisions which were "becoming unreliable" as a result of the struggles of the Indian masses back home. American Imperialism has not yet been put to such a test; but it is admitted by innumerable generals that the American Army is no longer an effective fighting force. Can it be welded in that direction? That will depend on the struggles of the proletariat at home. Unquestionably as times become worse the fighting power of the counter-revolutionary armies will deteriorate; the example of revolution will seize and inflame the worker-soldiers, just as the October Revolution has a disintegrative effect in the armies all over the world.

PEOPLES FRONTISM

10- Momentarily the fascist parties have been put into the background, but Trotskyism, Stalinism, and Social-Democracy have again come forth with the theory of "combined" governments, or Peoples' Fronts, to prop up the decaying bourgeois system. At this time this theory represents the greatest obstacle to the Revolution. This subject is dealt with in another document published in the April International News.

MILITARY POLICY

11- The atomic bomb, radar, long-range planes and rocket bombs are rapidly changing military strategy and tactics, and with it are having enormous effect on foreign policy. Sea and land obstacles are rapidly becoming indecisive in the determination of military conflict. Consequently the buffer policy of the Soviet Union, as well as the theory of impregnability of the U.S. from attack, are weakened considerably. In future wars we may witness large underground cities, decentralization of productive facilities and other innovations. But we shall not see the end of war - so long as capitalism exists. The new, terror weapons do not end war; they merely make it more scientific and destructive and they bring forth new and better defensive weapons. Against the atom bomb and rocket bombs, America is perfecting radar shooting anti-aircraft. After the first war people were led to believe that poison gas and the airplane made wars "impossible" because they would be so "terrible". Actually, however, the 2nd World War occurred because of basic economic antagonisms and contradictions - similarly with the new weapons. They do not end wars; they merely make wars more unbearable. Only the proletarian revolution can end wars forever... In one sense, however, the new weapons favor the proletariat. It takes considerably more industrial integration to make an atom bomb than an ordinary bomb. New industrial techniques make each process dependent on each other. The working class is thus in a favorable position to fight war by strikes and mass action. A strike of one million workers in key plants can completely disrupt the capitalist machinery in this or any other country. Guerrilla battles will be more, not less effective in the coming struggles. The bourgeoisie, of course, understands this as well as we do. The next war will demand, on their part, a much firmer dictatorship than even this one. The reorganization of American and other economies for the next war - unless revolution intervenes in the meantime - will require social reorganization along lines of open dictatorship.

THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIAN PARTY

12- The end of the first war saw a gigantic sweep toward bolshevism. The end of the first war came on the heels of the October victory. This post-war period has not yet seen such an upswing. The masses and their political parties are still considerably confused. Even those organizations which are opposed to compromising with capitalism are filled with ultra-left and sterile theories. But the impact of Revolution, particularly in Europe may see rapid developments to the left and the emergence of new and powerful Marxian parties. This process will not be automatic. The International Contact Commission will have to intervene more adeptly into the situation to help it along. But we may anticipate that the development of such movements in Europe and the development of one or more victories will have momentous effect upon us here in the United States. The world is so integrated today that an important change in one country will seriously affect social and political relationships in all other countries. We are living in hectic times, in a period of capitalist decay; and we must be prepared for the giant sweep of history to World Revolution.

"In twenty years nothing happens", Marx used to say, "and then in a few weeks the work of 20 years is done."

READ AND SUBSCRIBE TO

THE FIGHTING WORKER

Popular Organ of the REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE, U.S.A.

Affiliated to the INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION

The Fighting Worker contains popular analysis of national and international events; featured articles on economics; and interesting columns of comment.

Subscription rates are \$1.00 a year. Single copies 5¢

Bundle orders of 10 or more sent to you postage paid at the rate of 1¢ a copy. SPREAD THE FIGHTING WORKER!

Order from DEMOS PRESS, 708 N. Clark St., Chicago, Ill.

STARVATION MENACES MASSES OF WORLD

Only one year after the fall of German Fascism, the masses of the entire world are learning the bitter price of the imperialist war for the world: mass starvation and disease.

On all seven continents, in parts of even the most prosperous lands, from north to south pole, world capitalism has bred that fourth horseman of the apocalypse-famine.

When American workers sit down to their daily meals of over 3,000 calories, let us all think of our European and Asiatic brothers who are moving closer to starvation with each passing meal, or lack of it.

EUROPE

GERMANY: Officials predict widespread starvation in western cities. One-fourth of displaced children have tuberculosis and more than half are suffering with rickets and measles, about half of whom die. Except for the Russian zone of occupation, all other zones have cut basic rations by over one-third. British officials may cut rations to the starvation level of 750 calories - the same as inmates of Belsen concentration camp received.

AUSTRIA: Ration has been cut from 1550 calories daily (minimum for maintenance of health, according to capitalist doctors) to 1200 calories, and the full ration is rarely available.

HUNGARY: Deaths from starvation are increasing. Bread ration of about five ounces is almost the entire diet. No sugar available except a third of a pound monthly for pregnant women and mothers of nursing babies. Infant mortality very high.

BULGARIA: Faces starvation. Drought cut 1945 food production by 40 percent. Ration is slightly more than half a pound daily, including six ounces of bread. Home grain supply exhausted.

JUGO-SLOVIA: Disease and starvation growing. Imports of meat and fats must increase "if disaster is to be averted." Seed is lacking.

RUMANIA: 8,000,000 workers and peasants face famine during the four months before harvest. Some peasants eating acorns or corn mixed with grass.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Stocks inadequate, especially fats. Seed, machinery and fuel scarce. Labor shortage.

POLAND: Only great imports prevented starvation during the winter. Meat, cereals, grain are short.

FINLAND: Living mainly on imported grain. Meat, fats and sugar available on black market almost exclusively.

GREECE: Imports prevented starvation in winter, but with UNRRA imports cut to 55,000 tons when 79,000 tons were needed, situation is again serious.

ITALY: Stocks of wheat lowest in history. Dried and preserved foods and meat and milk practically exhausted.

FRANCE: Rationing has been extended to cafe meals. Wheat sowing still 20 percent below pre-war norm.

THE NETHERLANDS: Getting along fairly well, though rations are at 2300 calories a day, most of which is bread (a pound a day).

BELGIUM: Bread ration cut to 14 ounces a day.

BRITAIN: Rations sufficient for health, though at same low level of wartime and equally monotonous. Powdered eggs no longer being distributed.

RUSSIA: Rationing over in most products, but diet is poor.

SWEDEN: Bread, butter, meat and sugar still rationed; bread ration cut six percent.

NORWAY: Fresh vegetables, fruit, eggs, bacon and meat still unobtainable for workers.

DENMARK: No rationing, but workers are asked to reduce consumption.

SWITZERLAND: Ration is 2300 calories daily.

SPAIN: Scarcity of staples and climbing prices pinch workers and farmers. Widespread black market. Grains, rice, potatoes, meat and olive oil are scarce.

PORTUGAL: Bread ration cut to five ounces daily. Needs grain.

ASIA

CHINA: Famine in large provinces. Peasants are eating grass, bark and mud. Hoarding and food speculation widespread. Need 2,000,000 tons of food imports.

JAPAN: Ration is 1050 calories for urban workers.

INDIA: Needs at least 4,000,000 tons of food (twice as much as China) to stave off severe crisis. Famine widespread.

PHILIPPINES: Famine reported in northern Luzon and Cagayan valley. UNRRA relief on a small scale. Widespread hunger. Black market large.

LATIN AMERICA

MEXICO: Now imports about 1/7 of her food.

SO WHAT?

The only countries which have a relative surplus of food are: United States, Australia and New Zealand, Argentina, Brazil and Cuba.

All other countries in the world are suffering from one degree or the other of starvation. And even within those fairly prosperous countries - none of which singularly enough, has suffered directly from the horrible devastation and depredations of the imperialist war - there is a growing unemployment, with thousands applying for relief. In the General Motors strike alone more than 2,500 workers families applied for relief.

ACTUAL STARVATION HAS BEGUN AMONG THE IMPOVERISHED MASSES OF EUROPE AND ASIA.

Rapidly developing famine and diseases resulting from malnutrition arises in part from war's devastation and over six years of interrupted crop production, and also from a succession of natural catastrophes.

Severe droughts in the last two growing seasons have reduced wheat crops in several of the world's principal granaries, with the exception of the U.S. The rice supply has been cut by war in Burman and Indo-China, by typhoons in Japan, by failure of the moisture-bearing monsoon in India, and by drought in China and the Balkans. One of the reasons for the severe fats and oils shortage is the poor catch of British and Norwegian whalers.

The Combined Food Board reported to the UNRRA Council, meeting in March in Atlantic City. Although world wheat and flour exports during the 12 months ending June 30 will be about 60 per cent above pre-war averages, they will be about 60 per cent below the minimum requirements of a war-ravaged and drought-stricken world. Those figures show that pre-war conditions were approximately 120 per cent better than they are at present. This is the real cost of the war in terms of human starvation.

Wheat and flour requirements are set at 20 million tons; estimated supply is only 12 million tons. The American Occupation Commander's request for 1 1/2 million tons for Japan plus the catastrophic crop conditions in India where 10 millions of people are expected to die of famine this year has made the starvation problem "insoluble in full" (Combined Board's statement).

U. S. RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for most of the deaths rests squarely on the U.S. imperialist government. Not because it removed meat rationing last September as some critics claim, but because the enormous surpluses of grain present in U.S. granaries have been withheld from the starving millions throughout the planet. The U.S. is pursuing a policy of using food as a political weapon. As it did in the first world war's aftermath of famine and pestilence, the U.S. government will furnish food (in tiny quantities) only to countries which will permit U.S. intervention in their internal affairs. This is the price the U.S. demands. Concessions in the stricken countries are the basic requirement. The U.S. is thereby enabled to enter country after country under the guise of bringing in a tiny supply of food and fight for economic and political control against the native capitalists and rival imperialist forces. The U.S. goes so far as to utilize the services of the very same food politician used in World War One, later even more notorious as the "engineer of starvation" - ex-president Herbert Hoover - who was called on to survey how food could best be used for the political ends of American imperialism.

But already the U.S. government is withdrawing its meager assistance. Assistant

Secretary of State Will Clayton told the UNRRA Council that the U.S. will withdraw from UNRRA at the close of 1946 for Europe, and March 1947 for China. UNRRA is officially supposed to die on January 1, 1947.

Meanwhile, the U.S. government has fallen steadily behind in shipments of food, principally wheat. Scheduled to send some 225 million bushels to Europe, the U.S. government appears unlikely to reach the 200 million bushels level.

Within the U.S., fats and oils consumption is 45 pounds per person yearly, compared with 3.3 pounds in Poland and 4.8 in Italy. These are not the worst examples; they are merely typical comparisons.

In the face of the facts of U.S. imperialist planned restriction of diets of workers of Europe and Asia and his own testimony of "20,000,000 children who not only are badly undernourished but are steadily developing tuberculosis, rickets, anemia and other diseases, Hoover has the brazen gall to declare that the U.S., under President Truman's leadership, would "scrape the bottom of the barrel in extending help." Workers of America will remember that this is the same Hoover who denied them relief in the depths of the depression of the 1930's.

Most of the world is on short rations - concentration camp rations - while the U.S. remains temporarily outside of the deadly orbit of human starvation wrought by the second imperialist war for the world. Weakened though they are by starvation, the workers of these other countries will yet find the means of smashing the bonds of the deadly system which starves them, which reduces them to eating grass and bark and roots. They look to the comparatively prosperous workers of America for assistance. It is our duty in revolutionary struggle against the parasitic monster of American imperialism to come to the aid of our unfortunate brother workers by extending to them sympathy, physical assistance and propaganda aid to rid the world of the capitalist system of imperialist wars, unrivalled luxury of a tiny minority of exploiters, and the starvation of millions.

DON'T FORGET
TO RENEW
YOUR SUB!

CAN THERE BE A DEMOCRATIC ARMY?

Secret hearings by a special board, headed by General Doolittle, are striving to determine what is wrong with the "caste" system of the Army. That such hearings are held at all is a testimonial to two incredible happenings in American Army history which indicate the widespread hatred for the officers and the entire army:

1.- The widespread soldier strikes and demonstrations against the demobilization slowdown of last January, against discrimination in favor of officers and use of soldiers as imperialist police;

2.- The lagging recruiting for the armed forces which has seen volunteer figures fall from 40,000 weekly last September to less than 17,000 in late March.

Goaded by the lagging recruitment drive and the manifest hatred for officers and the entire army system, Chief of Staff General Eisenhower admits that "certain reforms" are in order, and explicitly comes out against "any assumption of human superiority." Eisenhower is trying to cover up the well known fact that army officers are considered "superior" to soldiers in every way and therefore receive superior treatment.

The board itself is heavily packed with officers, despite Doolittle's claim that all members were once privates. But the majority of board members were once officers too, and once an officer means only always an enemy of the soldier.

WHY THIS INVESTIGATION?

From a broader historical standpoint, the American ruling class has to make this investigation into the reasons for hatred for the army. The breaking up of army discipline in the recent soldier demonstrations is the handwriting on the wall to the entire old conception of the army, which has clamped a ruthless terrorist dictatorship down on the soldiers.

Truman and Eisenhower have some interesting historical models to follow in this process of "democratizing" the army. Careful examination will show that this so-called process of democratization is its exact opposite, and can result only in more skillful forms of complete officer dictatorship over soldiers. Look at Germany.

General Von Seeckt, military leader of the 100,000-man Wehrmacht, after the smashing of the Kaiser's armies, made a prolonged study of the reasons why the Kaiser's large and well-disciplined armies were torn apart by uprisings of soldiers against the officers. Hitler and the Fascists studied this problem too. As Joseph C. Harsch points out in detail in his book "Pattern of Conquest" (and William Shirer in small part in "Berlin Diary"), the Fascists, after considerable study, came to the conclusion that the more obvious forms of discrimination in favor of the officers had to be removed, that the soldiers had to feel the officers

were friends, not enemies. Accordingly, the German armies had officers and soldiers wear the same uniforms. The salute as a badge of continuous servitude of soldier to officer was universalized, with everybody saluting everybody else. The open, festering sores of discrimination were concealed. The worst features of the Kaiser's army of superior officers and "inferior" soldiers were alleviated in part. As a result, Harsch imagined the Fascist army appeared more "democratic" than the U.S. capitalist army.

Harsch points out how he suggested such changes to General Marshall, then Chief of Staff, who made no comment. But a comment should be made today: measures to remove the worst evils of officer discrimination are not in the slightest way concerned with democracy. What is being tried is the creation of a more efficient officer control of soldiers, a more complete dictatorship by alleviating some evils.

GRIPES AND MORE GRIPES

The specific gripes soldiers have against officers are legion. But they group themselves into a few major parts. As one soldier points out there is "neither freedom nor democracy" in an army that claims to have fought for both. Officer dictatorship is point one on any gripe list. It manifests itself in a hundred different ways. One is the courts-martial system, whereby officers try soldiers, but not vice versa. To cap this, officers serve as "defense" counsels for soldiers. For the identical offense, an officer at Selfridge Field, Michigan was reduced from Colonel to captain, whereas a master sergeant was given five years and a dishonorable discharge. All this is called erroneously the "caste" system of the army. Much more is involved than caste distinctions. One soldier has called it "the evils of the totalitarian state incorporated into the Army." This is a lot closer, though it misses the decisive thing: the social structure of the army, its division into officers and soldiers, follows closely the division of capitalist society into capitalists and workers. The officer is the boss of the army; the soldier is his slave. That is the living, class relation which constitutes the social system of organization of the American army.

From this arises the long list of evils of discrimination in favor of the officers: discipline is a process of disciplinary measures (or punishment) against the soldiers who are terrorized into fearing the officers more than the "enemy."

Most of discipline is concerned with teaching the distinctions to be accorded to officers.

Officers are considered gentlemen - by Act of Congress; soldiers are considered as dirt under their feet, which gives the direct answer to Eisenhower's fraudulent claim that he does not believe in human superiority. Well, General, the law of the land says the officers are superior.

Officers receive higher pay, better food, table service, better clothing, more time off, including terminal leave at the end of their tour of duty, whereas soldiers' leave time is lost irretrievably.

Soldiers' papers (so-called) are really only another means for the War Department through the officers - imposing its anti-soldier, anti-worker viewpoint on the broad masses of soldiers.

CAN THE ARMY BE DEMOCRATIC?

Already the Army has announced that from 1948 on officers and soldiers will wear identical uniforms, except for insignia of rank. Some prize ignoramuses, like General Stilwell, declare that "no caste system exists in the services," and defiantly proclaim: "Don't let anybody tell you the Army and Navy are not democratic. They are." He opposes "fraternizing" between officers and soldiers.

Can the Army be democratic? Can it become democratic?

Can J. Pierpont Morgan wear the same clothes as a steel worker, receive the same food, the same pay, be elected to his position of power?

As long as there is capitalist dictatorship in industry and in government, whereby the mass of the population is excluded from voice, vote and control, the army too will remain a total dictatorship of the big capitalists and financiers. No amount of alteration of uniforms, elimination of "off limits" signs and cutting down of obvious differences in food and quarters can gainsay that fundamental social fact.

The only Army that can be democratic is one in which the enormous mass of workers is armed, in which it elects its officers, in which the armed workers are responsible to workers councils in command of their own government and nationalized industry. This requires liquidation of the American imperialist army in the process of destroying the capitalist state and creating a workers council state on its remains.

WE DEPEND ON

YOUR

CONTRIBUTIONS

TO PUBLISH THE

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

WHAT OF BELGIUM?

Of the countries occupied by Germany, Belgium is recovering fastest. That is, it seems, the claim of the American papers. Belgium has many a time been the object of the curiosity of foreign countries. Formerly one spoke of her as the battle field of Europe. Also as a "ground of experiments." In order to understand well what is going on there it may not be superfluous to recall another evaluation of Belgium this one by Marx, who saw in this country a paradise of the capitalists - no more - nor less.

It is possible that the statement about the rapid recovering "of the country" - a statement that the government exploits abundantly - may be true. If it is so, this recovery can only be attributed to the particular circumstances of the development of the country's economy and to the political climate which is specific to it. To uplift the "country", it was sufficient to continue doing, after the liberation by the Allied armies, what was being done under the German occupation. At that period, Belgian capitalism participated in the German war effort. It is certain that the Belgian bourgeoisie was too well advised to put all its eggs into the same basket. That is why there were two governments, that of London, and that of Brussels, constituted in the absence of ministers by the general secretaries of the ministries. The Brussels government has made possible, if not favored, economic collaboration with Germany. While the London government maintained the flame of resistance. For example, it proclaimed as a patriotic duty the action of burning the harvests and sabotaging the distribution of food to the population, which permitted the bourgeoisie to engage without remorse in the black market forbidden to the working masses. It was the Belgian bourgeoisie, the Belgian capitalists holders of fortunes and not the occupiers - as official history would have it - who created the black market, although afterwards Germany not only adapted herself to it but largely profited from it.

When the allied armies replaced the defeated German troops, the country found a new activity: Allied military loaders admit that without the port of Antwerp the offensive against Germany would not have been as rapid. The port of Antwerp worked at its highest level of output for "victory". After having suffered four years of war economy for the benefit of Germany, the Belgian working class suffered a fifth year for the profit of the United Nations capitalism. The "free" press has described at great length the systematic looting of the country's resources to which the German armies devoted themselves. After the liberation, that which escaped the plundering of the German armies fell into the hands of the Allies. An extra effort for victory is demanded of the workers in exchange for better provisions. The working population has known its first winter without coal it having been reserved for the armies and war production.

The entering of the Belgian economy into the German war machine resulted in a surplus of monetary tokens which was one of the causes of the rise in prices. The liberation government took energetic measures to draw in the bills in excess which threatened the stability of the franc. But in the opinion of the prime minister himself, the effect of these monetary measures on prices was almost zero. The cause? Just as the bill printing presses had to work for the Germans during the first part of the war, they functioned for the profit of the united nations at the end of the war.

Also nothing resembles the government measures applied at the time of the German occupation more than the policy of the National Unity government followed since the liberation with the cooperation of the socialist and communist parties. The masterpieces of this policy are the blocking of salaries (while prices rise), civil mobilization, the prohibition of strikes during certain delays, the prohibition for workers in certain industries to change trades. It must be admitted that with such weapons the government has attained certain results which have their importance. Coal production - one of the main productions of Belgian economy - which had fallen to 25,000 tons in the month of February 1945 now reached nearly 80,000 tons. It is true that in order to attain this result the Van Acker government used close to 15,000 German war prisoners at forced labor in the mines. But it is also true that forced labor of war prisoners and others is among the reconstruction methods of the United Nations democratic capitalism.

The result of all this is that the Belgian worker enjoys wages the buying power of which is half of that which he had at his disposal before the war. And this after a war of almost five years during which he had to work for a bread crust, this is meant in the exact sense of the word. Thanks to the support of the socialists and the communists who collaborate in the government under the sign of National Unity, Belgian capitalism was able to get substantial results, and those results are considered in the whole world as signs of national recuperation. "Liberated" Belgium has not yet seen large social conflicts. Those that break out are rapidly stifled. Nonetheless the cry of victory seems premature to us. Belgian capitalism still has large wounds which National Unity has not yet been able to heal. The last elections prove this. The question of the king shows that the Belgian bourgeoisie is passing through an internal crisis, it is a gift of the world war which opposed one against the other the powerful neighbors of Belgium. As for labor conflicts, they have not yet been posed in their full extent. We have the impression that they will only be posed when the masses of the other countries, harder hit than Belgium by the madness of the capitalist regime, will start moving. That hour will come surely. That is why the success of Belgian capitalism won at this time should simply be considered as temporary.

MAY DAY MANIFESTO

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED EVERYWHERE

May Day 1946 finds the working class of much of the world facing starvation. Hundreds of millions are being systematically starved into slow death in a manner that makes the brutalities of Hitler pale by comparison. The victorious allied imperialists who by their destruction and planned curtailment of productive facilities are responsible for these atrocities are hypocritically salving their consciences before the masses of humanity by throwing them the pathetic crumbs of UNRRA and Red Cross relief.

War's end has brought not relief but an intensification of the miseries of the masses everywhere. Inflation runs rampant all over the world. Black markets, those symbols of the capitalist unconcern for starving humanity, flourish everywhere as they never have flourished before. Tens of millions are already unemployed. American and British arms, aided by the treacheries of Stalinism, have cut world productive facilities as even Hitler, in his days of conquest, never dared. Writer after writer reports that the conditions of the masses of Europe, in Italy, in Greece, in France, in Germany, everywhere, are worse today than they were under the swastika.

This, then, is the fruit of the "most democratic war in history", of the "people's war", of the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms. What a shameful mockery! Imperialism is spreading its tentacles and straitjacketing the oppressed of the world as never before. Never since the Roman Empire has one power controlled the economic and political destinies of humanity as brutal. American Imperialism controls them now.

Temporarily the U.S. is outside the pale of the present depression. It is the centerpiece which temporarily lends strength and supports the rotten structure of capitalism. It has won an unprecedented victory. It has reduced all the powers, with the possible exception of the Soviet Union, to a far lesser importance than they previously held. It has pauperized humanity. Its deprivations, both economic and military, are pouring through the arteries of the world at an unprecedented rate. American capitalism is the driving force for war and counter-revolution.

Wherever the masses anywhere attempt to take their destinies into their own hands, there they find arrayed against them the might of American capitalism. American guns, used by the British are shooting down the masses in Indonesia. American might is checking the revolution in China, in Japan, in Germany. American might bolsters the crumbling British Empire in its struggles against the masses of India, Greece, Italy and innumerable other spots.

To protect its gigantic empire, its domination of the western hemisphere, northern Africa, Asia, and large sections of Europe, American capitalism is preparing for new wars. Today it cloaks those preparations in all sorts of

"defensive" garments. Under the hypocrisy of "peace" propaganda, or a world United Nation order, American Imperialism is maintaining the largest peace army in all history, is preparing all sorts of new atomic and other murder weapons, above all, is strangling all of the world with its tight economic controls, with its mastery of the banking system, its enormous and cheaper production.

The fascist powers have been defeated, but Fascism itself marches on. Fascist undergrounds are openly being tolerated and encouraged. American and British imperialism, are giving moral and material aid to Xists, Royalists, and fascist swine the world over. To take the sting out of the present uneasiness and revolt of the masses, the powers that be are temporarily sustaining reformist and centrist governments. Popular Frontism and Combined Governments have gained a temporary lease on life. World capitalism is again using them, as Kerensky and Scheideman were used after the first war, to demoralize, confuse, dissipate the energies of the masses. But behind the scenes all sorts of preparations are being made to impose new military dictatorships and fascist orders throughout the world - including especially the United States. The fangs of extreme reaction are being nurtured in the background, but they are being nurtured with the most extreme care and on the most lavish scale in all history.

Let us beware this May Day of complacency. Let us not be caught off guard. Fascism is not dead. If the proletariat does not succeed in destroying the capitalist order, new and infinitely more virulent forms of fascism will yet be imposed on suffering humanity. The whole human order is threatened.

May Day 1946 poses, again, the question of either Communism or Fascism. All else is temporary, ephemeral. Those, who like the Socialists, Stalinists and Trotskyists support "left" bourgeois governments are committing a treachery that the working class will soon deal with in unmistakable language. If history has proven anything it has proven the contention of the Marxists that "democracy paves the way for Fascism".

Above all else, that is the issue today. Support of bourgeois democracy, even with the left and shameful phrases of those new Kautskyists, Cannon and Schachtman, can lead only to defeat, to more war, to concentration camps.

On the order of the day are soviets, workers' guards and militia, a struggle at the point of production. All attempts to channelize those struggles into parliamentary fields, into Labor Parties, "Socialist-Stalinist" governments can only lead to failure. As Lenin fought Kerensky and the Scheideman-Hasse government in Germany, so we today must fight Labor Party and Socialist-Stalinist governments the world over. We condemn categorically the left-handed efforts of the Independents in Britain and the Trotskyists everywhere to prop up the bourgeois state by such devices.

May Day is a day of struggle, a day on which the masses of oppressed everywhere must dedicate themselves to a finish fight against capitalist degradation and exploitation. Extend the October Revolution - that must be our watchword. Destroy and defeat the parasitical bureaucracy - Stalinism - which has, in the name of the Revolution, obliterated the major portion of that victory and aided in the resuscitation of the capitalist order.

The imperialist war has solved none of the problems of humanity. In fact it has made them much worse. It has brought no freedom, no liberation. It poses anew the problem of more untiring bloody struggles against the capitalist order. Many lives will yet be sacrificed to bring peace to the toilers of humanity, to eliminate the threat of hunger and tyranny.

But that is the only struggle worth fighting for - the proletarian revolution.

On May Day 1946, although our numbers are small, we of the Revolutionary Workers League and our comrades of the International Contact Commission, call for a struggle of class against class. We extend a fraternal hand to the workers everywhere who are fighting the tyranny of their own exploiters. Unite against the common foe, world capitalism. For a New Revolutionary Party of Marxism. Unite for a struggle against starvation and war, for the victory of Socialism and a Workers Council Republic.

FOR THE UNCONDITIONAL FREEDOM OF ALL COLONIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE UNDER THE HEEL OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM.

FOR THE NEW COMMUNIST (4th) INTERNATIONAL.