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ORGAN OF THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE AUSTRALIAN
COMMUNIST PARTY

Editor L. L. Sharkey

EDITORIAL

THE decision of Federal Cabinet to nationalise banking has thrown the bourgeoisie into a hysteria of rage and fear. They paint awful pictures of the worker losing his savings, the clerk his job, the farmer his farm, along with the ruin of the small shopkeeper if the Government proceeds with its plan to nationalise the private banking concerns.

In addition, we are to see the end of "individual initiative," "personal freedom" and liberty in general, according to the mouthpieces of monopoly capitalism — posing as the defenders of the savings of the toilers and the "liberty of the individual."

Their outcry is, as usual, arrant hypocrisy and blatant scare-mongering. On every occasion a progressive measure is mooted, the same profit-hungry pack howl against it as a threat to the poor.

These bourgeois demagogues are concerned neither with the poor nor with liberty. It is fear for their own profits and for the "liberty" to suck the blood of the people through the control of the financial institutions that causes these parasites to raise their voices in a crescendo of hate.

Since the foundation of Australia a handful of wealthy men have increased their wealth and power through their ownership of the banks. In Britain and elsewhere they have done so for centuries. In what way has this private ownership of the banks helped the toilers? Think of the thousands of small farmers and property-owners who every year are expropriated by the banks. Of what use was so-called "free" banking to the people in the dread depression years? Contemplate the slums, and low wage standards, and one realises the prostitution of the press when it is used to depict the government's proposal as "Nazism" and a blow to the toiling people. The rage of the millionaires and their men arises from the fact that banking is not an extremely lucrative for them but is a vital centre of monopoly capital. The bourgeoisie, incapable, to the nationalisation of key industries, metal, coal, transport, etc., and the twin of banking: Insurance.

In the pre-war depression it was the bankers who demanded and forced a wholesale reduction of our living standards—the so-called Premiers' Plan.

The decision of the Chifley Government to nationalise private banking is of far-reaching economic and political importance. It is the biggest step ever taken by the Labor Party. The Chifley Government has been chiefly characterised by its conservatism and tameness. Why did it decide upon such a drastic step (for a liberal reformist government) as Government control of banking?

Undoubtedly, the answer to this is to be found in the approaching depression, in fear of the effect of the British and American economic crises upon the weaker Australian economy and the adverse decision of the High Court against the Government's

decision which required local government bodies to do their business with the Commonwealth Bank.

The position of the Labor Government itself is threatened by impending economic crisis. The Menzies Fadden reaction has been impatiently awaiting economic dislocation in order to renew its offensive against the Labor Governments and scramble back to power.

As recently as the last Federal Elections Mr. Chifley was still fascinated by his dream of a post-war "golden age." The system of price-control and wage-pegging, of considerable public works and the attraction of British and U.S. capital and immigrants by the million would, in his view, not only avoid crisis but pave the way to a "wondrous age of industrial-commercial expansion." This Keynesian fantasy has been dissipated already by the crisis which grips world capitalism. Hence the need for action.

Nationalisation of banking, while it has the united opposition of the bourgeoisie, enjoys the undivided popular support of the workers. Its announcement was received with joy in the workshops and mines. The Labor Party itself, from its inception, has preached the doctrine of bank nationalisation, sometimes as an "alternative" to Socialism.

The Douglas Creditors have sowed many illusions among the masses about finance and its control as a magic cure-all for the ills and evils of capitalist society. While nationalisation of banking is an excellent measure to provide the government with means to combat depression, nevertheless, the reality of nationalisation, while capitalism remains the predominant economic form, will soon dispel the illusions created by Labor Party and Douglas Credit propagandists who painted too rosy a picture of the benefits of public control over finance. To insulate Australia against economic crisis requires also nationalisation of the basic industries in order to permit of economic planning.

The new democracies of Europe and the Soviet Union are reporting amazing economic successes in their post-war reconstruction, precisely because not only banking, but the commanding heights of industry too are in the hands of the State, which permits of the various economic plans of these countries.

Neither is nationalisation synonymous with "socialisation." Nationalisation, as we have known it in the Australian railways, is in reality State Capitalism — a goose that lays golden eggs for bondholders but does not raise living standards of the rail workers any higher than those in the surrounding private industries. It can be a "paradise for the exploiters and a hell for the workers," Lenin wrote.

Everything then depends on the type of nationalisation — the terms under which the State takes over from the former private owners.

If it is on similar terms to that of the railways or the 12% paid to shareholders in the Bank of

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England by the British Government, it can strengthen capitalism as a whole and, far from raising living standards, would (like the enormous annual interest bill on the railways) tend to depress the standard of living. Hence, the terms of the nationalisation must be critically examined by the labor movement.

Nationalisation, however, is important politically. It encroaches on private capitalism and renders ultimate socialisation the easier, as Lenin pointed out in his work *Approaching Catastrophe*. The bourgeoisie is putting great pressure on the

Labor Government on the issue of nationalisation of banking. Labor Governments in such circumstances are inclined to waver, develop weaknesses and give way to the will of the bourgeoisie.

A vast mobilisation of the masses and the most vigorous campaign must be waged in order to rally the utmost support for the government's proposal in order to counteract the danger of a retreat on the government's part and to prepare the way for further inroads upon private ownership of the means of production, for the nationalisation of the basic industries of this country.

BRITAIN'S CRISIS

L. L. SHARKEY

THE crisis in Britain is not a cyclical crisis of over-production. It is not the same type of "depression" that Australia experienced in the 'thirties and which is obviously overtaking the U.S.A. now.

It is the "general crisis" of monopoly capital, of imperialism, which is manifesting itself so sharply in Britain at the present time.

British imperialism has long been in decline. This was clear in the period between the two world wars. From the conclusion of World War I till the outbreak of the Second World War Britain had a permanent unemployed army living on the dole, numbering millions. Recall the "depressed areas," the derelict industrial areas which once served an overseas market.

The war created a market for the British capitalists, as the Government purchased everything that could be produced. Now the war-created market has vanished, the old chronic crisis manifests itself, albeit in a different form.

The crisis of British imperialism has been rendered more acute by the war. In pre-war times the unemployed army and chronic "depression" reflected the gradual loss of Britain's premier position as the "workshop of the world" and the chief imperialist power controlling a colonial empire embracing a population sometimes estimated as high as 500,000,000 people.

Britain's early supremacy was based on the possession of coal and other vital raw materials which served as a basis for the early development of capitalism. New industrial powers greater than Britain, such as the United States and Germany, arose to dispute possession of the world market, not to mention lesser imperialist States and a general world-wide industrialisation, which also transformed the British Dominions and, to a lesser degree, penetrated even into the Colonies (India).

The first world war visibly weakened Britain's position, just as it accelerated the development of monopoly and imperialism and generally strengthened the position of U.S. capitalism as against Britain.

British monopoly-capital showed an ever-growing tendency towards that parasitism referred to in

Lenin's *Imperialism*; to become a rentier living on overseas investments. This led to the decline of plants and equipment in the British heavy industries, which technique has notoriously lagged behind that of up and coming rivals (U.S.A. and Germany).

Lenin's law of the uneven development of capitalism, while it worked to Britain's advantage a century ago, to-day has made British capitalism its victim insofar as British capitalist industry lagged behind that of its rivals, and far behind the new post-war colossus, the United States.

Let us examine the coal position in order to see what has been happening. Fifty years ago, Britain still retained her monopoly of the coal market and on the surface seemed likely to continue to do so. The coal barons drew enormous profits from coal and re-invested practically nothing from them in modernisation of the mines, nor did they do anything to improve the lot of the miners workers—the Union was fought ruthlessly even on the most moderate demands for reforms.

The First World War undermined the position of the British coalowners. Mines were opened in Europe and the Far East whose production was cheaper. America and the Ruhr continued to advance. Oil began to compete with coal.

As a result of the criminal policy of the "private enterprise" coalowners, British mines are today out of date; 20% of the black coal is taken out of the seams by the old pick-axe method; in 1945, 1% U.S.A. Modern mechanical haulage in the mines is almost unknown.

This results from the policy of the coal barons which they tried to maintain their position and beat their British miners to a practical starvation level. In most collapsed. Britain, the former home of King Coal, could not produce enough to satisfy her own needs. Production fell from 287,000,000 tons in 1913 to 235,000,000 in 1938 and 195,000,000 in 1944.

Exports ceased and American coal supplied ships even in British Mediterranean ports. There

are 70,000 less miners than before the war and it is claimed that not one young man in ten years has entered this underpaid, overworked, ill-equipped industry. Today, the mines need at least 100,000 new workers. In an effort to halt the catastrophic results of the "profit motive" in the coal industry, the mines have been nationalised by the Labor Government with the tacit approval of the Tories because of the hopeless mess in the industry. The coal barons do not lose a halfpenny, they have been more than generously compensated by the Atlee Government.

Comrade Berlioz, in *Cahiers du Communisme*, summed up Britain's decline very neatly:

"To understand what is going on, we must go over the whole history of England from the eighteenth century, follow step by step the development of capitalist production there, first in the period of free trade professed by the Manchester School and its cotton manufacturers who supplied the whole world, then in the imperialist period of the Birmingham Unionists. We will only give the broad outlines.

"It was because of its abundance of coal and minerals that Great Britain stood for long at the head of the capitalist nations. For decades everything bowed before the triumph of this country, which had rapidly become a gigantic industrial town, intermediary between all the peoples who received manufactured goods from her and supplied her with food and raw materials.

"This tremendous development of commercial production — it was in England that Karl Marx was best able to study the laws of the system and its evolution — naturally led British capitalism to be the first to show the characteristics of imperialism, defined in masterly fashion by Lenin: concentration and formation of monopolies; fusion of bank capital with industrial capital and creation of a financial oligarchy; export of capital, etc.

"Great Britain had also been the first power in Europe for territorial division of the world. In 1815 she already possessed a vast Empire; she was in command in Canada, the Antilles, Bengal, Australia, the Cape, Ceylon, etc. India's subjection was completed in 1856. She was in a good position to round off her conquests in the years after the colonial struggles of the last quarter of the nineteenth century (Egypt, South Africa, Burma). In 1914, the British Empire included 331 square kilometres of land and 400 million inhabitants, almost a quarter of the earth's population.

"In 1862, British capital invested overseas amounted to 3.6 milliard francs; in 1914 it reached almost 100 milliard, and the colonies held first place on the list. According to an economist whom Lenin quotes, if England's national income had nearly doubled from 1865 to 1898, in the same period income from abroad had increased nine times. If 'training the Negro to work,' as Lenin added, 'is the merit of imperialism, the danger of imperialism is that Europe will shift the burden of the physical toil of heavy industry onto the colored races and

itself be content with the role of rentier, and in this way perhaps pave the way for the economic and political emancipation of the colored races."

"In these few words is summarised the parasitism of imperialism. Great Britain gradually took to living idly on the exploitation of her Empire and her bankers' investments there. To get an idea of this economic parasitism, 'the gangrene of imperialism,' read the vivid pages in which Victor Berard (*England and Imperialism*) depicts the lives of the English lords.

"But in this way the asted shareholders of Britain neglected the fundamental law of the uneven development of capitalism. They fell asleep on the achievements of the past, took no interest in the modernisation of the decrepit basic industries, while other countries were arising, making up their leeway, taking possession of British markets: Germany, the United States. For a long time only half the British imports were paid for by export of goods, the balance being secured by income from the Empire and overseas.

"In the First World War British imperialism changed its policy with the aim of correcting a new and unfavorable relation of forces. Yet the cost was high; it hastened the tendency of the Dominions to become industrialised economic units gradually breaking away from London; it gave to the colonial national movements an impulsion that was hard to keep in check.

"From then the crisis of contradictions within the Empire has continued to develop. It was greatly assisted by the last war, which so lessened Great Britain's world position and increased that of the United States. Half — if not more — of the British investments in the world were lost. The deficit in the balance of trade (£385 million in 1936) is no longer compensated by income from investments, big colonial tributes are no longer coming in; from a creditor, she has become a debtor nation; America doles out credits and takes advantage of this bounty to try and impose on her the abolition of preferential tariffs which, to a certain extent, still make the Empire a unity, protected against rival imperialisms."

Such is a thumb-nail sketch of the history of the British Empire, its rise and decline.

Frederick Engels, too, long ago at the time of Britain's industrial expansion posed the question to the Manchester Liberals of what their answer was to the spread of capitalist industrialisation and commercialism over the world and the consequent restriction of markets. "Where is thy answer, Liberalism," he asked.

Today, Britain has reached the position foreseen by Marx and Engels. There is no capitalist answer — neither Toryism, Liberalism, nor Labor Party reformism can recreate the conditions of the early period of capitalism which gave Britain industrial pre-dominance and an easy conquest of the greatest colonial Empire in history. Germany, Japan and other imperialist states that sought to establish simi-

lar empires have gone down, exhausted and in ruins, in the effort, because they were not faced with the conquest of backward "colonial peoples" but could win such empires only through world wars against the most powerful imperialist states, headed by Britain and U.S.A.

The desperate struggle of German imperialism, too, compelling Britain to fight two world wars in a failing effort to keep her pre-war imperialist position, has enormously accelerated the pace of decline of British imperialism.

The other great and decisive factor is the national revolutionary movement in the British colonial empire.

India could no longer be "held by the sword," it is plain that it was but a matter of time when the British overlords would be forcibly ejected. So India has been given dominion status and self-government while the British ruling-class manoeuvres to retain as many key positions as possible and save what it can from the Indian debacle by utilising the divisions and discords created by the Indian reactionaries: the Princes, wealthy Moslem and Hindu big capitalists, etc.

Egypt, too, has served a quit notice on British imperialism which here strives at least to retain the important Sudan colony.

In the desperate effort to maintain as much as possible of British imperialism, Bevin has kept 1,200,000 men abroad under arms. This has proved to be a burden beyond the present strength of Britain and is one of the prime factors causing the present crisis.

The capitalists and the Government declare that, to avoid bankruptcy, British exports must be stepped up by 75%.

Where is the market to be found? Europe is in a state of collapse.

The new Indian "Dominions" will not, because of their peoples' poverty, provide a sufficient outlet. American imperialism has taken over Japan and what there is of a market in Chiang Kai-shek's part of China.

Wall Street is taking over Turkey, Greece, and the Middle East, especially the oil in the Arab countries. In Germany, outside the Soviet zone, Wall Street is visibly taking over.

Canada is drawn further and further into the American economic and political orbit. Latin America is being "annexed" along the familiar American imperialist line of economic and financial penetration and control. And the dollar situation is preventing trade between Britain and Australia and the United States. Added to this is the handicap of the backward industries faced with American competition!

There is no lasting way out to be found in bigger overseas markets.

Continuance of the present policy means ever-growing dependence on United States imperialism.

For class reasons, Churchill and the Tories have already chosen this path. They sing the praises

of "unity of the English-speaking peoples," "Anglo-Saxon leadership," etc., etc., which they assert is necessary to "stabilise the world," "maintain world peace" and so on, when what they really mean is that they believe American capitalism has the means and certainly the desire to suppress the advancing and world-wide peoples' democratic movement, and to use an ultimate war with the Soviet Union and all those European democracies which they term "Soviet satellites."

This plainly means absorption of the British countries, and the domination of Wall Street imperialism. The French traitor, Laval, was not worried over the fate of France. "Hitler will smash Russia, that is all that matters," Laval said. In their own way, the British rulers are saying the same thing. "America is anti-Soviet, America will fight the Socialist revolution everywhere. America alone can attempt to save world capitalism, that is all that matters." Such is the theme song of those who are prepared to place the Wall Street yoke on our shoulders.

The instrument of this policy is Ernest Bevin.

For there is a way that offers to Britain the possibility of escape from her present dire economic straits and American domination.

This possibility was opened up by the recent trade negotiations in Moscow where Britain was offered sufficient supplies of wheat and vital raw materials to assist her on to her feet economically, and release her from dollar bondage.

The rejection of Soviet trade and trade with the new democracies is due to class, political reasons and not an inability to reach an agreement on trade, not, as Bevin was reported to have said, because trade is not possible until the Soviet Government trade monopoly has been abolished.

This is desperate lying to get out of a tight corner, because the Soviet Union has always developed trade with countries who desire it.

Government trade also is a tenet of Socialism and the Labor Party sometimes alleges it Socialist Party.

The trade agreement with the Soviet Union was rejected because this brought Britain into more intimate and friendly relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which is contrary to the policy of an Anglo-American, anti-Soviet bloc preached by Churchill and implemented by Bevin. The alternative policy soon revealed itself. It is a grim one for the British — and Australian — people.

The reimposition of wartime controls, that is, industrial conscription for the workers, who are to be strictly controlled, a cut in the already meagre rations and an extension of hours of work—that is what the British proletariat have been asked to sacrifice to the Churchill-Bevin imperialist foreign policy. The rejection of economic agreement with the Soviet Union means the continuance of the policy of the Anglo-American bloc, greater dependence on Wall Street and hostility to the Soviet Union, with war as an ultimate perspective.

Such is the policy to which the welfare of the British people is sacrificed. It has already caused serious complications within the British Parliamentary Labor Party, whose rank and file are beginning to realise where the path Bevin is treading is leading them. 150 Labor members are mentioned as in opposition in their recent Caucus, and only half the "Powers" Bill.

This disquiet reflects the growing opposition within the rank and file of the trade unions and the Labor Party organisations. The British working-class movement finds itself at the cross-roads. A crisis is developing within its ranks upon whose outcome Britain's future hinges.

Unfortunately, the British labor movement is still strongly impregnated with imperialist ideology and conceptions which allows the Bevinists to put across their tales about Greece, Palestine and the rest as "freedom" to Britain. They cannot yet see that Britain's freedom depends on a free world, but believe Bevin's "position" depends on the subjugation of foreign peoples along the line of "imperial communications," and so forth.

These imperialist concepts hamper the opposition to Bevin within and without Parliament.

A break with the old imperialism, which can be restored neither by Wall Street dollars nor British bayonets, a genuine nationalisation of key industries and real workers' control of industry, repudiation of the policy of subordination to Yankee imperialism, economic agreements and friendly political relations with the Soviet Union and the new European democracies and last, but not least, demobilisation of the huge army, which Britain in any case cannot afford: these are the methods of combating the decline and opening up the perspective of Socialism.

The alliance with aggressive American imperialism leads but to new dangers and catastrophes. Is it not from New York and Washington that daily there are belled threats of war and boasts of American weapons, atom bombs, germicidal and chemical preparations for war? Boasts of its Navy which has displaced British naval power as "Mistress of the Seas"? Is it not America that is faced with an economic catastrophe, a new "depression"?

America, too, therefore, will soon face economic problems which can be solved only along similar lines.

Britain's crises touches Australia nearly. Already we are feeling its economic effects in this country.

An aggravation of Britain's crisis threatens Australia's staple agrarian industries, in particular. Britain is still our chief market. Already Britain's plight has destroyed Prime Minister Chifley's pipe-dream of a "golden age." The Australian Prime Minister now speaks of a coming depression, which only the Communists, armed with Marxist theory, were able to perceive earlier.

Crisis in both Britain and the United States, although from different causes, threaten Australian economy with a collapse.

That the Federal Government is beginning to realise the seriousness of the situation and rid itself of the "golden age" hallucination, is becoming plain in its concern over control of prices, for which the A.L.P. official organ in N.S.W., the Standard, proposes a referendum to maintain Government control, and in Federal Cabinet's proposal to nationalise private banking.

These proposals are very much to the point and must receive the fullest backing, but nationalisation of key industries, coal, steel, metal, engineering, building, etc., are also essential if Australia is to strive for a stabilised economy free from economic earthquakes.

Our foreign policy is subordinated to that of Bevin and Churchill and is also based on the myth that Australia needs American imperialism's military "protection" against "aggression" on the part of the Soviet Union!

The repudiation of Bevin's foreign policy by the British Labor movement calls also for the repudiation of Dr. Evatt's "Australian" foreign policy, which is a weak, and sometimes demagogic, echo of Marshall, MacArthur, Bevin and Co.

Present policies are leading Britain, America, Australia, New Zealand and Canada to loss of power of independent action, to economic disaster and to the danger of a new war.

The working-class movement must enforce a sharp change.

THE INDONESIAN CONFLICT

R. DIXON

THE Dutch assault on the Indonesian Republic, in a desperate attempt to restore their imperialist control, has recoiled on them.

The sight of well-armed Dutch troops attacking the virtually defenceless Indonesians aroused a world-wide demand for action to put an end to the war in Indonesia. U.N.O. had to take action. Not even the American imperialists, who are now striving to destroy U.N.O. because they cannot transform it into an instrument to further their imperialist ambitions, could stem the protest.

It is true the decision of U.N.O. merely to order a cease-fire in Indonesia is unsatisfactory, because it leaves the Dutch in possession of their ill-gotten military gains, but it showed that when great masses of people move, U.N.O. can become an important weapon of struggle against war, and that is something to alarm the imperialist warmongers everywhere.

Australia played a very important role in the fight against Dutch aggression. The Waterside Workers' Federation, immediately the Dutch mili-

tary attack was announced, strengthened the ban on Dutch shipping and urged similar action by waterside workers in other countries.

The Australian trade union movement, generally, denounced the Dutch imperialists and they called upon the World Federation of Trade Unions for international action to put an end to the war, and urged the Federal Government to bring the matter before U.N.O.

The protests of churches, university students and others showed that the vast majority of Australians supported the trade unions in the stand they had taken. There is no doubt that the decision of the Australian Government to refer the conflict in Indonesia to U.N.O. was influenced by this powerful movement of the people.

The Australian decision to refer the Indonesian war to U.N.O. was not welcomed in either London or Washington.

British and American monopolies have big investments in Indonesia, in rubber and tea plantations, oil, etc. Because it is a small and weak power, Dutch imperialism over many years pursued an "open door" policy in Indonesia, permitting the entry of British, American and other foreign capital and thus aligning those powers against the Indonesian on the one hand and, on the other, securing allies in the event of war with some other imperialist power.

The Indonesians in their struggle for independence, therefore, have to contend with the British and American imperialists as well as the Dutch.

When the resolution calling for a cessation of fighting in Indonesia came up for decision before the Security Council, the British, French and Belgian delegates refrained from voting. They opposed the Polish proposal that Dr. Sjahrir, spokesman for the Indonesian Republic, should be permitted to address the Security Council.

The U.S. imperialists, on the other hand, proposed to the Dutch, even while the matter was before the Security Council, that they should arbitrate. The Dutch immediately accepted in the hope that this would sidetrack any proposal that U.N.O. should appoint an impartial commission to handle the issues that caused the conflict.

For many months Yankee Imperialism has played a particularly bad role behind the Indonesian scene. At every stage they sought to sabotage the Indonesian demands. They supplied the Dutch with arms and finance. Almost simultaneously with the Dutch attack in Indonesia and the American offer to mediate, the International Bank in New York, dominated by U.S. imperialism, made a loan of 195,000,000 guilders to the Dutch. When the Dutch attacked the Republic, the U.S. State Department demanded of the Indonesian Government that they should not apply the scorched earth policy or damage the oil properties of Standard Oil, in Sumatra.

From all this it will be readily seen why the Dutch so promptly accepted the American offer to mediate in Indonesia.

Although the Government of the Indonesian Republic accepted the "good offices" of the U.S., they made it clear that they wanted U.N.O. to arbitrate. Further, they proposed that a U.N.O. commission be sent to Indonesia immediately to investigate the situation on the spot, the commission to include Soviet Russia, Britain, France, China, U.S.A., Australia, India and a number of Arab countries.

Unlike the Dutch, the Indonesian Government has been frank and open on all of the issues. They have won profound sympathy and support throughout the world. The aim of the American and the Indo-British imperialists to impose a peace on the Indonesian that would leave much of the Dutch power intact and the foreign monopolies in possession of their estates and industries is, therefore, becoming much more difficult.

Of great significance is the powerful support for Indonesian independence coming from various countries of Asia oppressed or threatened by imperialism. Out of a population of 70,000,000, there are 60,000,000 Moslems in Indonesia. The Indonesian Government made a strong appeal for support from Moslems all over the world and especially to the Arab countries and India.

The Middle Eastern countries, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, etc., are supporting Indonesia. In India, Hindus and Moslems, divided on many big internal issues, are united in their support for Indonesia. The Indian Government has forbidden Dutch planes to use the Indian aerodromes, and Indian dockworkers have imposed a ban on Dutch ships trading with Indonesia.

Expressing the new spirit that is spreading through oppressed Asia, Pandit Nehru, Indian Congress leader, sent a chill down the spines of the imperialists when he thundered against the "We will not tolerate foreign armies operating in Asiatic countries," and later: "No European country has any business to use its army in Asia."

This seems like a Monroe Doctrine for Asia. When seen against the background of the revolutionary-democratic wave that is engulfing Asia, from China, all through Southern Asia to India and the Middle East, it is a warning that the days of British, French, Dutch and, also, American Imperialist exploitation and oppression in Asia are nearing their end.

For 350 years the Dutch have violated, plundered and exploited the Indonesians. Whatever development took place in Indonesia under the Dutch was designed not to benefit the Indonesians but to facilitate the extraction of wealth and profits for the Dutch. The industrial development of Indonesia has been deliberately held back.

The people, poverty-stricken because of Dutch rule, were denied the most elementary democratic

rights. They had no real say in the government of the country, no freedom of speech, or of the press. Trade unions were suppressed and Nationalist organisations banned. The Indonesians found their lives ordered and directed by the hateful Dutch oppressors.

Dutch imperialism ruled by force in Indonesia, they commanded no support amongst the people.

When the Japanese came Dutch power collapsed. There was no Dutch resistance, only cowardly capitulation. The Indonesian people refused to help the Dutch, a fact which clearly demonstrates that 350 years of Dutch control had resulted in only hatred and bitterness amongst the Indonesian people.

When the Japanese were defeated the Dutch trusts and combines demanded that the Indonesians slavishly submit, once again, to their rule. They wanted their estates and profits back, they wanted to fasten themselves upon the backs of the Indonesian people, deny them freedom and seize their wealth. But a new situation confronted them.

The movement for national independence in Indonesia, which long before World War II was already very powerful, received a great stimulus with the collapse of Dutch power and culminated, with the defeat of the Japanese, in the proclamation of the Indonesian Republic on August 17, 1945.

The Republican Government and its various organs, army, police, etc., constitute the State power of the Indonesian nation. Under their own government the Indonesian people have for the first time experienced democracy. For two years the Republican Government has ruled in Java, Sumatra and Madura, clearly refuting the absurd Dutch claim that the Indonesians are not yet ready for self-government.

Under the Cheribon Agreement the Dutch were forced to give de facto recognition to the Indonesian Republic, whilst the Republic, on the other hand, agreed to recognise the Netherlands Crown.

In spite of this, however, the Dutch imperialists who have never given up their hopes of uprooting the Indonesian Republic, demanded of the Republican Government that a joint Dutch-Indonesian police force be established, under Dutch control, to maintain "law and order" in Java, Sumatra and Madura, although the Republican Government for two years had maintained law and order much better than when the Dutch were in complete control before the war.

The Dutch also demanded that they, and not the Republic, should appoint the diplomatic and trade representatives of Indonesia to foreign countries.

The Indonesian Government rejected both of these proposals as encroaching upon the sovereignty of the Republic.

When the Indonesian Government was reorganised and Dr. Sjarifoeden became Premier of a Cabinet that was stronger and more determined to

press Indonesian claims than the Government led by Dr. Sjahrir, the Dutch decided to attack.

The Dutch forces have a great superiority of arms. The Indonesian military forces have very few modern weapons of warfare. The Government and the army command, therefore, decided to avoid pitched battles with the Dutch, to employ a scorched earth policy and wage guerrilla warfare. These military tactics have proved effective.

The Dutch militarists planned a short, sharp campaign. They informed the world that they were resorting only to "police action" and that the opposing forces would be "dispersed" within a week or 10 days, and that a "new Government" would be established with which the Dutch would negotiate.

They were wrong. The Dutch military gangsters only succeeded in seizing a number of large towns and ports. The Indonesians hold all the surrounding territory and have cut off Dutch spearheads. Instead of a passive population they are confronted with bitter hostility from the united Indonesian people. Thirty per cent. of Java's foreign-owned estates have been destroyed in accordance with the scorched earth policy, and vast supplies of rubber, oil, rice and other products that the Dutch planned to seize intact from the Indonesians have gone up in a "sea of flame".

The Sjarifoeden Government is intact. The Dutch have failed to establish the puppet government they had planned for.

The military aggression of the Dutch imperialists, which was calculated to defeat and enslave the Indonesians, has by no means strengthened the hold of the Dutch on Indonesia. It was an act of desperation which has intensified the hatred and bitterness of the Indonesian people and rendered even the co-operation envisaged in the Cheribon Agreement much more difficult.

There are still dangers for Indonesian independence, however. U.N.O.'s cease-fire order leaves the Dutch in possession of their military conquests. Nevertheless the offer of U.S. imperialism to mediate is the chief danger.

Not only the Dutch but also the American and British Imperialists want the Indonesian conflict settled outside of U.N.O. They are opposed to a U.N.O. Commission being appointed to arbitrate. American "mediation" will be a blow at Indonesia's aspirations and can only result in a settlement satisfactory to the Dutch, British and American monopolies.

The Indonesian Government, aware of the line-up of imperialist forces, is demanding that a U.N.O. commission arbitrate in the conflict. They have undertaken to abide by whatever decisions such a commission makes.

Australia is vitally concerned in the outcome of the Indonesian struggle. Reactionaries in Australia, Mr. Menzies, the newspaper magnates and others, who demand "neutrality", are in fact sup-

porting the Dutch imperialists. Their policy not only means the enslavement of Indonesia by the Dutch, but jeopardises the future of Australia. An Indonesia in chains to Dutch imperialism will always be a danger to Australia, a menace to our living standards, freedom and to our defence.

For the working class there can be no neutrality in this struggle. The 70 million people who inhabit the Indonesian islands are our closest neighbours. Having won their freedom and independence with

the sympathy and assistance of the Australian people, they can be powerful friends and allies of ours, and that will be of immense importance for the defence of Australia.

The support of the trade unions of this country for Indonesian independence, the ban on Dutch ships, has created a firm bond between the Australian and Indonesian peoples that must be consummated in the future in the form of trade and defence agreements.

THE POST-WAR INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

LU TING-YI

(Lu Ting-yi is chief of the Department of Information of the Chinese Communist Party. This is a translation of an article which appeared in the "Yenan Emancipation Daily" in January, 1947.)

It is now the new year 1947. We wish to make a survey of the entire international situation from all sides in order to dispel certain misconceptions in this field.

For the past year and more and right up to the present, because of the complicated changes in the situation and because of demagogic propaganda spread intentionally and widely by both Chinese and foreign reactionaries, there are still some people in the camp of democracy in China whose understanding of several basic questions of the post-war situation is not in accord, or not wholly in accord, with the actual state of affairs. These people include some Communists, some Left-wing critics, some middle-of-the-road critics. The purpose of this article is to offer a general interpretation of several of these basic questions.

Sixteen months have elapsed since the victory in the anti-fascist war. These sixteen months have been a period of extremely complicated changes in the international political situation. The course of changing affairs has taken many twists and turns. One set of conditions prevailed at the Foreign Ministers' Conference in London in September, 1945; there was a change at the time of the Moscow Foreign Ministers' Conference in December of the same year; another change took place in February and March of last year; while from September of last year onward still another change occurred.

After the many changes of the past sixteen months we have ample assurance in saying: the development of the international situation accords entirely with the prediction of Mao Tse-tung.

In "On Coalition Government," the political report of Comrade Mao Tse-tung to the Seventh National Convention of the Chinese Communist Party in April, 1945, he made the following prediction as to the new world situation that would follow World War II:

"This new situation differs greatly from that of the First World War and the so-called 'peaceful' period that followed. At that time there was no

Soviet Union, such as the present one, nor was there such a degree of consciousness as is now shown by the people of Great Britain, the United States, China, France and the other anti-fascist allies, and naturally there could not be such a world unity as the present, headed by three great powers or five great powers. We are now living in an entirely new situation. In the world there now exist peoples and their organised forces who have been awakened and united and who are in the process of becoming more so. This determines the goal to which the wheels of world history are turning and the path that should be followed to reach it.

"The defeat of the fascist aggressor countries and the emergence of a general situation of peace will not mean there will be no more struggle. The widely scattered remnant forces of fascism will certainly continue to make trouble. The anti-democratic forces remaining in the camp of the anti-fascist war against aggression will continue to oppress the people. Therefore, after the realisation of international peace, the struggle between the anti-fascist masses of the people and the remnant forces of the fascists, between democracy and anti-democracy, will continue to occupy a major part of the world. The broadest peoples' victory can only arrive through a long period of energetic efforts to overcome the remnant fascist forces and anti-democratic forces. The attainment of this victory will certainly be neither very quick nor very easy, but it will nevertheless certainly come. The victory in the anti-fascist war—the just World War II—has opened the road to victory in the peoples' struggle in the post-war period, and it is only after such a victory that a stable and lasting peace can be guaranteed. This is the bright future lying before the peoples of the world."

I hope that all my readers will read carefully these words of Comrade Mao Tse-tung several times. This will help to a comprehension of the basic questions of the present international scene.

These words of Comrade Mao Tse-tung bring out two basic points:

The first basic point: victory in the anti-fascist war has opened the way to progress for the democratic forces in all nations. The extent of the progress of these democratic forces will be incomparably greater than after the First World War. An attack by the anti-democratic forces on the peoples of all nations must of necessity come. But the democratic forces will in the necessity of things be able to overcome the anti-democratic forces, secure their own victory, and win firm and lasting international peace. There are two necessities involved here: one, that the anti-democratic forces will of necessity attack, and, two, that the democratic forces will of necessity be victorious.

Thus all erroneous pessimistic contentions are swept clean away. These pessimistic contentions are: alleging that the extent of the progress of the democratic forces after World War II will be less than after World War I; statements about the "supercrisis" reactionary strength of American imperialism and Chiang Kai-shek and about how they will oppress the people of China and of the whole world until they will be unable to draw breath; statements that World War III is inevitable or that it will soon arrive, that firm and lasting peace cannot be attained, etc. All these points of view are clearly in error. The reason that these errors are made is that some people are misled by the temporary and outward appearance of the might of the international and domestic reactionary forces, or are blinded by reactionary propaganda and thereby overestimate the strength of the reactionaries and underestimate the strength of the people.

The second basic point: the struggle between the forces of democracy and anti-democracy will cover the greater part of the world. That is, in the world there is a Socialist Soviet Union in which there have long been no anti-democratic forces and therefore no internal struggle between democracy and anti-democracy. Other places in the world besides the Soviet Union—that is, the whole of the capitalist world—are filled with struggle between democracy and anti-democracy. Thus, following World War II, the dominant contradiction in the actual political world is between the democratic and anti-democratic forces within the capitalist world, not between the capitalist world and the Soviet Union, and also not between the Soviet Union and the United States. To be more concrete, the dominant contradictions in the world at present are those between the American people and the American reactionaries, the Anglo-American contradiction, and the Sino-American contradiction.

The demagogic propaganda by reactionaries in China and abroad is thus thoroughly swept away, so that all good-hearted people will not be misled by it. Such dogmatic propaganda is: that the present dominant contradiction in the present world is that between the capitalist and socialist countries, that the Soviet-American contradiction is dominant while

Anglo-American and Sino-American contradictions are secondary; that socialist and capitalist countries cannot peacefully co-operate, that Soviet-American war is inevitable; etc.

We shall elucidate below: (1) Who are the anti-democratic forces? What is their present and what will be their future role? (2) Who are the democratic forces? What is their present and what will be their future role?

After World War II, American imperialism took the place of fascist Germany, Italy, and Japan as the fortress of the world reactionary forces. The reactionary forces of the world are precisely the American imperialists with the addition of the reactionaries in various countries—China's Chiang Kai-shek, Great Britain's Churchill, France's de Gaulle, etc., and the fascist remnants—Spain's Franco government, Japan's Yoshida cabinet, Germany's Von Papen, Schacht, etc. The reactionaries of all countries and the fascist remnants have now all become traitors, directly or indirectly supported by American imperialism, selling out the peoples of all their respective countries.

America's wartime industrial production more than doubled in comparison with the pre-war period. American monopoly capital experienced tremendous growth during the war. At that same time, a gang of warlords arose in America. After the close of the war this gang of monopoly capitalists and militarists, this bloc of an extremely small handful of fanatical aggressors, advocated a policy of imperialist aggression to expand markets, wrest the markets, colonies, and semi-colonies of other capitalist countries, oppressing primarily the great colonial-imperial countries, Great Britain and France, and oppressing China, while at the same time exercising sole domination over Japan and Latin America. The American imperialists are carrying out this aggression under the slogan of "Open Door Policy," "Equal Opportunity," etc. Because American productive technique is very high and American monopoly capital tremendous the U.S. imperialists, no matter where they penetrate, need only have the conditions of "Open Door" and "Equal Opportunity" to be in an overwhelming position to drive others out and monopolise the market. Besides this, the American imperialists are undertaking large-scale military preparations against all other capitalist countries, colonies, and semi-colonial countries under all sorts of pretexts. Their military bases are spread over many countries outside the Soviet Union. American imperialism has through "peaceful" means occupied many "Pearl Harbors" in various countries while saying that this is "to prevent another Pearl Harbor."

In February and March of 1946, world reactionaries schemed to incite war against the Soviet Union. This was typified by the reactionary speeches of Churchill. That this aroused alertness in everyone was as it should be. Churchill's agitation met with opposition and the cold shoulder

from people all over the world, and the schemes of the reactionaries met with sorry defeat.

But the "Anti-Soviet War" propaganda begun by Churchill was treasured and continued by the American imperialists. The reason they cherish this kind of propaganda is not that they intend to launch an anti-Soviet war at the present time, but that the propaganda may be used as a smokescreen behind which to carry on their great world-wide aggression and their domestic oppression.

"Anti-Soviet" — what does this mean? Hitler's anti-Sovietism was another name for enslaving the German people and trampling on the peoples of Europe. Fascist Japan's anti-Sovietism was another word for enslaving the Japanese people and invading all countries on both sides of the Pacific. The anti-Sovietism of the American reactionaries cannot but be a word for enslaving the American people and launching aggression against the whole world.

There are, however, points of dissimilarity in the meaning of the present anti-Soviet slogan of the

American reactionaries and that of the German and Japanese reactionaries in the past. Germany is very close to the Soviet Union and, granted the other conditions, German fascists could attack the Soviet Union. Japan and the Soviet Union were contiguous, but because the national strength of Japanese fascism was not as great as that of Hitler, Japan could only attack China and the Pacific areas and was defeated before she could invade the Soviet Union. America is very far from the Soviet Union and there are vast territories separating them. These in-between territories comprise all the capitalist in-between territories of semi-colonial countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Under these and other conditions it is very difficult for the United States to attack the Soviet Union. The real significance of the American anti-Soviet slogan in the post-war period is its usefulness in oppressing the American people and in invading all countries outside the Soviet Union by "peaceful means."

(To be concluded next issue.)

"GOLDEN AGE" IS NOW A FADING MIRAGE

E. W. CAMPBELL

THE drying up of the world dollar pool and the near-exhaustion of the American loan to Britain has shown up Mr. Chifley's Golden Age as a receding mirage.

Twelve months ago Mr. Chifley confidently forecast that Australia stood on the threshold of a "wondrous age of industrial and commercial expansion." At that time the Attlee-Bevin Cabinet had just committed itself to an unofficial Anglo-American pact directed against the Soviet Union and the new European democracies. The "pay-off" for this new "Munich" sell-out was the 4,000,000,000 dollar Wall Street loan to Britain. It was expected by the borrowers that the loan would tide Britain over until 1950, by which time, they hoped, she would somehow or other have struggled back to her feet.

U.S. moneylenders, however, had different ideas. The ink had not dried on the signatures to the loan agreement before price rises in the United States cut the loan's value by more than one quarter. Further American price increases since have cut its value to about three-fifths of the original sum advanced.

Only a small portion of the loan, which is now nearly exhausted, has been applied to feeding British workers and re-equipping British industries. Most of it has gone towards the upkeep of more than a million British soldiers in a dozen foreign countries and the feeding of defeated Germans in the British occupied zone.

Several weeks before the current British dollar crisis broke into the open, Mr. Chifley was compelled by the unmistakable signs of developing crisis in America to hedge on his earlier Golden Age fore-

cast. He told the N.S.W. Labor Party conference that it seemed that an "economic recession" was on the way in U.S.A., but he hoped that Australia would be geared to meet it.

Australia will never be geared to meet the coming crisis while her foreign and economic policies are meshed to fit in exclusively with those of Britain and America.

As the dollar loan to Great Britain continues to run out like beer from a broached keg, Mr. Chifley will be compelled to take an even more sober view of things than he did at the A.L.P. conference.

While Mr. Chifley retreated from his Golden Age fantasy at the A.L.P. conference and at the same time recognised that certain groups in U.S.A. were striving for world domination, nevertheless, indicated that Australia would continue to maintain close ties with Britain and America. There is nothing objectionable in Australia maintaining close ties with Britain and America providing this is not done at the expense of worsening our relations with other countries. But Mr. Chifley gave no indication that it was the Government's intention to strive for closer political and economic relations with the Soviet Union, the new European democracies and colonial countries in process of liberation.

Circumstances today demand, with greater insistence than ever before, a change in the Evatt-Chifley policy. All the influence that Australia is capable of bringing to bear must also be used to change the present Bevin-Attlee policy. Unless the Bevin-Attlee policy is soon changed the deepening dollar crisis will compel Australia to drastically reduce her exports to Great Britain and at

the same time cut her imports from both Britain and America.

The Bevin-Attlee policy rejects closer trading relations with the self-governing Dominions, the Soviet Union and the new European democracies and aims at exporting more goods to the dollar areas and less to sterling areas like Australia — a policy which not only deepens British subservience to dollar imperialism but hits the economy of Australia.

Curtailment of imports from Britain will greatly increase the shortage of consumer goods in Australia and make it harder to obtain the capital goods without which Australia will find it difficult to maintain the present level of employment, much less enter upon a "wondrous era of industrial and commercial expansion."

Biggest items on Australia's list of imports from Great Britain are textiles and machinery. Petrol is the most important item imported from the War area is petrol. Imports of all three items will have to be further curtailed unless the current Attlee-Bevin policy is reversed. This will mean that clothes rationing, instead of being relaxed, as promised earlier, may have to be tightened up; petrol rationing, instead of being abolished, may become more severe, throwing additional burdens onto the transport system. Cutting down of machinery imports from Great Britain will seriously hamper the expansion of Australian industry and contribute to the spread of unemployment, unless alternative supply sources are tapped.

Australia's chief pre-war providers of capital goods — machinery and machine tools, etc. — were Great Britain, North America, Germany and Czechoslovakia. Imports from Great Britain will have to be cut severely, while Bevin and Attlee remain under the hypnotic influence of the Yankee dollar; additional imports from America are out of the question, while Chifley and Evatt are satisfied to play Trilby to Bevin and Attlee's Svengali; Germany is not in the picture and will not re-enter while the Anglo-American pro-Nazi policy prevails; so there remains Czechoslovakia.

Australia at present ranks fifth last on the list of 28 countries with which Czechoslovakia has extensive trading relations. The only countries below Australia are Iceland, Palestine, South Africa and defeated Germany. Czechoslovakia's nationalised industries are turning out large quantities of high-class textiles, which could help relieve the shortage of men's and women's clothing and certain Manchester lines in Australia. Czechoslovakia's nationalised industries are also turning out large quantities of machinery and machine tools, which could help re-equip Australian industries, which, in spite of war-time expansion of the engineering industry, are still dependent on imports for certain lines.

The Skoda works in Czechoslovakia, quite recently, supplied all the equipment to establish an

electric power station at Skarbaek in Denmark. Australia's premier city, Sydney, still suffers periodic blackouts because the main power house, at Bunnerong cannot obtain urgently needed plant from Great Britain.

In return for the textiles and machinery which Czechoslovakia, an "easy currency" country, could send to Australia, she could take in return Australian wool, Australian ores and other products. The development of the Czechoslovakian market for Australian wool would help to avoid the slavish cringing to America to cut the wool tariff by a few cents a pound, in return for which the Chifley Government has expressed its willingness to sacrifice the future of the Australian dried and canned fruits industries and jeopardise the future of other important primary industries like sugar.

Others of the new democracies may soon have products, including capital goods, which can be readily exchanged for Australian products. Poland is already exporting textile machinery from Lodz. Restored industries in Silesia are starting on big machine-building projects. Poland will also be a big timber exporter before long and in a position to help break bottlenecks in Australia's housing programme. Poland, like Czechoslovakia, will need increasing quantities of Australian wool to supply her large textile industry.

It's not good enough for Mr. Attlee to refer in passing in the House of Commons to Australia's help in the past and to look forward to the unquestioning continuance of this assistance. The Australian people, if called on, will be quite willing to come to the aid of the British people, but not on the Bevin-Attlee terms.

In the common interests of the people of Britain and Australia the least the Chifley Government must demand in return for Australia's assistance in surmounting the present crisis is that the British Government should:

- Reject article nine of the American loan agreement, which forces Britain to cut imports from Australia when a shortage of dollars compels her to cut imports of identical lines from America;
- Accept the offer of mutual trade agreements from the Soviet Union and new European Democracies;
- Carry out a courageous policy of nationalisation of key industries and the acquisition of landed estates — deer parks, shooting boxes, and fox-hunting grounds — to be put under cultivation to help solve the food crisis.

Inside Australia, to really gear the nation to meet the coming economic crisis the Chifley Government should push ahead with the Labor Government's own programme of nationalisation of key industries; peg prices and profits; cut hours to 40 a week throughout Australia and increase the basic wage by at least the minimum of £1 demanded by the trade unions.

FRENCH POLICY DRIFTS TO THE RIGHT

JACQUES DUCLOS

(From "Democratique Nouvelle," June, 1947)

THE political situation in France before the war was marked by the chronic repetition of moves to the right following more or less closely on elections favorable to the left. Among the most typical examples of this evasion of the decisions of universal suffrage we can quote the 1924-28 legislature, which began with the victory of the Cartel des Gauches (Radicals and Socialists), to end up with a government led by Raymond Poincaré, who had suffered a major defeat in the 1924 elections.

In 1932 the elections went to the left, and after the attempted coup d'état plotted by the Fascists on 6th February, 1934, the rightward trend of French policy was to bring to power one after the other Doumergue, Flandin and Laval. But the formation of the Popular Front of bread, freedom and peace, with the particularly active participation of the Communists, was to lead to a democratic victory at the 1936 elections. This victory was a very promising one; it could have allowed, as the Communists proposed, the mustering against the increasing Hitlerite danger not only of all the more or less advanced democrats, but also of the great mass of patriots, worried about their country's future owing to the pressure and threats of Hitlerism.

But once again the people's will, which had clearly favored the left, was translated into a policy going further and further to the right. This policy was to lead us to the shame of Munich and then to the 1939 war which, in the minds of the Fascists and also of some other individuals, was to lead to the liquidation of the international Communist movement and the destruction of the land of Socialism.

Such class aims, in complete contradiction to the national interest, could not fail to lead the country to catastrophe, while playing into Hitler's and Mussolini's hands. During the black night of the occupation, we saw the so-called patriots of yesterday becoming accomplices of the invader, while the mass of the people, led by the working class, embodied the permanence of the national spirit through ceaseless and many-sided struggle.

But in this battle on which the future of France and also, to a certain extent, the future of international democracy depended, the possessing classes, the upholders of big capital, showed great capacity for manoeuvring. The possessing castes, rich families, business circles took all possibilities into consideration with the aim of protecting themselves on both sides.

During the first phase of the war, when a Hitlerite victory seemed certain to a pack of short-sighted politicians, the governing classes made common cause with Hitler. But this did not stop them from having their representatives in de Gaulle's clique, which, in the beginning, seemed to be as reactionary as that of Petain and differed solely on the problem of the attitude to be taken towards Hitler Germany,

Later on, of course, General de Gaulle was to be induced to talk of the Republic in his speeches and proclamations, but he did it more from calculation than conviction. Carrying on the resistance from outside, he was certainly not unaware that the resistance movement within France, on the soil of our invaded country, was avowedly Republican. Moreover, the important, not to say decisive, role played by the French Communist Party in the development of the struggle against the invader helped to open up the French resistance a progressive, anti-reactionary character which General de Gaulle deemed it wise to take into account.

Certainly, for this officer with his reactionary training, brought up to scorn the Republic, there could be no question of adopting an attitude which would have led him to regard the cause of France and that of democracy as inseparable.

From the moment of his arrival in Paris, when he was received as a distinguished guest by the Parisian people, who had just freed themselves by force of arms through the victorious insurrection in whose triumph the Communists had had a large share, General de Gaulle's first thought, his main concern was to reduce the French Communist Party's role in the political activity of the country to a minimum, and to isolate it. To do this, he sought to establish a basis for agreement between the Socialist Party and the Christian Democrats, who were shortly afterwards to form the "Popular Republican Movement" (M.R.P.).

On the basis of an alliance between the Socialist Party and the M.R.P., the municipal elections of April, 1945, appeared as an attempt to strike a blow at the influence of the French Communist Party, whose efforts and sacrifices for the liberation of the national soil had nothing to fear from comparison.

The elections, which were to have a provisionally character owing to the absence of the prisoners of war and political deportees who were still held in Germany, did not give the results that General de Gaulle had expected. The position of the Communist Party, far from being weakened, showed itself on the contrary to be very strong, and reaction immediately understood that if unity of Communists and Socialists were realised, it would enable the working class to be a decisive force in the evolution of the French political situation.

The French Communist Party, conscious of its responsibilities, forcibly and clearly put the question of working-class unity and the formation of a French Workers' Party, which would result from the fusion of the Communist and Socialist Parties.

Unity of action, which had developed after the Liberation in fairly satisfactory conditions, was to be challenged again later on by Leon Blum, who had in the meantime returned from Germany where

he was imprisoned in very different conditions from those inflicted on ordinary political deportees.

Leon Blum's plan at the Socialist Congress of August, 1945, was to prevent organic unity of the working class, to prepare for liquidation of the unity of action between Communists and Socialists, and to create favorable ideological conditions for the co-ordination of efforts between the Socialists and the M.R.P.

At the Socialist Congress, Leon Blum attacked the conception of dialectical materialism and proposed to revise the first article of the Socialist Party Rules, which is formulated in this way: "The Socialist Party is founded on the following principles: international working-class understanding and action; political and economic organisation of the proletariat as a class party for the conquest of power and the socialisation of the means of production and exchange, that is, transformation of capitalist society into a collective or Communist society."

The text that was to be substituted for this was just confused and equivocal (twaddle inspired by alleged "humanistic socialism" and intended quite simply to combat working-class unity and at the same time to justify coalitions between the Socialists and the M.R.P.).

It was under these conditions that the Socialist Party and the M.R.P. agreed with de Gaulle to organise a referendum intended to limit the powers of the National Constituent Assembly, which was to be elected on October 21st, 1945.

The M.R.P., strong in its agreement with the Socialists, made itself out to be a republican party. Yet within it, beside a certain number of real resistance members, were to be found old reactionary gangs, happy to be able to appear under a democratic mask. The new feature in the political situation was the use by a party of reaction and by the clerical forces of France of a progressive mask to deceive part of the population. And it can be said that this political ambiguity, which obstructed the evolution of the situation in France, was the work of the Socialist Party in general and Leon Blum in particular.

Nevertheless, after the elections of 21st October, 1945, to the first National Constituent Assembly, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party held 54.64% of the seats in France itself and they had an absolute majority in the Assembly through the support of a number of overseas deputies.

Consequently it would have been possible, when General de Gaulle voluntarily gave up power in January, 1946, to make the Communist Party and the Socialist Party the prime movers of French policy; but the Socialist Party strove to give the M.R.P. a most important role and aided the work of this group against the Constitution, which was subject to popular ratification.

After the Constitution had been rejected at the referendum on 5th May, 1946, elections took place on 2nd June, 1946, to appoint the second National

Constituent Assembly. The Communist Party's vote increased, but the Socialist Party's dropped in favor of the M.R.P., into whose hands it had been playing.

Now, in the Second Constituent Assembly, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party only held 30.18% of the seats in France and only narrowly gained an absolute majority in some particular cases, through the support of the overseas delegates.

So the consequence of the Socialist Party's policy of division had been to weaken the Left, whereas undoubtedly, if the Communist Party's proposals for unity had not been rejected, we would have seen the working class and democratic forces emerge victorious from the elections.

The new constitution having been endorsed by universal suffrage on 13th October, 1946, elections for the National Assembly were held on 10th November, 1946; while the Communist Party increased its vote, being at the head of all the parties, the Socialists suffered another setback and a noticeable loss of seats. The two parties now hold only 47.56% of the seats in France and, in spite of a considerable Communist advance in the overseas territories, the Communists and Socialists no longer have a majority in the Assembly.

Yet, if the Socialists had been willing, it would have been possible even in the Assembly to form a democratic group around the Communist Party and the Socialist Party.

But this road was not taken by the latter, whose first gesture, after the elections of 10th November, was in practice to block the candidature of Maurice Thorez, general secretary of the Communist Party, to the presidency of the Government.

Since the Communist candidate had not been elected and the M.R.P. candidate, Georges Bidault, had been ousted after receiving less votes than Maurice Thorez, Leon Blum's candidature was put forward.

The issue was the formation of a transition government which was to last only till after the election of the President of the Republic, fixed for 16th January, 1947; but in some circles it was hoped that the government could be returned after this election.

Quite obviously, reaction's plan, after Leon Blum's election as President of the Government on 12th December, 1946, was to bring about the elimination of the Communists from the government.

The formation of an all-Socialist government was held to offer the best possibility of removing the Communists, and that is why Leon Blum's Government was greeted with joy by the reactionaries, happy to have at last found a government without Communists.

But after the election of the President of the Republic, continuance in power of the Leon Blum government did not prove possible. The return of the Communists to the Government could not be prevented without outraging the people's conscience. Nevertheless, in reactionary circles and even in the

Socialist Party the return of Communists to the government was looked on as a transitory measure and nothing would be neglected to bring about their exclusion.

It had become indispensable to drive the Communists out of the government because their presence hindered the development of a policy tending to deviate towards the right, both in foreign and home affairs.

In the matter of relations with the peoples of the French Union, the Communist Party stood out against the policy followed in Vietnam and demanded the cessation of hostilities, in a spirit of absolute loyalty to the principles expressed in the new Constitution of the French Republic. On the other hand, the Socialist Party once more showed the difference between words and deeds by supporting a policy of force inspired by the most detestable colonial methods, which it no doubt condemned in principle, but carried out in practice.

The French Communist Party, representing loyalty to democracy as well as the real national interest, emphasised that a policy of force towards the overseas peoples must finally result in undermining France's position. This would be to the advantage of imperialists who want to enslave our country and transform it into an obedient instrument of their expansionist policy.

Moreover, even before the Moscow Conference, changes could be noted in the conduct of France's foreign policy. The M.R.P., which had declared its desire to hold aloof from all blocs, chose to integrate France into a so-called Western political system. The clearest result of this is to lose us our rights to reparations and, in relation to Germany, to make France a card that the poker-players of Washington will use as they think fit.

The reconstruction of France is the last thing this policy cares about. It is more concerned with Germany's economical revival, under the wing of the international trusts, and for aims in which there is nothing particularly democratic.

France's interest demanded that in maintaining our absolute national independence we should make full use of the identity of the interests of our country and those of the U.S.S.R. on the matter of reparations and security, but quite a different path was taken. This is a characteristic of the drift to the right in French policy.

Who can doubt that pressure was exercised from outside to obtain such results? Business men and politicians from across the Atlantic made their pressure felt, and even the spiritual powers came to the aid of the temporal powers. The Vatican, which once, when our country was the eldest daughter of the Church, is now turning away from our poor, anaemic, amputated France and looking towards the land of the dollar, where the Church's doctrines can find more substantial support. So it can easily be understood that the Vatican's directors should have urged on the faithful a western policy that is less

concerned with France's national independence than with the retention of certain class privileges.

On the question of internal policy, the problem facing France is whether it is the privileged classes or the masses who, in the end, will pay for the country's reconstruction.

At the Communist Party's call, the workers boldly took up the battle for production. The level of French production reached 20% of the pre-war figure, but, on the other hand, while the ratio of prices to the pre-war period was 837% at the end of April, that of wages was only from 500 to 550%, according to grades. These figures show how the living conditions of the working masses have fallen, while capitalist profits were considerably increased. Moreover, they are trying to hide this fact by skillful dissimulation which assists tax evasion.

These conditions led the workers to ask for bonuses on production. No one can dispute the legitimacy and justice of this demand, yet the government would not accede to it. It was because the Communist ministers defended the workers' interests within the government that they were driven out by President Paul Ramadier on 5th May last.

Nevertheless, since then the government has been forced in self defence to agree to grant bonuses on production, because of the workers' calm, cool determination to enforce their rights.

People in high places are always talking about a stable currency, which is good; but they are trying to present the granting of bonuses on production as leading to inflation. This intentional sophistry tends to give the wrong emphasis to the problem of the security of the franc, which is closely linked to a firmer policy for lower prices. This policy, moreover, is in no way contradictory to the grant of bonuses on production and output, for capitalist profits have considerably increased recently.

But, through the weakness of the policy of the government, which did not wish to bring the masses into the struggle for lower prices, it had to be noted at the end of May, that if, from the beginning of the year to the end of April, the fall in prices initiated by Leon Blum had only been 3.3%, the rise had been 5.9% in May for retail prices, which gives an increase of 2.4% over January, while wholesale prices have just risen by 11.7%. These figures suffice to show how legitimate are the demands of the working masses.

Moreover, the problem of budgetary stability comes up with some force, and, to obtain it, on the one hand the inflated military expenses, necessitated by the existence of an over-large professional army, must be reduced; on the other, there must be a fairer distribution of the placing of tax burdens. Capitalism must be made harder and in particular there benefits a considerable section of profits classed under the heading of reserves.

And so, against a background of bitter struggle, we see a drift to the right taking place in France

which could hold many dangers for the future and for the independence of the country, unless the popular forces succeed in checking it.

The working class is not isolated; its demands are the better understood by the peasants because it understands their demands. And the town middle class, struggling against a routine-loving and expensive bureaucracy, are also able to understand the workers' legitimate anxiety for a rise in their purchasing power. The shopkeepers can understand this position the better because already, while production has not yet reached the pre-war level and the needs of the masses are immense, signs of a slump can be seen, as a result of the crying lack of purchasing power.

The problem of this alliance of the working class and the middle classes is of the greatest importance. Official circles know this, and that is why it was hoped in high places that the workers, instead of fighting factory by factory, achieving bonuses on production, would start a general movement which could have been used as a bogey to mobilise the middle class behind reaction and isolate the working class, the better to defeat it. But the workers mean to remain masters of their own tactics and not have them imposed by their opponents.

The Ramadier government pushed its anti-working class activity very far by issuing a decree of requisition against the gas and electricity workers. Certainly, this decree has not been applied, but it is a dangerous precedent which can be used in the future.

So the Ramadier government is following a policy that is drifting to the right. Governmental circles, it is felt, desire to earn the confidence and

aid of dollar diplomacy, whose best surest guarantee, moreover, General de Gaulle is to be.

In the eyes of some people the present is, no doubt, considered to be a stage in the move to the right which allows preparation for a future government still more definitely rightist, and the possibility of a de Gaulle government later on.

That is why it is correct to denounce as unacceptable the government policy which, on the pretext of avoiding de Gaulle, is, in short, carrying out his policy, which can finally lead only to the enslaving and oppression of France.

The working class and the mass of the people of France have a tremendous task to carry out, a task with international significance. If France continued to go to the right to the point of being but a kind of protectorate in which freedom would only be a memory, the cause of world democracy would be sorely stricken. But the French people will not allow these fatal moves along the path of reaction to come about. It will struggle, will fight to bring France back to the left, which will, moreover, bring up the question of the return of the Communists to the government.

In the awe-inspiring and formidable battle being fought between democracy and reaction, a battle which, under different aspects, has just caused some stir in Hungary, in Italy, and which is the backcloth of the world political situation, France, to remain faithful to her revolutionary traditions, must defeat reaction. That is the great objective and the dominating idea of millions of French men and women who are concerned about their country's future.

THE MOUNTBATTEN PLAN

Statement by the Central Committee, Communist Party of Great Britain.

The Communist Party condemns the proposals for the partition of India set out in the Mountbatten Plan, and reaffirms its support for the full independence of a united India.

The Mountbatten Plan can provide no final solution for India's problems.

The Communist Party recognises that within the sub-continent of India there are diverse national groups with their own languages and cultural traditions, and it is only through a self-determination of these nationalities that a real and lasting unity of the Indian people will be achieved. But the present proposed partition of India into Hindu and Moslem States, alongside the equally artificial boundaries of the Princes' States, has nothing in common with national self-determination.

It will aggravate the Hindu-Moslem conflict and give rise to dangers of new conflicts over boundaries.

It hinders progressive development and urgently needed all-India planning.

It creates economic chaos; divorces agricultural areas from industrial areas; cuts across railway and irrigation systems; weakens India and opens the way for new imperialist intrigues to play off one section against another.

Government spokesmen have endeavoured to throw the responsibility for partition on to the shoulders of the Indian leaders.

But partition is the legacy of 200 years of "divide and rule." It is the result of the British Government's policy throughout the negotiations since the end of the war, namely, the refusal to hand over power to a sovereign, elected Constituent Assembly and to the majority leadership of the Indian people, and the placing of the right of veto in the hands of an obstructive minority.

Every effort will now be needed to overcome the difficulties created by partition, and to build an All-India Union based on the free participation of all the various national groupings of the Indian people.

The major Indian political organisations have accepted the Mountbatten Plan only as a temporary compromise. Congress has made it clear that it will continue to strive for the aim of a united democratic Republic of India.

All well-wishers of India will hope that the newly formed Dominion Governments will find the way to the closest possible practical co-operation, leading to the future unity of India.

The Mountbatten proposals for speeding up the promised transfer of power and for establishing Dominion Governments reveal the deepening crisis of the old imperialist rule in India and the powerful advance of the Indian liberation movement. Imperialism is compelled to make far-reaching concessions, at the same time as it endeavours to qualify these concessions by the imposition of partition, the maintenance of the power of the Princes, and new intrigues to maintain a military and economic grip upon the country.

The establishment of Dominion Governments, even though at present restricted in effectiveness by the evils of partition, will represent an important advance on the present status of the Interim Government. The existence and functioning of responsible Cabinets based on elected majorities (even though for the moment on a restricted franchise and communal electorates) will open the way to rapid democratic advance and planned economic and social development. It will enable Indian representatives to carry further forward the progressive role of India in the United Nations.

The fulfilment of these tasks will require the closest co-operation of all progressive sections of the national movement and the working-class movement on a common platform of democracy and national freedom.

The Indian working-class movement, the Communist Party, the All-India Trades Union Congress and the All-India Peasant Association, have stood in the forefront as the representatives of the unity of interests of the common people of India. They have maintained that unity unbroken in face of communal divisions and antagonisms; they have led the way in the fight to overcome such divisions. And they will lead the way forward in the fight for a united democratic India, based on national self-determination and voluntary co-operation of all national groupings, and for full political, economic and social liberation.

We in this country have a special responsibility to see that the transfer of power shall be real

and effective in this critical hour of India's advance to freedom. We must be on guard against all the many intrigues and manoeuvres which will be employed by reaction to sabotage the establishment of a fully free, democratic and united India.

In particular, the Communist Party will campaign for the complete withdrawal of British troops and all military missions from India and the Indian States.

It will resolutely oppose the contracting of special treaties or the establishing of special direct relations with the Indian princes.

It will demand the full and equitable settlement, over a period of time and by methods agreed upon, of the sterling debt, in order to promote as rapidly as possible the reconstruction and industrialisation of Indian economy.

Similarly, we shall oppose any attempts to impose unequal economic agreements upon India or to interfere in the free development of her economy.

We shall expose and resist all attempts to encourage reactionary sections in India—whether among the Princes or within Pakistan, Hindustan or any part of India—to seek British support and interference for their special ambitions. For such interference can only hinder the development of national unity for an All-Indian Union and sovereign democratic independence.

Above all, we shall work for the closest political and economic collaboration between the British people and the people of India on a democratic and equal basis in the interests of world peace and world prosperity.

We, therefore, welcome the new Dominion Governments in India as allies and friends of the world democratic forces, believing that their people can and will play a great part in the world today against the aggressive demands of British or American imperialism, and for the strengthening and protection of the democracies.

We further believe that it will be to the great advantage of both British and Indian people if, on the basis of complete equality, the closest economic collaboration is established with a view to rapid development of India's economy and for the expansion of trade and the frustration of American ambitions to impose its dollar imperialism and political domination throughout the world.

WHO IS STARTING A NEW ARMAMENT RACE?

MAJOR-GENERAL M. GALAKTIONOV

THE world has just come through the most sanguinary and destructive war in history, a war started by the fascist aggressors. The nations want peace. They want a durable and lasting peace, not the kind that existed between the first and second world wars. The peoples cannot reconcile themselves to a peace that is actually filled with preparations for a new war and a race in armament — it outrages their sense of morality and justice.

History has made it perfectly clear what an armament race means. It manifests itself in very definite ways: in the excessive piling up of armaments and the spread of militarism in certain countries. It inevitably leads to a monstrous inflation of military expenditure and weighs as a heavy burden on the people. Although blood is not flowing on the battlefields, war invades every artery of the life of the nations.

One need not waste many words to demonstrate that armament races are started by those who are preparing for war. The examples of Hitler Germany, fascist Italy and militarist Japan are fresh in our memories. These countries frantically built up their armaments precisely because they were aggressor countries.

History also teaches that an armament race may be started under the hypocritical flag of peace. From time immemorial aggressors have exploited the old Roman proverb: *Si vis pacem para bellum*—if you want peace, prepare for war—as a pretext to impose, by means of preparing an aggressive war, a *Pax Romana* on other nations—a peace based on the Roman sword.

Peace and armament race are mutually exclusive concepts. If there is an armament race there is no real peace. This concept of modern democracy has been embodied in the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 24, 1946, on the principles governing general regulation and reduction of armaments. The resolution says:

"In pursuance of Art. 11 of the Charter and with a view to strengthening international peace and security in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, the General Assembly recognises the necessity of an early general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces."

Accordingly, the General Assembly recommended the Security Council "to give prompt consideration to formulating practical measures" for the implementation of the decision.

But when the Security Council proceeded to carry out this instruction, it appeared that the American and British representatives were interpreting the General Assembly's resolution in a way which was in obvious contradiction to its real meaning and purport.

At the meeting of the Security Council of February 4, the American representative, Senator Austin, declared:

"Following the first world war the United States had bitter experience with unilateral disarmament. My government will not repeat this error. Twice in the past generation we were compelled to take part in great and bloody wars. In neither case were we equipped at the outset with armaments which other peace-loving states might have wished us to possess. Had we possessed adequate armaments, both wars might have been avoided."

By this reference to history, Austin is proclaiming the very ancient motto: to prevent war, we must arm for war. But does not everybody know that the first world war came in the wake of the armament race started by Germany, and that the second world war broke out because the aggressors were allowed the opportunity to arm. The League of Nations swamped the problem of general disarmament in futile and interminable talk. Both these examples show that piling up armaments does not prevent war; it leads to war. Yet Austin declared:

"In any plan or programme for the general regulation and reduction of armaments practical security arrangements must be the primary considerations. Members of the United Nations must have definite and concrete assurances that effective enforceable safeguards regarding such security arrangements have been established before committing themselves to final plans for a reduction of armaments and armed forces."

Thus Austin is not willing to regard reduction of armaments as one of the major safeguards of the peace and security of nations, as is specifically laid down in the General Assembly's resolution. On the contrary, he holds that armament reduction must have as its premise "practical arrangements" for and "safeguards" of security. But what can be the value of such arrangements and safeguards if the armaments of the individual countries are not reduced, not even regulated by general agreements of the United Nations? Is it not obvious that in talking about safeguarding peace and security, Austin is actually advocating unrestricted arming — for the United States, of course, in the first place. His assurances of his desire to safeguard peace are unconvincing, for growing armament is indicative not of a stronger peace, but of preparation for war. Austin's statement can only be interpreted as an ideological camouflage for a new armament race.

The British representative, Sir Alexander Cadogan, speaking in the Security Council's Conventional Armaments Commission on March 24, fully endorsed Austin's arguments. He said that in examining the problem of the general reduction and

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regulation of armaments, the following principles must be observed:

"First, reduction and regulation of armaments and armed forces depends primarily upon the establishment of international confidence," and, "secondly, on completion of international arrangements for collective security. . . . These arrangements should, therefore, be completed before any practical measures to regulate or reduce armaments are actually adopted. . . . Thirdly, the establishment of an effective system of international control and verification must precede the adoption of armaments." This is just as in the days of the League of Nations: talk of collective security runs parallel with actual increase of armaments. And the parallel lines never meet.

In considering the armament race which has already begun, it is necessary to bear in mind the peculiarities of the present situation. Hardly two years have elapsed since the end of the war. During the war, the countries of the United Nations that took an active part in the fight against Hitler Germany and imperialist Japan were compelled by force of circumstances to create huge armies and abundant munitions of war. This fact must not be lost sight of when examining the problem of general regulation and reduction of armaments.

It was on the initiative of the Soviet Union that the question of reducing armaments was raised. Thereby our country demonstrated its genuine desire for universal peace and security. It is precisely in the present condition of affairs that the question of general regulation and reduction of armaments, which assumed enormous proportions during the war, acquires particular urgency. Since the General Assembly adopted its resolution, the Soviet representatives have been energetically insisting in the Security Council that it be put into effect without delay. The desire of the Soviet people for enduring peace was reflected in the drastic reduction of the allocations for military expenditure in its budget; they now amount to only 18 per cent of total expenditure.

The attitude of the American and British representatives in the Security Council testifies to a diametrically opposite position, namely, a refusal to accept a general regulation and reduction of armaments at once, without delay. The chief and evident concern of the United States and Great Britain is to retain and partly even to increase their major war-time armaments.

It is quite clear that the United States wants to preserve the advantages in armaments it attained during the war. This applies first and foremost to the atomic weapon. But there is another reason why the American militarists fear a clear and explicit statement of the issue and open discussion. We are referring to the U.S. navy, which attained immense proportions and is superior to the navies of all the other countries put together. This year the United States is reducing her naval appropriations from

last year's \$6,500 million to \$4,400 million. But, of course, this does not imply any reduction of armaments, for the American navy remains the strongest in the world nonetheless. Lastly, the United States has no desire to reduce its air force, and is taking energetic measures to equip it with the most-up-to-date machines.

It is quite understandable that, retaining these major positions in the field of armaments, the United States could consent to a certain reduction of its army from its wartime strength to 1,070,000 men. After all, this is a huge army, bearing in mind, firstly, that the United States has no reason to worry about the security of its land frontiers, and, secondly, that before the war it had a regular army of 174,000 men. America was also able for the time being to give up compulsory military service and to count upon filling an army establishment of this size by voluntary recruitment.

In spite of all this, in the new fiscal year military appropriations to the vast sum of more than \$11,000 million are contemplated, which represent nearly one-third of America's total budget expenditure. In the budget discussions in the Senate and House committees it was revealed how great is the discontent of the people with the heavy burden these immense military expenditures impose upon them.

While placing every obstacle in the way of a reduction of armaments, the American militarists are endeavouring to maintain industry in a state of readiness for a mass-scale production of armaments and are spending vast sums on scientific research for the invention of new weapons and the perfection of old ones.

All these measures for the retention and increase of armaments are designed to back expansionist plans of the United States: the creation of a chain of military bases in areas located thousands of miles from her frontiers, the military measures in Canada, Japan, China, Iran, Turkey, and Greece, the dismemberment of Germany, and so on.

As to Great Britain, her desire is to preserve and enlarge her naval and air arms in the first place. The new budget provides for an expenditure on the air force of £213,000,000, which is £17,000,000 more than the wartime expenditure. Expenditure on the army is cut; its size is reduced, but it still remains at the very high strength of 1,210,000 men. Conscription is introduced in Britain in peacetime. The debate in the House of Commons on the national service bill reflected the intense dissatisfaction prevailing in the country at the growth of militarism. The government was forced to make a certain concession to public opinion and introduced an amendment to the bill reducing the term of military service from eighteen months to one year.

More than one-fourth of the budget expenditures — some £900,000,000 — is allocated to the country's economy. This will lay a heavy burden on the country's economy. The plea of security advanced by government circles is swamped in a sea of accu-

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sations levelled at the maintenance of British troops in many countries that were not former enemies and the huge expenditure this entails.

The criticism which the new armament race policy is meeting both in Great Britain and the United States indicates that it is causing serious alarm among the masses. Past experience teaches that armament races can never lead to any good, and

that if peace and security are to be safeguarded, speedy and effective measures must be taken for general regulation and reduction of armaments.

It is from this angle that one must evaluate the position taken by the Anglo-Saxon representatives on the Security Council in the discussion of measures to effectuate the General Assembly's resolution on general regulation and reduction of armaments.

PICASSO AND THE ARTS UNDER CAPITALISM

JOHN OLDHAM

TO many Communists Picasso is puzzling. They consider his art obscure and unintelligible. Yet Picasso in his early life has had a great love of humanity. In his early painting of the "Blue" and "Pink" periods, it was from the ordinary people that he drew his inspiration. Then, when Franco attacked the democratic forces in Spain, far from thinking that the artist is "above" politics, he contributed much of his fortune to assist the Spanish Government, and used his art to attack and expose the fascists. He played an heroic part in France during the occupation. And now he is a Communist.

Yet in the "Tribune," 6/8/46, Derek Karton, a French writer, while paying a tribute to Picasso as a man, made the following statement:

"But having said this one must still add that both the Picassos and the Massons suffer fatally from the 40 years of barren experimentation with form in which the most talented artists have indulged in their despair with the world in which they found themselves."

I do not agree with Karton's statement as reported in the "Tribune," but for the moment it will serve to illustrate the profound contradiction that appears to exist between Picasso as a man and Picasso as a painter.

We cannot estimate Picasso and his work without some clarity on two fundamental questions:—first, What is art, especially visual art? and secondly, What effect does capitalism have on art and the artist? But before we deal with these, something about his life and work may be useful.

Picasso was born in Malaga, Spain, in 1881. His father was a professor of painting in Barcelona. He used drawings to express himself from his earliest childhood, and at the age of 14 painted a beautiful representational portrait of his sister which is the envy of many mature artists today. He went to Paris in 1900 and has spent most of his life there. At first influenced by representational experiments, he soon began experimenting on his own account, challenging all accepted canons of picture painting. In the words of one of Australia's foremost art authorities, Mr. Hal Missingham, Director of the National Art Gallery:

"His development of the form of painting created such a stir and such a commotion that the noise of battle has not yet died away. . . . Whatever

form his paintings take, almost all have an unmistakable touch of magic, a sureness about them that is satisfying and exciting. He paints objects as he thinks and feels them, by no means as he sees them. . . . Like all really first-rate artists Picasso is above classification. He is, I think, the spirit and moving force of our epoch."

Picasso has quite definite views about himself and his art. Interviewed about 1930, he said:

"I am not a pessimist. I do not hate art, for I could not live without consecrating all my hours to it. I love it as the total aim of my life. Everything that I do relative to art gives me great joy."

And of patrons — bourgeois patrons — "They take what they can and where they can. . . . They make everything in their own image, from God to a picture. That is why the patron is the destroyer of painting."

From the above it is clear that Picasso has a very great reputation as an artist, and that he is sincerely devoted to his art.

Now for the two questions I mentioned earlier. First, What is art? Here is my definition: "Art is that particular quality attached to the products and activities of man, which gives us an emotional and intellectual stimulus distinct from the material and intellectual stimulus distinct from the material use-value of the work." Visual art is the art which includes all man-made objects intended to appeal predominantly to the sense of sight — that is, the sense of sight rather than the sense of hearing, touch, smell or taste. Visual art then includes an enormous field. It includes painting, photography, the film, sculpture. It includes many objects in which the use-value predominates. But for our purpose it is important to separate the artistic value from the use-value. To illustrate: two chairs may be made by two men. Both may fulfil their function of supporting a human being in a sitting posture quite adequately. But one may be a great work of art, the other purely a use-value.

If we accept the foregoing definitions, it is clear that painting is only part, though an important part, of visual art. Picasso is a painter. Most of his work consists of colors, lines and tones applied to a flat surface enclosed in a frame.

Many of us today still demand of our painters entirely representational paintings and drawings, and we judge a painting in terms of the closeness of its direct imitation of nature. Yet in dealing with

music, we would not dream of making the same demand of our composers.

Painting is a visual art, dealing predominantly with the sense of sight. Music is an art dealing almost exclusively with another of our senses, the sense of hearing. Painting draws its inspiration in a world around us, and interprets this inspiration in a visual way, on a flat surface, with colors, tones, shading and textures. There is a definite range of colors, based on the colors we detect in nature, and these colors have a range within themselves from dark in tone to light. The composer, whether of songs or instrumental music, draws his inspiration from the world around us, but interprets it in terms of sound, using an instrument (either human or otherwise) which gives him a range of notes from which he may select those he requires for his composition. The notes are based on the sounds we detect in nature. They range from high pitch to low, from soft tone to loud.

If a musical composition is just an arrangement of notes which brings out fully the quality and beauty of the notes themselves, and which doesn't attempt to represent anything exactly from life, we can still admire it even though we are not great students of music. But if one of our painters makes a composition of colors and tones which brings out fully some quality of the colors and tones themselves, and doesn't attempt to represent anything exactly from life, some people say: "What's he driving at? Can't he paint things as we see them?"

I am not advocating that our painters should all go abstract. That would be a catastrophe. But just that when we see an abstract painting by any painter, let us approach it with sympathy and an open mind, not condemn it with ignorance and prejudice.

Now for our second question: "What effect does capitalism have on art and the artist?" One most significant result of capitalism which greatly affected the arts was the enormous extension of the division of labor. During feudalism many of the useful objects needed by man were works of art produced by individual craftsmen. Crockery was made by the potter on the potter's wheel and so on. The craftsman could take a joy and a pride in the work of his own hands. What happened when capitalism took over? To quote Marx:

"While simple co-operation leaves the mode of working by the individual for the most part unchanged, manufacture thoroughly revolutionises it, and seizes labor power by its very roots. It converts the laborer into a crippled monstrosity, by forcing his detailed dexterity at the expense of a world of productive capabilities and instincts. . . . The knowledge, the judgment, and the will, which, though in ever so small a degree, are practised by the independent peasant or handicraftsman, . . . these faculties are now required only for the workshop as a whole."

This process has been greatly accelerated in recent years by the widespread use of mass production. Perhaps the best example is a Henry Ford

assembly line where a worker does a simple operation with two fingers of one hand for the whole of his working life.

For the artist — and by artist I also mean the artist-handicraftsman — the advent of capitalism and the acceleration of the division of labor was disastrous. Other specialists such as scientists and engineers were useful to capitalism, and science received an enormous stimulus. But art was considered a luxury. In the words of Marx: "Capitalism is hostile to art." The artist has either to take a "useful" job in industry as described above or starve in a garret. Many artists who didn't take the industrial job became outcasts from bourgeois society, were treated as useless and slightly queer. Works of art, instead of being incorporated in the general process of social life, were relegated to special museum-like structures called galleries, standing apart from the life of the community.

Capitalism was hostile to art, and conversely artists became hostile to capitalist society. They sought a solution to their problems by retiring into an ivory tower, became obsessed with personal problems.

It was into this environment that Picasso was born. It has been in an environment of decaying capitalism that he has spent the whole of his creative life.

Despite the fact that Picasso was not fully conscious of what was going on around him, I believe much of his work reflects very effectively the anarchy, horror and cruelty of capitalism in decay.

As far as they are interested in art, the capitalists wish it to be ordered, romantic, express serene beauty, gloss over ugliness. Picasso refused to subject himself to the lies and deceit involved in this sort of painting.

One of the objects of Picasso was to break through the romantic vision or conception of painting handed down to us from the immediate past. And in this he achieved his object. His success has been an inspiration to other artists, particularly architecture. That is why I cannot agree with the characterisation of the work of this painter by Kerton as "forty years of barren experimentation with form." It is true that during those forty years Picasso was experimenting with form, but these experiments were far from barren.

Communists naturally wish to see great social themes expressed in works of art; but I believe that Communists should be careful in their criticism of art and artists, should be quite certain they understand their subject before indulging in criticism in Marxist terms. By this I don't mean that Communists should hesitate to criticise the politics of an artist. If an artist indulges in politics, either consciously or unconsciously (and we must encourage them to do so) we must be exacting in our criticism.

Capitalism is hostile to art. And in greater and greater numbers artists are becoming actively hostile to capitalism. Artists, frustrated and disgusted with their treatment in capitalist society, are seeking a solution to their problem. They can be our allies

in the class struggle, for their problems cannot be solved until socialism is achieved.

When an artist comes to the class struggle, when he makes the final important step of joining the Communist Party let's accept him as we accept any other skilled tradesman. We don't say to carpenters, or ironworkers: "From now on, you must not experiment in form and method. From now on, you must produce only Communist houses, Communist machines and Communist chairs and tables."

EGYPT AND THE SUDAN

NORMAN FREEHILL

ERNEST BEVIN, knight in shining armor for all that represents freedom, democracy and independence, having thumped a few tables to pieces, almost in tears at the obstinacy of the Egyptians. Obstinate about the Sudan. Obstinate about the British keeping their army in Egypt.

Mr. Bevin is sentimental about "the way being left free for Sudanese independence." About the British Army in Egypt Mr. Bevin has not the same smoke-screen material of sentimentality.

Mr. Bevin wants the Sudan to continue its present independent course (under British control) with the right to complete independence "when the time is ripe" (British monopoly capital to decide when the time is ripe).

Mr. Bevin discussed this with Sidky Pasha—representative of the Egyptian Federation of Industries and agent of British Imperialism—in December last. In return for this I'll take my—and Winston's—troops out of Egypt, just across the Canal. This will pacify your nationalists and be a nice, handy position from which we can move in again to protect your interests—and ours, of course!—should your intellectuals, workers and peasants take too seriously this dangerous democracy talk which is floating around the world.

This gangster-hijacker bargain between Mr. Bevin and Sidky Pasha was set out in a protocol in December. Its publication caused an uproar comparable to the public reaction to the infamous Hoare-Laval Pact to divide up Abyssinia.

The uproar in Egypt was so great that Sidky's "health" was affected and he resigned. Nor has the protest eased in the succeeding months.

Under the pressure of the rising Nationalist wrath Nokrashy, on January 27, said the matter would go to U.N.O.

The progressive forces—intellectuals and workers—built on the move with a slogan: To U.N.O.—but with a democratic Government! This is disturbing to a Government which restricts the franchise and, when the votes are cast, makes doubly chise and, when the ballots. It will also disturb Dr. Ewart, "Stabber Jack" Beasley and other Australian Imperialism, who boil with indignation about the wrongs of the poor, downtrodden Fascist elements in the new democracies, but who have carefully

Let's say instead to our artists, in the words of Comrade Harry Gould:

"Be Communists! Feel, as a Communist should, a hatred for social oppression and injustice. Try to understand what is happening in the world, what fascism means, what the free enterpriser aims at. . . . If you do, then you will, I am sure, imbue your art with greater feeling and vision. You will know what to write about, or sculpt, or compose, and the added knowledge and purer emotion will advance your art."

overlooked, amongst a host of other things, the "minor" matter of British subjugation of Egypt and the Sudan.

Nokrashy Pasha succeeded Sidky Pasha as Prime Minister. He heads a Government which represents only the extreme right wing of Egyptian reaction. The popular (bourgeois) party, the W.A.F.D., is not represented in the Government. In the Sydney Morning Herald of March 22 was a nauseating article on Nokrashy headed "Egypt Is Led By Her Worthiest Son," in which was said: "His two noted characteristics are his honesty and courage."

What might be said of Nokrashy is that he is better than Sidky. Just as it might be said of Lucky Luciano that he is better than Al Capone.

Nokrashy reads the Bevin-Sidky-hatched protocol as he wants to: Complete unity with Egypt so that the unselfish feudal lords and bourgeoisie can prepare the Sudanese for "self-government." This cuts the string which Bevin so cleverly attached to the protocol, a string which he thought was sufficiently long to bolt the Sudan door to Egypt or unbolt it to Britain, as circumstances might require.

It's an awkward situation. But the boys at the Foreign Office told Mr. Bevin not to lose heart. Just as General Smuts got petitions signed by West African chiefs calling for absorption into the Union of South Africa, so the Foreign Office minions in Sudan have been seeking signed declarations from bribed Sudanese officials and subsidised Sudanese tribal chiefs requesting separation from Egypt and a British trusteeship until the Sudan is ripe for independence!

Sir Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi Pasha, staunch friend of the British, went to London to help on the good work of Imperialism.

The general crisis of capitalism is sharpening. The structure of Imperialism is rending under the stress and strain of its inherent contradictions. So widely is this recognised in international circles as to render difficult the old-time hypocritical diplomatic subtleties; the niceties of speech that cloaked the threat of murder and large-scale theft.

In March of last year, Prime Minister Attlee announced that it had been decided to withdraw

British troops from Egypt "unconditionally." In this he was consistent, as British Governments have been making the same promise since 1881. And the Foreign Office maintained its consistency by ignoring Atlee's promises, just as it has done Bevin's, when such promises cut across Imperialist interests. The troops are still in Egypt!

The Executive Committee of the British Communist Party expressed its opinion of Atlee's promise re Egypt (and other colonial and dependent countries) in these terms: "The subject people are not deceived either by specious constitutional reforms or by declarations of sham independence, which seek to deflect the demand for freedom, but which leave unchanged the real substance of power, the fact of military occupation and the economic relations which are the essence of Imperialist domination."

The statement specifically demanded (inter alia) the complete withdrawal of troops from the Sudan and Egypt.

All Mr. Bevin's word-spinning cannot hide the fact that the Egyptian people do not want the British armed forces; cannot hide the fact that Britain has armed forces in Egypt for protection of its Imperialist interests in Sudan, Egypt, Lebanon, Transjordan, Iraq, Iran, India, and Africa.

As the influential London "Economist" indicated clearly early in the discussions, Britain is adamant about the Sudan and Egypt. Egypt (said the "Economist") must be adequately defended "against any conqueror wishing to tamper with its riches and with the many British Imperial interests which lie just beyond."

So too with the Sudan, for British finance capital keeps a grip on Sudan's revenue and British industrialists and their Indian offshoots take 66 per cent. of its cheaply-produced raw products (chiefly cotton).

"The Economist's" cold-blooded declaration of Imperial gangsterism makes Mr. Bevin's task of "explaining" a little difficult.

However, his thumps and rants for Sudanese independence ("when the time is ripe") are equalled only by the altruism and high-mindedness of the Egyptian feudal landowners and bourgeoisie. The Sudanese (they say, without table thumps) must be given the right to ally themselves with their economic, social and blood brothers of the Nile Valley!

"We just could not face the British people if we failed to guarantee the Sudanese that independence which means so much to them," says Mr. Bevin.

"We would start back aghast at our reproving consciences if we did not insist on our Sudanese brothers being linked with us," say the Egyptian bourgeoisie.

Pretty fiction, star-distant in each case from the fact, which is that the British Imperialists and the Egyptian feudal lords and war-profit-bloated Egyptian capitalists cannot agree to split the rich Sudan watermelon between them.

Why don't they? For two main reasons, both being contradictions inherent in capitalism.

First contradiction is that which is expressed in the antagonism between the Imperialist Powers in their fight for territory, for sources of raw materials, for markets.

To that clash of economic interests is added the second contradiction, "the antagonism between the handful of ruling 'civilised' nations and the hundreds of millions of colonial and dependent peoples of the world." In this case "dependent" Egypt and "colonial" (under a mask of the condominium) Sudan.

And the moves for independence in both Sudan and Egypt are rampaging these democratic days.

Out of exploitation and oppression by "a ruling 'civilised' nation," has arisen in Egypt and the Sudan a class of proletarians "... a native intelligentsia, the awakening of a national consciousness, the strengthening of the liberation movement."

Current history brings out with stereoscopic sharpness those Leninist truths.

Sections of the colonial bourgeoisie at times even forget their long-range economic interests in the bitter, burning shame of past oppression.

For the British Imperialists have made little pretence of hiding their domination of both Egypt and the Sudan. Incident after incident in Egypt's history since the 'Sixties has shown, how insolent has been the rule of the Effendi.

Some of these incidents have eaten like acid deep into the consciousness of the people. The British Government admitted in the House of Commons on May 13, 1919, that about 1,000 Egyptians had been killed because of the killing of some soldiers and a British officer who, earlier, had been responsible for the death of an Egyptian.

Let us glance briefly backward at the Sudan. Sudan was freed for British capital—and democracy, of course—in 1898. Australia of those days, saturated with the metho. spirit of imperialism, sent a contingent. The battle for Sudan was frightfully tough! But democratic machines and cannon and civilised armies triumphed over the spears of the barefooted barbarian Sudanese.

For the next half-century British guns and martial law protected the Sudanese from such devices of the devil as hospitals, education, health measures, trade unions, and the vote. British Imperialism saw to it that the Sudanese did not get involved in modern rubbish such as factories, manufacture and industry generally. It mapped out a policy which forced the Sudanese into poverty and semi-feudal bondage. It used every device to keep the eight million or so peoples divided. Artistically-created antagonisms between the Arabic north and the multi-racial south were carefully fostered to keep the people from unitedly demanding their rights.

The actual political set-up was clearly stated by Sir Sidney Low in "Egypt in Transition":—

"The Sudan is divided into 14 provinces, each presided over by an English Mudir or Governor, responsible to the Governor-General, who is nominally responsible to the Khedive (now King) of Egypt and to the King of England; actually responsible to nobody, unless, it be to the British Agent in Cairo who is, in theory, one of the foreign Consuls-General, and, in reality, the representative of the British Government, which controls the Government of Egypt."

A little cotton-ginning was the only industry allowed the Sudanese. Main activity was and is the cotton growing of the big English monopoly, the Sudan Plantation Syndicate.

Sudan is not a colony. (This statement always wins a laugh in the Sudan!) It is ruled under a condominium which provides for joint rule by England and Egypt. (This statement always wins a laugh in Egypt!)

Sudan is dry in the north, has a huge rich agricultural area in the south, but, most important, within its area lies the source of the White Nile, chief wealth-giver to the lower Nile irrigation areas. And the flooded and irrigated narrow strip of highly fertile land along the banks of the Nile is Egypt. The rest of Egypt isn't even good building sand.

But the Sudan has other great importance to Mr. Bevin's masters: it has a Red Sea coastline.

As Douglas Wilkie said in Sydney "Sun," 23/9/46: "Britain has economic and strategic interests in the Sudan, plus an obligation to the Sudanese, who are less likely to get a square deal from their Egyptian neighbours than their British oppressors." (Oppressors! Tch, tch!)

Over the past 10 years or so a national movement has emerged in the Sudan—the Graduates' General Congress. Formed with British approval and pursuing for some time a progressive educational policy (it has built more than 100 schools since its formation) it has striven to eliminate illiteracy. These efforts won for it place in the hearts of the Sudanese and allowed it to move to a political activity which, in 1941, could demand self-determination with economic development by the Sudanese. The hand-picked, British-owned, Sudanese 'Government' refused to pass the demand along to London.

The Graduates' Congress recently joined with the Ashigga, Unionists, Liberals and Liberal-Unionists in forming the Sudanese National Front. In March the S.N.F. demanded "establishment of a democratic Government in the Sudan as quickly as possible."

An S.N.F. delegation visiting Middle East countries was repudiated by the recently-resigned Governor-General (Sir Hubert Huddleston), which suggests that the United Front is worrying the Foreign Office.

It looks as if the worries are likely to increase. In June, the British Civil Secretary of the Sudan Government (Mr. Robertson) suspended three National Front papers for their anti-Imperialist comment. The Sudanese Journalists' Union protested

and all Arab papers in the Sudan decided to cease publication. Popular feeling rose so high that tanks were brought out by the British authorities. However, so general was the protest that the suspense orders were withdrawn.

The paper "Al Balagh" commented dryly that suspension was the British way of "granting the Sudanese the right freely to decide their future."

Now (August 11) comes word of a strike of 7,000 Sudanese railway workers. With the workers allied to the Sudanese intelligentsia and nationalist bourgeoisie the Sudanese may decide to do their own deciding.

The Egyptian landholders have their eyes to the rich land in the south and their thoughts on the control of the Nile head-waters which are the life-blood of Egypt. In addition, the war-nourished Egyptian industrialists, now frantic for markets, and realising that their exploited, poverty-stricken peasantry cannot absorb local industrial production, are looking to the Sudan and elsewhere in the Middle East.

But British finance-capital also has its eyes on the land (it has its hands on it anyway!) and on Sudan as a market. British finance-capital also has its thoughts on the control of the Nile waters, realising full well that this means the control of Egypt.

Nokrashy Pasha borrowed in June last a well-worn red bogey from his Turkish feudal friends and sent a shiver up the spine of the U.S. State Department as a preliminary to asking for "a substantial loan." According to that paper "Al Nida" "Negotiations have made definite progress. Egypt has accepted the American condition by which a special position in the defence of the Canal Zone will be granted to the U.S.A."

Disturbing to Egyptian and British bourgeoisie is that the Egyptian workers are gathering strength. Hundreds tried to prevent supplies being loaded on the Dutch liner "Volendam" at Port Said (S.M. Herald 11/8/47) and there is increasing evidence of widening union and political activity.

Hard-pressed by the stand-over tactics of its bloated American brother, British finance-capital is almost frantically holding to what it has, and will relinquish even a portion only as a final desperate compromise. At the moment, armed with the huge Egyptian sterling balance — probably £500,000,000 — which it holds in its grip, it believes it can out-blackmail, out-bully, out-sell and out-fight what it must view as the insolent Egyptian upstarts.

The Sudanese and the Egyptian people should benefit from this strife between Egyptian and British capital. To what extent is difficult to say in view of the division among the Egyptian bourgeoisie and the numerical weakness of the proletarian leadership and the extreme backwardness of the peasant masses of both countries.

Still, these days events move quickly, and when thieves fall out . . . !

TASKS OF AUSTRALIAN SCIENTISTS

H. G. HIGGINS, B.Sc. (Hons.)

NEVER before in our history have such urgent tasks in the social sphere confronted Australian scientific workers as at the present moment. Never before, perhaps, has Australian science been better equipped to meet the challenge, but much remains to be accomplished.

Recent wild and irresponsible allegations against certain scientific individuals and organisations are in keeping with the generally strained relations between world reaction and science. Imperialism, monopoly capitalism, needs the services of science and technology for its very existence (in no matter how unstable a form); on the other hand it fears the irresistible march of human knowledge and ingenuity, which will inevitably be a determining material factor in the final elimination of class society.

Not only does imperialism depend largely on science in its quest for super-profits in those periods of uneasy "normality" between the recurring, enlarging cycles of war and economic crisis which have been part and parcel of its existence, but it now seeks to conscript science into continuous service of its war aims. Such an attempt involves a denial of the great tradition of scientific freedom, of the unfettered interchange of ideas and results without which development must be stifled.

These contradictions have not sprung up suddenly since the development of the atomic bomb; they have been a part of the system of imperialism and have grown with it. The release of nuclear energy, however, has sharpened the antagonisms, and has made them apparent to the majority of scientific workers. That is why a broad front can be built up against the imperialist war-mongers; attacks on scientists are attacks against all progressive forces, including the working class.

Some of the more subtle stooges of monopoly capitalism, those better experienced in distortion and suppression of facts, realise that excesses of the kind indulged in by Mr. Abbott under parliamentary privilege will tend to alienate the support of the masses. For instance, a report of Mr. Abbott's criticism of Sir David Rivett, a member of Canberra on the necessity for freedom in scientific research appeared in only one of the four Melbourne dailies. Similarly the concluding phases of the defeat of Mr. Edmunds ("Liberal" member for Hawthorn in the Victorian Parliament) at the hands of Melbourne University students and staff (whom he had vulgarly abused and red-baited) were not marked by the same press publicity as his earlier efforts, and he was even turned on by sections of his supporters.

In Australia manifestations are not lacking of the imperialist drive to press science into the service

of war, and the voice of Wall Street does not go unheard.

Any legitimate preparations for defence of our country will certainly be supported by Australian scientists. During the war against fascism, they threw themselves into the struggle, both within the services and in civilian capacities. Their whole efforts were directed towards the application to military purposes of established scientific principles. That was the urgent task then, but in the changed conditions of today there must be a re-initiation of fundamental research and a re-orientation of its application towards fulfilling the needs of the people.

It is not impossible that "military scientists" exalted status may seek to implicate a wide circle of scientific workers in projects quite remote from defence, at the behest of those circles in the United States which constitute the only real threat to peace in the world today. If successful, their unwelcome attentions would cast a pall of secrecy over many of our laboratories, with the attendant threats of dire penalties for trumped-up breaches of official confidence. Experiences in Britain and Canada have shown that such frame-ups are not confined to regimes such as those of Hitler or Truman.

For scientists, too, the struggle against secrecy will be integrated with other proposals, such as the development and expansion of research into nuclear physics in Australia. Whereas a year ago we viewed these problems of secrecy, military control, atomic diplomacy, as vitally important but rather remote, we now find them knocking at our own back door.

Particularly significant is the forthright statement of Sir David Rivett, who, as chairman of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, presumably speaks for that body, to the effect that neither C.S.I.R. nor the Universities should be implicated in preparations for aggressive war. His sentiments will certainly find the widest support amongst the majority of the workers in those institutions.

The full use of science and technology does not come automatically under a capitalist economy—indeed it can never be achieved. Only a constant struggle, in which scientists as well as administrators must play their part, can lead to the best development of productive resources under any prevailing set of economic conditions.

Sometimes the struggle will be directed against the unconscious inertia of moribund authorities, but more often against the conscious obstruction of financial interests for whom larger profits do not coincide with better living standards for the people. Our geologists and engineers must show how better utilisation can be made of our mineral resources,

how brown coal can solve the power problem in Victoria; our foresters must show why our timber resources have been so depleted, and how rational utilisation can be achieved; our architects must overcome the adherence to obsolete building codes; our doctors must campaign for the eradication of tuberculosis. Many more examples could be cited. Sometimes it will be difficult to find even a partial solution of a problem without making it clear that the means of production must be publicly owned. A socialist Australia could well become the happiest place on earth.

The social aims of science have been to the fore in the deliberations and activity of the Australian Association of Scientific Workers, and this circumstance has probably been responsible for Mr. Abbott's attacks upon this very reputable body. He resents the existence of an organisation of men and women, of many political views, who nevertheless have this in common: that they seek a satisfactory solution of the problems besetting science as a part of society generally. Interest in these matters is extending in a healthy way to other organisations concerned primarily with the economic conditions of technical workers.

This brings us to a consideration of our tasks in the economic sphere. The scientific trade unions such as the F.S.T.W., the A.A.E.S.D.A., the C.S.I.R.O.A., are developing apace and are playing a real part in the general struggle of the employed classes for better wages and conditions. The economic interests of the middle class generally, and of scientific and technical workers in particular, are becoming ever more closely identified with those of the industrial workers. This basic fact must be brought home to the members of the scientific unions, and ready support will be found for its general acceptance, despite sporadic resistance from a few "senior scientists" who are irrevocably committed to the bourgeois system and its ideology.

There is room in these organisations for the

development of union principles: of solidarity, of 100% unionism, of an abhorrence of scabbing. Such development will contribute materially to the workers' struggles in critical periods, and will refute the pious efforts of right-wing politicians, employers, and managements to organise "volunteers" from among staff members.

One significant trend is the evident desire for co-operation between the various economic organisations, which has been called forth principally on the basis of securing better conditions of employment generally for scientific and technical workers. Mutual discussions, joint action, and exchange of experiences are welcomed because they strengthen the hand of any body of workers in negotiations with employers. It is possible, for example, to discover anomalies in salaries paid for similar services, and these can be used to raise the general level, to improve the lot of some employees, and thus to strengthen the organisation. In N.S.W. last year a move was made towards the establishment of a Federation of Scientific and Technical Associations; in Victoria at the present time joint discussions are being held between several leading scientific and technical unions, and a Committee of Technical Associations has been set up for their perpetuation.

These federative activities have more than a purely reformist significance, and are to be encouraged by all progressive scientific workers, who desire to forge the closest unity with the great working class in its struggle for emancipation.

Scientists have grave responsibilities in the present period, and only by meeting them conscientiously and resolutely can they contribute to defeating the growing threat of a new fascism. Attacks on intellectuals, anti-Semitism, and the all-out offensive of the capitalist class against Communists form too familiar a pattern to be taken lightly, and the most strenuous efforts to counter them must be put forth by all who realise the effect of fascism upon science and upon humanity.



Questions & Answers

conducted by
L.H. GOULD

On what grounds do you deny that the Jews of the world constitute a single nation? Why is the Communist Party critical of Zionism?—J. Greene.

The assertion that the Jews constitute a nation is clearly refuted by the facts of life, by history, by social and political development. Nationhood requires as fundamental pre-conditions that a people must occupy a common territory and possess community of language, and economic life. The Jews do not.

What common national interests are there, or can there be, between, say, English-speaking Jewish workers in Australia, Greek-speaking Jewish guerrillas in Greece, wealthy American Jews who support Truman's imperialist provocation against democracy everywhere, Yiddish-speaking Jewish farmers in the Jewish Soviet Autonomous Region of Biro-Bidjan? The question has only to be asked to reveal the absurdity of the claim that the Jews are a nation! (It is true of course that the Jews in capitalist lands have this much in common, that

they are all subject to varying degrees of anti-Semitic prejudice and outrage).

This does not at all mean that the Jewish people cannot form themselves into nations. If the conditions are favorable they can, and in fact, they are doing so today. Two new nations, Jewish nations, are now in process of formation, one in Biro-Bidjan, the second in Palestine. There is nothing extraordinary in this development. The emergence of the "new British nations" (Canada, Australia, etc.) provides an historical parallel; the Australians and Canadians exhibit all the necessary characteristics of nationhood.

What are the characteristics, the pre-conditions, of nationhood?

Modern nations, says Stalin, are the product of rising capitalism. He defines a nation: "A historically-evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture." He pointed out that every nation "is subject to the law of change, it has its history, its beginning and end."

The question, What is a nation?—was of fundamental significance in the Russian Revolution. About half the total population of Tsarist Russia consisted of subject nations and peoples. The Jewish question naturally occupied a prominent place. Were the Jews a nation? Should they (i.e., the Jewish workers in Tsarist Russia) have their own political party? The various anti-Marxist viewpoints of that pre-1917 period (and since!) are well summarised in the following definition of a nation by Otto Bauer, a leading theoretician of the reformist Second International: "A nation is the aggregate of people bound into a community of character by a community of fate."

Stalin made the following devastating answer: "We thus have a community of national character based on a community of fate and not necessarily connected with community of territory, language or economic life."

"But what in that case remains of the nation? What national community can there be among people who are economically disconnected, inhabit different territories and from generation to generation speak different languages?"

"Bauer speaks of the Jews as a nation, although they have no common language; but what community of fate and national cohesion can there be, for instance, between the Georgian, Daghestanian, Russian and Armenian Jews, who are completely disunited, inhabit different territories and speak different languages?"

"The Jews enumerated undoubtedly lead the same economic and political life as the Georgians, Daghestanians, Russians and Armenians respectively, and in the same cultural atmosphere as the latter; this cannot but leave a definite impression on their national character; if there is anything common to them, if it is their religion, their common origin and certain relics of national character. All this is beyond question. But how can it be seriously main-

tained that petrified religious rites and fading psychological relics affect the 'fate' of these Jews more powerfully than the living social, economic and cultural environment that surrounds them? And it is only on this assumption that it is generally possible to speak of the Jews as a single nation."

"What, then, distinguishes Bauer's nation from the mystical and self-contained 'national spirit' of the spiritualists?"

The foregoing explains the critical attitude of the Communists towards Zionism. Communism regards prejudice against Jews (also against other minority groups and peoples, against foreign peoples, etc.) as the product of the class struggle—in brief, the need of the oppressors to find new victims and to produce a scapegoat. The solution of the Jewish problem must therefore be regarded as part of the general solution of society's problems, namely, the united struggle of the forces of Labor and democracy against capitalism. The only real hope for persecuted minority groups is to ally itself actively with the militant progressive movement, and in turn, the latter must protect the minority group suffering persecution because of their religion, race or nationality.

Zionism, however, sought the solution of the Jewish problem mainly, one might say entirely, within Jewry itself; its specific answer was to be the creation of Palestine as a Jewish State which would be the "national home of world Jewry." This conception derived from the "mystical" interpretation of the Jews as a nation. Zionist leadership has been bourgeois, bourgeois nationalist. This explains its orientation on British imperialism following the Balfour Declaration of 1917 which promised the establishment of a national home for Jews in Palestine; it also explains why, in more recent years, one section of the top Zionist leadership has switched from reliance on Britain to the more powerful imperialism of Truman and Vandenberg.

Communists differentiate between Zionism, as the conscious or unconscious tool of imperialist intrigue in the Middle East, and the legitimate needs and aspirations of the Jewish settlement in Palestine, now numbering 600,000, and almost entirely the result of savage persecution in capitalist countries.

The aspirations include, in particular, the winning of nationhood; but this cannot be the "Jewish State" conception of Zionism, or at least that section of it, which denies equivalent rights to the Arab population. Further, the claim by some Zionists that the establishment of such a "Jewish State" would "normalise" the position of Jews in all lands has played into the hands of anti-Semites and other agents of imperialist reaction. A Jewish national home in Palestine will be a national home only for the Jews in that country. Thus, the fantastic notion that the Jews of all lands constitute a single nation leads to echoing the anti-Semitic slander that the Jews "don't belong."

Jewish people in Australia are Australian by nationality, and will remain so irrespective of what

happens in Palestine. Apart from a Jewish person here and there motivated by sentimental or family reasons, no Australian Jew has the least intention of going to Palestine. Similarly with Jews who live in Britain, U.S.A., the Soviet Union!

Much more could be said about Zionism, but of immediate significance is the division of Zionism into three main groupings, a division brought into sharper relief as a result of M. Gromyko's historic declaration on Palestine at UNO's General Assembly.

One grouping continues orientated on British imperialism; the second, on USA imperialism; and

the third is linking up more and more with the Left.

This third grouping sees the basic solution, quite correctly, in the unity of the Arab-Jewish peoples in Palestine. Progressive unity of the two peoples, and these with world democracy, will transform into living reality Gromyko's proposal: "The legal rights of the Jewish and the Arab people in Palestine will be protected really only by creating an independent democratic Arab-Jewish State."

(References: Stalin, Marxism and the National and Colonial Question).

L.W.: The word is obviously used only in a figurative sense.



BOOK REVIEW

AUSTRALIAN COMMUNISTS AND SOVIET
RUSSIA (L. L. SHARKEY)

NORMAN FREEHILL



[S] the Australian Communist Party "Russian dominated" in seeking strict price fixing, increased wages, slum eradication, and better housing for the Australian people?

Is it a crime that the Communist Party works for peace and co-operation between all the peoples of the world?

Is the Party to be condemned because it exposes the plans of the American imperialists to plunge the world into the unspeakable horrors of a Third World War?

Is it anti-Australian when it exposes the danger of American Imperialism to Australia's sugar, fruit and other industries?

Was Churchill a traitor when he opposed Chamberlain? Lloyd George when he denounced Munich?

Mr. Sharkey takes up the charges and shatters them, one by one. He uses facts — unanswerable arguments! — to rip away from Truth the layers of lies laid on so lavishly by the press and spokesmen of reaction.

The Australian Communist Party denounced von Luckner. Opposed the export of pig-iron to Japan. Condemned Italy's attack on Abyssinia.

It opposed Chamberlain's appeasement policy which was slavishly followed by Menzies and Co. and accepted by most of the A.L.P. leaders.

It denounced the treacherous "non-interventionist" policy which helped Franco (aided by Germans, Italians and Moors) to crush the young Spanish democratic republic brutally, bloodily.

The Australian Communist Party condemned Munich, which handed Czechoslovakia over to the Fascists.

No words were too harsh, no abuse too vile to hurl at the Communist Party on those occasions. Its members who led the protests were fined and jailed.

History proved that the Party was right. And history will prove the Party right in its opposition to the ruthless Imperialism of Wall Street.

The Communists of Australia, charged with being "agents of a foreign power," are in good company. The Communists of France were so charged; were called "traitors." History has written the names of 75,000 of them (members of the Resistance, murdered by the Nazis) in letters of gold. Their defamers betrayed France to the Nazis. They ended on the gallows, in prison, disgraced in the eyes of all decent people.

The Australian Communists are concerned primarily with Australia. They bend their efforts to improve conditions in the homes, factories, localities. Yet they never swerve from their objectives: A Socialist Society, in which poverty and fear will be no more; where peace will rule and exploitation of man by man will cease.

French Communists strive to do for France; Belgian Communists to do for Belgium; English Communists for England, what the Australian Communists do for Australia.

If there was no Soviet Republic, the Australian Communist Party would still serve the people; still strive for Socialism.

The Australian Communist Party, Mr. Sharkey points out, makes no secret of its aims. Its policy is set out in the *Communist Review*, in *Tribune*, the *Guardians*, in pamphlets and books.

It also makes no secret of its internationalism. For it believes "that the working peoples of all countries must co-operate in order to improve their living standards and achieve the goal of a Socialist Society."

This is a timely pamphlet. It should be read, of course, by every Party member. Far more important is that every Party member should see that a copy is in the hands of every supporter, every person confused or misled by the flood of falsehood in the daily press.

[Price sixpence from Current Book Distributors, 695 George Street, from Pioneer and progressive bookshops.]

THIS IS MY STORY (LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ) SENDER GARLIN (New York)

HITLER'S residuary legatees are busy. Their voices may be heard in Congress, on the radio, in the press. The American imperialists, seeking to stifle democratic movements everywhere, in order to establish world mastery, know that the conquest of the human mind is a vital part of their war strategy. It is this political climate that makes possible the publication of the "revelations" of one who in 1945 absconded from Communist circles in order to make a well-timed and well-publicised entry into the Catholic Church. If ever there was a time for such political pornography, it is the present.

It is as difficult to "refute" Budenz's collections of half-truths, mis-statements, libels, slanders and vilifications as it is to catch a greased pig. How, for instance, was one to refute one of Budenz's predecessors—Jan Valtin—when the latter told how the seventy-four-year-old Romain Roland was offered the choice of "girl companions" by an alleged Moscow agent? Can such miserable falsehood be refuted by documentary evidence?

One thing is quite obvious about Budenz's chronicle: he prepared himself for his task by a most conscientious reading of all previous confessions by kindred spirits, including Victor Serge, Walter Krivitsky, Jan Valtin, Alexander Barmine, Eugene Lyons, Isaac Don Levine, Ben Gitlow and all the others who have made a career of describing the Communist movement "from the inside."

Budenz has lots of stuff about "secret agents." I read about it before in concoctions by Kravchenko and his friends. It's the kind of stuff that's easy to write. You don't have to prove a thing. You assert it loudly, violently, "colorfully," and the more luridly fictitious your yarn is, the more impressed are the reviewers. For these gentlemen of the literary stock-exchange who are so stern in appraising the historical truth of a novel, say, by Howard Fast when he deals with John Peter Altgeld, are suckers for Budenz's stuff.

Budenz proclaims that he wrote his book "in humility." A few examples: He writes that "some people began to call me the best known man in the labor movement." He suggests that a letter he wrote for the Republican New York Sun was somehow responsible for the popular front policy enunciated by Georgi Dimitrov at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International. To build up his authority as a "Communist leader" who participated in the highest councils of the organization, he tells of meetings in which he allegedly participated. And always, of course, he played a stellar role. The picture he presents of himself is one of master-organiser, theoretician, editor, silver-tongued orator, and giant battler for human freedom. To those who, like myself, had the melancholy privilege of working with Budenz, these self-serving

declarations can only bring wry smiles. All told, it suggests the day-dream of James Thurber's classic, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*. It must be said for Mr. Mitty, however, that his dreams were harmless.

It would be a mistake to think that Budenz has given himself this terrific build-up merely for the purpose of propping a sagging ego. It is the regulation formula of the informer seeking to impress his clients with his impressive "background," his extensive "connections," and his ability to play the fingerman against militants in the labor movement. That Budenz has had a measure of success in this business has already been amply demonstrated: he is permanent star witness for the Un-American Committee, and announces that he is working on another book which "will evaluate the Reds in the labor movement."

Budenz gaily acknowledges that for a number of years after his first meeting with Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen he felt like an "onlooker," even though posing as a devoted Communist. "At the *Daily Worker*," he recalls, "I criticised copy, made proposals and revisions on pieces to back the line—and fingered a rosary in my pocket as I did so."

Yet, Budenz's principal leitmotif is the "duplicity" of the Communists!

Throughout the narrative, too, one encounters the phrase, "I made notes at the time," and one is impelled to ask, for whom?

But the answer is no longer a mystery. Whether Louis Budenz entered the Communist movement ten years ago for the purpose of ultimately betraying it, only Budenz and Monsignor Sheen can say. But that his conduct while he was ostensibly a Communist (according to his own testimony) savored of the stoolpigeon is beyond question.

The description of his "conversion" to Catholicism is as phony as the rest of his story. It's full of contradictions and retroactive explanations. This conversion—if indeed it was that—was not a religious one. If he is a convert, then so was Jacques Doriot who deserted the French working-class movement to do the dirty work of the fascists who sought to destroy France.

The spectacle of Budenz collecting wages from the *Daily Worker*—cash made available frequently through contributions of loyal Party members—while his real sympathies lay elsewhere, is certainly not one that suggests either St. Augustine or St. Francis of Assisi. Duplicity is a mild word.

One thing must be said for Budenz: he is consistent. He lies on virtually every page. He lies when he says that the Communist Party demands a religious test for membership. He lies when he says that "when a member takes up a new post, he must file a complete new biography,"

giving his entire history "and a list of his relatives." Budenz's imagination is so inflamed for the purposes of his book that he doctors up speeches made by former colleagues. He quotes from alleged talks before the *Daily Worker* staff by James S. Allen and Milton Howard, for instance. I happened to be present on both occasions. Although he is lavish in the use of quotation marks, Budenz attributes remarks to Allen and Howard which do not bear the slightest resemblance to what these men actually said. In the same category are Budenz's malicious yarns about Art Shields, a veteran labor journalist of sterling character. Budenz uses another device, seemingly more important; he lifts sentences from Party documents and puts them in the form of statements made "confidentially" to him by "highly-placed Communist leaders."

Monsignor Sheen's agent says that American Communists are imprisoned in a "Red straitjacket." It impels the members of the Communist Party to submit to such a cruel fate? Do they celebrate

their thralldom by fulfilling manifold assignments involving hard and detailed work, and by contributing from their hard-earned wages to fund drives to fight the Budenzes and their kind?

Budenz's libels are not even original. Some have been plagiarised from Gerald L. K. Smith. He asserts, for instance, that in the Communist Party, "to have been born in Minak, Dvinsk or Pinsk was much more valued than birth in Minneapolis, Detroit or Pittsburgh."

This crude bit of anti-Sovietism aside for the moment, the facts in Budenz's own career would prove him a liar. It was Earl Browder's preoccupation with the form rather than the substance of an American Party that made possible Budenz's elevation to the National Committee a few short months after he joined the organisation.

Budenz's dedication of his book to the Virgin Mary is disingenuous. A more appropriate dedication would be to J. Edgar Hoover, the National Association of Manufacturers and Columbians, Inc.

NOW WE CAN DATE THE PAST

PROF. J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S.

UNTIL a generation ago the only events which we could date accurately were those which were part of a history where each year had a numerical date, such as the year 412 after the founding of the city of Rome, or a date by names of officials, such as the year when Caesar and Bibulus were consuls.

Even where the lengths of kings' reigns were accurately recorded, one does not know if "ten years" means ten years and one day or ten years and three hundred days, so the uncertainty soon piles up.

About 30 years ago, a number of historic eclipses were accurately dated, so that we know the date of the siege of Troy within ten years, and it is more remarkable that the city of Ur in Iraq was destroyed by the Elamites in 2283 B.C. This is still the earliest dated event in human history.

Where there is no written history, there are two methods by which we can give an exact date to buildings or tools, which tell us a good deal more about men than lists of kings and battles.

One method is by tree rings. In a country like Arizona, where there are so many dry years that the trees are growing under a severe handicap, far more wood is formed in a wet than a dry year. By examining recently-cut trees one gets a calendar for several hundred years back.

Douglas, the pioneer in this investigation, was not content with this. He examined tree trunks from abandoned "Indian" buildings which had been preserved in the dry climate.

He found some whose ring pattern overlapped that of living trees. That is to say their outer layers

showed the same succession of broad and narrow rings as the insides of trees recently felled. From these he worked still further back in the same way, until the earliest date determinable is about A.D. 400.

This he was able not only to date houses and tools, making a cultural history possible, but other workers, by examining giant Sequoia trees, have obtained at least a rough history of the weather of California for the last 3,000 years.

In wetter countries, annual layers of mud are laid down in some lakes. When heavy rain or a big thaw brings down a lot of mud, the layer is thick. In this way different mud sections can be compared and finally synchronised. And where human tools are embedded in the mud they can be dated.

This method of dating by annual mud layers works best in the neighbourhood of retreating ice sheets. It has been particularly used by de Geer to date mud layers or varves, as they are called, in Sweden.

But, unfortunately, men were rare or absent in the neighbourhood of these giant glaciers, so such records can only be used rather indirectly to date human events.

Still they do give us the earliest dated event. In the year 7912 B.C. the fresh water lake occupying the northern Baltic basin, but considerably above the present sea level, burst across Southern Sweden in Vestergotland, opening a valley which lowered the lake level by 90 feet. The present connection further south was only opened later, when the sea level had been raised by melting ice.

We have a pretty good record of successive events during the ice ages.

For example, it is quite clear that there were four main cold periods with warm ones between them. But whether the last one went on for 50 or a 100,000 years is not so certain. It may be certain a generation hence.

The Yugoslav scientist, Milankovitch, claims to have dated the ice ages on the basis of an astronomical theory. At present most geologists do not accept his calculations. This does not mean that they think he is wrong, merely that they are not convinced. In another 20 years they may be convinced.

If Milankovitch is right, we can date the big climatic changes of the last half million years with errors which vary between five per cent and 20 per cent.

The ice ages began about 600,000 years ago according to his calculations. Other estimates give over 700,000 years.

The method of annual mud layers can be used to date sections of the past.

Sometimes the evidence for a yearly cycle is overwhelming. For example, fossils of adult insects are found in one part of each layer, and of their larvae in another.

Bradley counted enough varves in the Eocene formations of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming to be able to say that a particular epoch lasted between five and eight million years. During this time a thickness of about 2,000 feet of sandstone and oil shales was laid down in two lake beds.

But this only gives us the duration of about a third of the Eocene period or a tenth of all the time which has gone by since these rocks began to form. Other estimates are based on the rate of animal evolution.

Far the best dates for remote events are given by radio-activity.

If a rock contains uranium, just one atom in 6,578 million of this element is transformed every year.

Most of them pass through the stage of being radium, a few through that of being actinium, and in each case end up as lead. A very tiny fraction

split in two, as in atom bombs. Thorium, another radio-active element, behaves in a very similar way.

Thus, if a mineral is found containing uranium, but no thorium or lead, one could calculate its age from the amount of lead contained in it. However, this would be almost useless in practice, because one could never be sure that some lead had not been present in the original mineral.

Fortunately, however, the lead derived from radio-active atoms has a different atomic weight from ordinary lead. So it is possible to find out how much of the lead in a mineral was derived from the uranium or thorium in it, and thus estimate its age exactly.

On this basis enough rocks have been dated to fix the dates of all rocks carrying fossils with an error which rarely reaches ten per cent. We thus have at last the time scale of evolution.

We know that about 500 million years have gone by since the earliest rocks were formed, containing well-preserved animal remains in quantity, and 400 million since the first record of the vertebrates.

Two hundred and seventy million years ago our ancestors left the water, and 70 million years ago the mammals took over from the giant reptiles and became the dominant land animals.

The complete story of how these figures were reached is, of course, a very long but extremely interesting one.

Any good public library should contain Zeuner's *Dating the Past* and Holmes' *The Age of the Earth*, and Zeuner's series of clues make even the best detective stories look pretty elementary. Most of his ideas are generally accepted; however, Milankovitch's theory is still on trial.

And in 1941 Holmes, as a result of more lead analyses, has arrived at 3,000 million years for the age of the earth, whereas the oldest known rocks are little more than half this age.

In later articles I am going to try to tell something of what has happened in this vast period of time, in order to help my readers to form a picture of our world in time, like the picture which they form in space when they learn geography.

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