

Briand's Plan for a United States of Europe

By Arne Swabeck

Following closely upon the heels of the agreement reached by the imperialist powers on the reparations question the wily old diplomat Briand formally launched his slogan for the United States of Europe. Although presented only in a very general form at the last League of Nations sessions, as an indication of certain imperialist trends it is significant.

In the first place it is one expression of strivings toward an anti-American front of the European debtor nations. It is an endeavor to resist the efforts of the United States to put the European powers on an ever more limited ration, which forms one of the greatest sources for coming imperialist conflicts and proletarian revolutions. In another aspect the slogan represents the efforts for greater consolidation of the European bourgeoisie against its working class and against the Soviet Union. Hence the idea is hailed by the "socialist" *Vorwärts* of Berlin as a "final and lasting peace guarantee".

BRIAND'S PROPOSAL

Preceding Briand's utterances, European capitalists at the congress of the International Chamber of Commerce, held at Amsterdam this Summer, alarmed at the menacing growth of American imperialism as an exploiter of all countries, advanced the idea of a United States of Europe; advanced as an immediate retaliation against the new American high protective tariff policy. But even before the emergence of American imperialism as a world dominant power, politicians of the German empire, during the early period of the war, came forward with such a program, or at least a union of the central European powers to be accomplished by the victory of the German arms. What they had in mind then, and what is proposed now is a capitalist United States of Europe—to better resist the competition from American imperialist penetration. Now as then each main national capitalist grouping is ready for any unscrupulous maneuver to gain hegemony for itself.

The advancing of this slogan is but one additional proof of the further accentuation the growing conflict between American and European capitalism and particularly British capitalism. MacDonald's so-called peace visit to Hoover fits in well. His part at present is to delude the masses to the real nature of this growing conflict. He, the fabian socialist democrat, representative of the British imperialists, personifies their most effective selection to accomplish this aim, as well as to maneuver under the mask of "peace and good will", for the most favorable position for his masters in this conflict.

European imperialist diplomats, including those bearing the name social democrats, will perhaps increasingly indulge in discussions of the problem United States of Europe—whether an economic or a political union. Tendencies toward formation of European industrial syndicates already appeared some time ago, notably in the steel and chemical industries, always meeting the difficulties of national capitalist group interests from which none of these groups can dissociate themselves.

TROTSKY AND THE SLOGAN

Comrade Trotsky has long ago, in discussing this problem, clearly emphasized the impossibility of a European union being accomplished on a capitalist basis; this even aside from what efforts the United States may make in seeking allies within the European nations. But he has also particularly stressed the immense significance of the role of the growing American imperialist penetration of Europe since the capitulation of the German Communist Party and the defeat of the German proletariat in 1923. He says, "... the period of 'stabilization', 'normalization', and 'pacification' of Europe including 'regeneration' of social democracy, has developed in close material and ideological connection with the first steps of American intervention in European affairs."

The rationalization of industry process initiated in America, with its colossal mergers and technical improvements of machinery, but based primarily on increased intensity of speed up of the workers, has been transplanted to Europe. One of the big tasks of the MacDonald "labor" government is to complete this process in England, including the labor policy of American imperialism with its so-called high standard of living. In reality, as the American workers have bitterly experienced, it is the policy of class collaboration, exterminating labor unions where that is possible, transforming those that persist in remaining into company unions existing under schemes of compulsory arbitration; to outlaw strikes and class organizations and thus secure an increased share of profit out of the intensified speed-up piece work system.

The enormously growing American investments in European industries, with which goes increased political dominance, are rapidly acquiring control for American imperialism of these industries and becoming the means whereby the kings of American finance can take their payments for European debts, all in all, war debts and industrial debts, estimated at the staggering figure of \$20,000,000,000. The American new high protective tariff policy is part of this scheme.

Incidentally this refutes the reactionary silly nonsense peddled by such types as Matthew Woll in boosting the high tariff policy to prevent dumping of "cheap European goods" on the American market as repayment of European debts. The main repayments will be exacted by American imperialism acquiring increased control of European industries with the profits of increased exploitation of European workers flowing into the coffers of Wall Street.

Very concrete manifestations of this policy role

played by American financial interests and American imperialism in general in European affairs are the Dawes plan of the past and the present Young plan worked out under the tutelage of Wall Street's most powerful magnates. Again in the Kellogg Pact, the hypocritical talks of diplomats about outlawing war found the representatives of American imperialism rushing to the fore maneuvering for first place for themselves. What is more, thereby making clear that in the line-up for the coming war the United States is going to have a decisive word to say. This pact the Soviet Union, under the leadership of Stalin, signed, thereby helping to maintain the illusion of it being a peace pact.

The international bank for reparations settlement, proposed by the Young plan and being organized under the immediate direction of Wall Street, American imperialism has undoubtedly conceived of mainly as an additional instrument to further the process of acquiring control of European industries and with it control of the intensified exploitation of the European workers. Not only will it then show its colossal power in the further enslavement of the workers there but it will become the most gigantic reactionary force against the revolutionary struggles of the European workers.

THE SOVIET U. S. OF EUROPE

These conditions must recall pointedly to the world proletarian movement and, to the Comintern in particular, the growing vitality, importance and correctness of the revolutionary slogan of a Soviet United States of Europe. Comrade Trotsky has clearly proved that he and Lenin were of one opinion as to the vitality

and principle correctness of this slogan. In 1923 it was officially adopted by the Comintern. Later, under the Stalin leadership, the deductions from the basic conditions from which it derived its contents were artificially made into a series of false, slanderous accusations against the Bolshevik Opposition. It was naturally conceived of as one to find its practical application on the eve of the revolution and by no means to infer that the workers of one country must wait for the others before beginning the revolution. Since the victory of the Russian workers there could, of course, be less reason for overlooking this elementary A B C. Now this slogan has been deleted and seemingly forgotten as so many other correct teachings and formulations of Lenin and Trotsky.

The Tenth Plenum of the Comintern, meeting under the conditions of rapidly growing American imperialist penetration of Europe and growing control of exploitation of the European workers could find time only for prognostications of second rate importance. But it failed entirely to give any consideration whatever to this important slogan which today retains its validity as much as ever.

In the words of Comrade Trotsky: "... it is precisely the international strength of the United States and its unbridled expansion resulting from it, that compels it to include powder magazines throughout the world among the foundations of its structure..."

The slogan of a Soviet United States of Europe is a correct slogan, not only as counter to that of Briand and the other European imperialist diplomats but as concrete direction for unified revolutionary action of the proletariat towards the only possible working class solution.

Lovestone Issues a Dishonest Document

One of the latest faction circulars issued by the Lovestone group, dated August 31, 1929, and entitled "How the E. C. C. I. 'Fights' Trotskyism Today" sets itself to prove that: 1. the Trotskyist "danger still exists in menacing form"; 2. that the Stalin regime in the Russian Party and in the International is going or has gone over to "Trotskyism", i. e., to the viewpoint of the Russian Bolshevik Opposition; and 3. there is a "complete suppression of the struggle against Trotskyism".

In order to "prove" this absurd contention, Lovestone, who was never notorious for his political honesty proceeds deliberately and unscrupulously to distort, maul and squeeze his "facts" to fit them to his untenable thesis. Consider them one by one:

1. We are glad to have an acknowledgment that the Opposition "still exists in menacing form"—in spite of the fact that Lovestone and his ilk in the International have announced its disintegration, burial and disappearance a thousand times in six years.

2 and 3. To prove these points, Lovestone quotes at some length a letter written by Preobrazhensky in April 1929, a few months before his capitulation to Stalin. In his letter to Oppositionists, Preobrazhensky already forecasts his surrender, and attempts to justify it on the main ground that "both of these ideas (hastening the tempo of industrialization and struggle against agrarian capitalism) have been adopted by the official majority of the Party". That is, Preobrazhensky still pretended to support and justify to a certain extent the platform of the Opposition presented to the Party in 1927. Lovestone could have brought even more and "better" proof of his argument by quoting from the long letters of Radek and Smilga, also written while in exile, in which they declare that their differences with comrade Trotsky lie in the fact that the latter has departed from the Platform of the Opposition while Radek and Smilga intend to defend it as originally conceived and written!

On Preobrazhensky's letter, Lovestone then makes the entirely false comment: "It is important to bear in mind that it was on the basis of this letter that P. really was recently admitted into the Russian Party." Lovestone knows this to be untrue. Preobrazhensky, Smilga and Radek wrote their letters while still in the Opposition ranks, and "defended" the Platform of the Opposition solely for the purpose of winning support in its ranks for their impending capitulation—something they could not do had they rejected the Platform from the outset. But when they finally capitulated to the Centrist swamp, they declared in their official statements to the Party (which were published in the *Inprecorr* and the *Daily Worker* and of which Lovestone cannot therefore be ignorant) that their whole line of policy, all their activities had been wrong for years, that they renounced their entire past, and that they withdrew their signatures from all Opposition documents including the Platform! In other words, the miserable collapse of this trinity before the power of Stalin makes the latter no more of an Oppositionist, than the similar collapse of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Safarov and Pitakov almost two years ago made one of Bucharin, Rykov or Stalin.

The rest of Lovestone's "proof" is of the same caliber. "Maslov, Fischer and a whole series of Leninbund functionaries in Germany" are being readmitted. Maslov and Fischer are even less of Oppositionists than Radek and Co. They left the ranks of the Opposition—which they should never have entered—almost two years ago but have not yet been taken into the Party although they have sought to negotiate this step for many months. Who compose the "whole series of Leninbund functionaries" is an inscrutable mystery. Lovestone has previously used them with the actually exist-

ing series of functionaries of his newly-discovered ally, Brandler, who are joining—the German Social Democratic Party.

Lovestone seizes upon an insignificant item in the Berlin *Volkswille*, organ of the Leninbund, which mentions the fact that the Party had adopted correct slogans in the Ruhr struggle, distorts and misrepresents the quotation and presents it triumphantly of more proof that the Party and the Opposition are approaching each other. One has only to read *Volkswille* and its sharp strictures upon the Party line in general and the trade union line in particular to realize what value to attribute to this discovery, borrowed from the Brandlerist organ, *Gegen den Strom*.

The same holds for his quotation from *L'Unité* *Leniniste*, which says that the C. P. of France is coming near its line. *L'Unité* *Leniniste* has not been published for more than a year! It was not a "Trotskyist organ" but the organ of the Zinovievist adventurist, Suzanne Girault, who capitulated two years ago to Stalinism and was never readmitted into the Party. The organ of comrade Treint was *Le Redressement Communiste*, which is no longer published now.

Lovestone is unduly flattering Stalin, who is as incapable of understanding the revolutionary content of the Opposition's Platform as he is of applying it, who recognizes bureaucratic machinations behind the scenes as the epitome of political wisdom. The regime of Stalin has not changed its attitude towards any of the fundamental aspects of the Opposition's Platform. He is still the champion of national reformism, i. e., of "socialism in one country" and of "two-class Parties". He is still the hero of the Menshevik policy pursued in the Chinese revolution and the British strikes of 1926. He continues his brutal assaults upon the Opposition: 23 Y. C. L. members, Oppositionists, have been expelled in Odessa alone a few weeks ago; comrade Rakovsky and other Oppositionists have been sent further into the Siberian wilderness and Trotsky still sits in Constantinople.

That Stalin has nevertheless executed a "Left" zig-zag in the last year is quite true. Cut off from the Right wing, from whom all his political steps were borrowed, he moved under the pressure of the Opposition. Stalin has no program of his own, and borrows alternatively from the Right and from the Left. His loans from the Right are heavy and are paid for heavily. His loans from the Left, made under its whip-lash and the demands of the proletariat, are light and lightly repudiated. Stalin's "Leftism" consists of picking up the splinters and dust around the unshakable pillars of the Opposition Platform, and of using even this debris so that it appears only in caricature. In their fight against Bucharin, the Centrist bankrupts are obliged to use the phrases of the Opposition without being able to understand or knowing how to apply their content. Even the Five Year Plan, another result of persistent Opposition pressure, is taken by Stalin from the chapter-headings of Opposition textbooks, misapplied and deprived of correct socialist, class content.

Stalin's "Trotskyism" has a certain amount of "revolutionary" polish, lots of noise, and little content, like the brightly-painted empty barrels which acrobats manipulate with their feet.

BEG PARDON!

In the article by comrade Trotsky on Brandler and Thalheimer published in our last issue, an unfortunate typographical error crept in. Speaking of the national reformist tendencies of the German Right wing, the author is made to say: "They don't give a flag for the Russian revolution, or the Chinese revolution, or the rest of humanity." It should, of course, read: "They don't give a fig for..." etc., etc.