

Hitler Seeks To Mend Axis By Rome Visit

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 refusal to take more efficacious action was not only a confirmation of Great Britain's present conception that her interests end at the Rhine. It was also an order to France not to stick her nose beyond the Rhine. Nobody takes seriously France's pledge to defend Czechoslovakia by force.

The French proposal to gain time for the maturing war crisis by taking measures of economic aggression against Germany in Central and Southeastern Europe also fell upon deaf ears in London. The British categorically refused to complicate England's situation by extending their trade with France's former vassals. The skillful British traders are ready to grant commercial credits; not to Czechoslovakia, Rumania and the others, however, but exclusively to France, who will have to assume by herself the risk of doubtful capital investments in doubtful states.

France Loses

However, the time has passed when it was possible to fight imperialist competition in Europe with trade and credits. Behind the Chinese wall of fortifications on both banks of the Rhine, France will have passively to watch the disappearance of her post-war conquests throughout Europe. She will have to wait until Great Britain gives the signal for battle.

The London military agreements, despite their technical thoroughness, do not bind British imperialism as to the conditions under which they are to be put into operation. The bourgeois press is unanimous in saying "that the whole decision is open to Britain at the moment something happens, and that she is not bound to any definitive action."

The profits of the London deals accrue above all to Britain. After the war, France was for a long time not only the "gendarme of Europe" but also, very often, a danger to British interests on the continent. Now France seeks protection under the wings of the British Empire, at a price which makes her a kind of new dominion, a dominion which, unlike the others, is ready to fire the first shot in a new war at a moment's notice.

AFL USES DUAL UNION TACTICS TO FIGHT CIO

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are calculated to "carry the fight in the enemy's battlefield." The actual chances of the A. F. of L. cracking the powerful U. M. W. A. are next to nothing and the Green bureaucracy knows it.

Progressive workers in both the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. can only condemn this latest Green maneuver which carries the implication of raiding and open warfare between the two organizations that can bring only defeat to both sides.

I.L.G.W.U. Position

Dubinsky's refusal to serve on the C. I. O. committee verifies often repeated rumors that the I. L. G. W. U. is not going to participate in the coming C. I. O. convention but rather expects to seek a course of "neutrality" in the C. I. O.-A. F. of L. dispute. The defection of the I. L. G. W. U. union from the active ranks of the C. I. O. will weaken the industrial unionists in future unity negotiations and jeopardize the position of the C. I. O. unions.

The C. I. O. unions whose A. F. of L. charters were revoked include: the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, the United Textile Workers of America, the United Rubber Workers of America, the United Automobile Workers of America, and the International Union of Oilfield, Gas and Petroleum Workers.

Workers Of All Races Must Unite Against Fascism In Czechoslovakia

Following consultations this week with the French ministers in London, Lord Halifax informed the Czechoslovakian ambassador in the firmest manner that Prague will have to submit, without resistance, to the ultimatum delivered recently by the Czechoslovakian Nazi leader, Konrad Henlein.

This ultimatum, in its practical implications, means nothing less than the establishment of a totalitarian Nazi dictatorship on Czechoslovakian territory by means of a plebiscite, the result of which is a foregone conclusion.

Whereas France, still reluctant, had been trying to rescue the Czechoslovakian child of its post-war policy, Britain, in an effort to gain time, is determined to write off Czechoslovakia as an independent state in Hitler's favor, as she has already written off Loyalist Spain in Mussolini's favor. Under the mask of impartiality, Lord Halifax, the representative of democratic Britain and with the acquiescence of the French government, is acting in this matter as an auxiliary ambassador of Nazi Germany in London. Yielding on the continent, Britain hopes to gain greater freedom of action for her empire.

AN IRONIC OUTCOME

The situation is all the more ironic in that the crimes of Czech policy, domestic as well as foreign, were only the faithful and slavish reflection of Franco-British post-war policy on the continent.

Leaning upon the Wilsonian principle of national "self-determination, the Versailles victors forced five nations into an artificial state formation under the domination of a Czech bourgeois minority. At present only 40 per cent of the 15,000,000 inhabitants of the Czechoslovakian republic are Czechs. In 1919 the imperialist peace-makers, through their own self-determination, forced two and one-half million Slovaks, who consider themselves a separate nation, into one joint and arbitrary "nation" with the Czechs, in order to justify the hegemony of their Czech gendarmes in Central Europe.

Since the formation of the republic, these Slovaks, along with 600,000 Ruthenians (a Ukrainian national group), 100,000 Poles, 800,000 Hungarians and three and one-half million Germans, have claimed the right of national autonomy against the brutal Czech central power.

COMMUNIST PARTY FAILURE

So long as a strong Communist Party, comprising workers and peasants of all six nations, pursued a revolutionary policy and actively defended the right of self-determination for the oppressed nations, the chauvinistic, reactionary and fascist tendencies remained unimportant minorities. But as a consequence of the degeneration of the Third International, the Communist Party lost its principal positions to the Czech and German Social Democracy, which since 1929 has been using its newly gained influence to back the Czech bourgeoisie through a coalition government.

The Stalinist Third Period policy transformed the Communist Party into an impotent sect, at a time when the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration pushed the workers and middle classes of the oppressed nations into the arms of fascism and national chauvinism. Thus it was possible for Henlein's Nazi party to become, even before the taking of power, a real mass movement of the German workers in Czechoslovakia.

The turn of the Communist Party toward a People's Front occurred at the most unfortunate moment. The German workers, in the main, had already made their choice as between National Socialism and Czechoslovakian democracy. On the other hand, the bulk of the Czech workers, disillusioned by the Stalinist brand of communism, had already rallied to their own "People's Front" in the form of Social-Democratic participation in the government.

CLASS STRUGGLE ABANDONED

The only result of the vain Stalinist attempts to become a respectable democratic movement was the stifling of any proletarian attempts to cast off the chains of class collaboration. Thus questions of class struggle were more

and more relegated to the background, while the problems of national conflicts became the vital issue. Here too reformist and Stalinist complicity in the policy of national oppression and exploitation by the Czech bourgeoisie spurred the separatist and fascist tendencies among the non-Czech nations to the extreme.

Now Henlein not only claims independence for the Germans in Czechoslovakia. He becomes the self-styled champion of national liberation for all the other oppressed peoples. In the absence of a revolutionary proletarian movement, which would take the lead in the fight against Czech imperialism within the republic, Henlein's demagoguery gains wide popularity.

It is hardly necessary to point out that behind Henlein stands Hitler. With war approaching, Czechoslovakia has become a vital stepping-stone for German expansion. If Hitler succeeds in capturing Czechoslovakia before the outbreak of war, alliance with the still wavering Poland becomes almost a certainty. The carving up of Czechoslovakian territory at the proper time might well enable Germany to regain the Polish Corridor which, since 1918 has cut off Eastern Prussia from the Reich.

GERMANY'S STAKE IS VAST

As master of Austria and ruler or "protector" of a federated Czechoslovakia, definitely isolated from France and Russia, and with the Czech bourgeoisie deprived of its privileges, Hitler could easily gain domination over Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia. Germany's basis of operation would be significantly broadened from the very beginning of the war.

Further, with the subduing of Czechoslovakia, Hitler would come into possession of an invaluable economic hinterland for his war economy. Czechoslovakia possesses 70 per cent of the industry of the former Austrian-Hungarian monarchy, a rich agriculture, abundant sources of coal and metals, and the famous Skoda munitions plants, a serious competitor of German war industry on the continent.

Last but far from least, Hitler's demands for German autonomy ring with military urgency. In the last three years the Czech government has been heavily fortifying the extended German border, controlling the border regions by virtual martial law which concentrated all power in the hands of the military authorities. This military dictatorship of Czech democracy is directed primarily against the German population, overwhelmingly pro-Nazi. In establishing Nazi rule over Czechoslovakia, Hitler would naturally gain command of the Czech fortifications, and thus eliminate any possibility of military resistance from Prague.

MILITARY RESISTANCE IDLE TREAT

Such military resistance is, at best, an idle threat. The Czech General Staff counts, at the most, on a feeble struggle of a few weeks' duration. Along with this technical estimate one must take into account the mortal weakness of an army recruited from six warring nations.

The Czech bourgeoisie is desperately seeking a compromise with Hitler. There are strong "realistic" fractions among the Czech capitalists ready to sacrifice the already restricted democratic rights of the broad masses and to join the anti-Soviet chorus. But they encounter serious resistance among the proletarian and middle class strata, who want to preserve their own national and democratic rights after 300 years of German absolutist rule.

The decision of the Czech masses to resist fascist intervention, in whatever form, can play a progressive role only if they are led to a decisive break with the Czech ruling class and its labor lieutenants, who together have made the approaching catastrophe possible.

A movement of resistance steadfastly opposed to the reactionary national policy of the bourgeoisie, under the independent leadership of the working class, would re-awaken the militancy of the masses. Regenerating the revolutionary traditions of the Czechoslovakian proletariat, it would prepare the unification of the workers and peasants of all nationalities, freed from the demagoguery of fascism.

Militant Students Hold Large Anti-War Rallies

Resistance To Patriotic Degeneration Of Annual Anti-War Strikes Is Widespread

NEW YORK—April 27, the traditional day of the student anti-war strikes, found the student movement split in New York City, as the Stalinist-controlled "United Student Peace Committee" held patriotic assemblies, whose function was to prepare the students ideologically for support of the United States government in the coming war.

The militant anti-war students, who were determined to express their firm opposition to the forthcoming imperialist war, denounced these meetings as pro-war mobilizations, and issued a call on the campuses throughout the city for militant, student controlled anti-war strikes, based on the Oxford pledge (no support to any war undertaken by the United States government), opposition to the war preparations of the Roosevelt government, and support of independent action of world labor against the war-makers.

Ready Response

The call found ready and widespread support everywhere. Approximately 5,000 students participated in the anti-war strikes in New York, and in many cases the opposing demonstrations were equal in size.

At Brooklyn college 300 students heard B. J. Widick, labor secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, proclaim the revolutionary struggle against capitalism the only road in struggle against war, while Earl Browder, speaking at the "peace strike" of the U. S. P. C., urged American imperialists to invest their surplus capital in China.

"One of the outstanding features of the economic crisis," Browder said, "is that we have a tremendous accumulation of capital which is lying idle because it cannot find profitable investment.... The only prospect for profitable investment of American capital is China. But if the United States really wanted to put our 13 million unemployed back to work, the United States government should invest about five billion dollars in building up Chinese industry...."

City College Strike

One of the most impressive strikes, took place at the main Day session of City College. Nearly a thousand students gathered at Lewisohn stadium to hear speakers who in general took the stand that students must support the working class in its fight against the war makers.

The U. S. P. C. meeting on the same campus was addressed by William E. Dodd, eminent American diplomat, who urged that America join with other democratic nations to defend democracy, and.... "our foreign trade." Dodd made a special trip from Washington for the tidy sum of \$100.

At the evening session of the same college, two opposing demonstrations were held. Some 800 students rallied to the strike held under the auspices of the "Committee for a Militant Anti-War Strike" to hear Carlo Tresca, editor of *Il Martello*, and Hal Draper, national secretary of the Young People's Socialist League. The Stalinists of the U. S. P. C. were greatly ruffled, and called the police to their

assistance, informing them that the anti-war students had no permit for the use of the sound truck on the campus.

United Front Difficulties

Although in most cases the strikes were conducted by united front committees including all anti-war elements at the colleges, this was made difficult and in some cases impossible, by the facilitation of the Norman Thomas Socialists, who sought to reach "agreements" with the Stalinists.

In all but one college they were forced to break off negotiations in the end, but not due to any difficulty in finding a common programmatic basis, but because the Stalinists were unwilling to give them parity in speakers. Their constant negotiations, causing confusion and delay, hampered the preparations for the strikes greatly.

At the evening session of Brooklyn college the anti-war club, controlled by the Norman Thomas Socialists broke off negotiations with the Stalinists two days before the strike because they could not get speakers, and proceeded to issue an independent strike call. No mention of the Oxford pledge, opposition to Roosevelt's war preparations, or support of independent labor action against war was to be found.

Y. P. S. L. Meetings

The Y. P. S. L. pointed out in a leaflet to the students that there was no essential difference between the two strike calls and that neither could be considered an anti-war strike. An independent Y. P. S. L. meeting was held after school hours.

At New York University the Stalinists and the Norman Thomas Socialists affected a compromise and held a joint meeting with a minimum program—pro-war. The Y. P. S. L. refused to participate and called an independent strike at noon. It was addressed by Bob Stiler, industrial director of the Y. P. S. L. and James Rorty, prominent author.

In the New York City high schools official "peace assemblies" were conducted by the administration, but in a number of the schools Y. P. S. L. circles held independent anti-war meetings.

MASS MEETING ON SPAIN

The crushing of the revolutionary workers of Barcelona in May, 1937, and the present situation in Spain will be the subject of a New York meeting, to be held at Germania Hall, 16th St. and 8rd Ave., at 8 p. m. Sunday, May 15. Speakers will include Harry Milton, an active participant in the Barcelona events, and Max Shachtman, editor of the *Socialist Appeal*.

HOW TO FIGHT WAR

Isolation? Collective Security? Relentless Class Struggle? by JAMES BURNHAM 16 pp. Socialist Workers Party 116 University Place New York City 3c

OF INTEREST TO "APPEAL" READERS!

What is "the Workers' State"? (see Sidney Hook's article on *Semantics* in the April number of the Partisan Review.)

What do the Moscow Trials mean to the American intellectual? (see Philip Rahv's "Trials of the Mind" in the April Partisan Review.)

What is the political significance of Thomas Mann's humanism? (see William Phillips' "Humanism in Exile" in the May Partisan Review.)

Also in the May issue (just out): Max Brod on "The Boyhood of Franz Kafka," Mary McCarthy on the W. P. A. Theater, stories by Delmore Schwartz and Eleanor Clark.

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SOVIET UNION NOTES

Election Call For R.S.F.S.R. Seen As Move For Extension Of Purge; Shortage of Primary Goods Still Prevails

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

STALIN'S "ELECTIONS"—A COVER FOR WILDER PURGES

The Praesidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee has set June as the date for the elections to the Supreme Council of the R.S.F.S.R. These Soviet "elections" will follow immediately upon the termination of party elections now in progress. Their task, like that of all of Stalin's elections, is to extend the purge. The instructions issued in connection with the coming elections are very explicit. We cite a key paragraph from the decree issued by the joint plenum of the Moscow Central Committee and Moscow Regional Committee:

"The conduct and preparation of the elections to the Supreme Council of the R.S.F.S.R. must aid in the successful solution of all political and economic tasks confronting the toilers of the city of Moscow and of the Moscow region, in raising the revolutionary vigilance of all the toilers in the struggle against the rabid enemies of the people, the Trotskyite-Bukharinite agents of foreign espionage services." (Pravda, April 22.)

The meaning of these ominous words is plain enough. More arrests. More executions. More trials—both secret and "public." Judging from the past procedure, it can be stated with virtual certainty that the present wave of arrests will reach its crest early in June, in the days immediately preceding the elections, and that shortly after the elections the next trials will be staged.

THE PARTY PURGE

Meanwhile, the purge of the party continues its course in Krasnoyarsk, in the 15 party organizations that have reported the result of the elections, nine have elected "young Communists" who are holding party posts for the first time. In Leningrad, 370 units have thus far reported new party committees, new secretaries and organizers. In Stalino out of 578 functionaries elected "about one half" are reported as holding posts for the first time; out of 407 secretaries and organizers just elected, 134 are reported as newcomers.

The campaign around this latest party purge is identical in tone with the preparations for the coming "Soviet elections." Pravda boasts that an enormous interest is being evinced in the party elections by "non-party workers and peasants, by millions of non-party Bolsheviks who are firmly united with the party in the joint struggle for communism." Nor does Pravda mince words as to the actual significance of what is taking place:

"The questions occupying the center of attention are the questions of vigilance, of the struggle against the Trotskyite-Bukharinite scum, of the ideological arming of the communists.... All efforts of the party organizations must be directed toward liquidating the consequences of wrecking, rooting out the enemy remnants, and fighting to fulfill the state plans." (Pravda, April 19.)

Appointment of new deputies indicates a purge in the following departments: Commissariat of Justice (under Vyshinsky); Commissariat of Water Transport (under Yezhov); Commissariat of Heavy Industry (under L. Kaganovich); Commissariat of Agriculture (under Eike).

SHORTAGE OF NECESSITIES

(While the Trial of 21 was in progress, and almost at the same time as Zelenski was testifying (and confessing) how he had kept the shelves of Soviet stores empty of such necessities as butter, salt, sugar, soap etc., the Stalinist authorities were conducting an investigation of the trade network. Toward the end of April, Pravda carried a carefully worded report of this investigation, a section of which we reproduce:

"In March 1938 the investigation covered 5,090 stores of the state trade network. About 10 per cent had no soap, and no makhorka (low grade tobacco); 4 per cent were suffering from lapses in the sale of matches; 5 per cent of the stores were without salt. The conditions in the stores of the consumers' co-operatives were even worse. Out of 2,150 stores investigated in March, 11.4 per cent suffered from lapses in the trade with salt; from 3 to 7 per cent of the stores were not always able to satisfy the demand for matches, sugar, makhorka and soap." (Pravda, April 21.)

The "wreckers" had been shot but the population is still without primary necessities. Who is responsible? You know the answer. Pravda insists that this condition is obviously due to fact that the trade network has not been completely purged of "wreckers."

LaFollette Third Party Movement Would Check Workers' Independence

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pense of the standard of living—the hours and the wages—of the working class.

Reactionary Policy

In so far as the Platform deals with foreign policy, its tendency is strongly imperialistic and reactionary, expressing the thought that the American continents, "from the Arctic to Cape Horn" are to be kept under U. S. domination on a direct mandate from the "Creator" who so "ordained" it.

Like the spokesmen of so many of the middle-headed middle class movements launched in recent times by capitalist politicians for the purpose of exploiting and canalizing popular discontent, LaFollette did not forget to criticize the "old" capitalism and to take his stand, presumably, for a "renovated"

capitalist exploitation of the masses. He warned his audience against socialism, communism and fascism, and assured them that he was absolutely opposed to class struggle.

It is already clear that the aim of the LaFollette party is to exploit the disillusionment of the masses over the collapse of the New Deal myth for its own ends. The emphasis placed by its sponsors on their opposition to any class party—that is, a party of the workers, the producers of wealth—is significant indication that the purpose of this party is to prevent the successful development of the movement for independent political action of the American workers which is beginning to take hold in the ranks of labor and which threatens the domination of the old capitalist parties and their satellites.

(See Editorial, Page 4)

Hear
 MAX SHACHTMAN

Editor, Socialist Appeal

Can A People's Front Stop Fascism?

Manhattan Opera House

34 St. Between 8 & 9 Aves.
 Auspices, Socialist Workers Party (Needle Trade Branch)

Monday
 MAY 9, 1938
 7 P. M.

Questions, Discussion