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Soviet
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BY
M. ROSS

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A HISTORY OF Soviet Foreign Policy

BY M. ROSS

PUBLISHED BY
NEW YORK
WORKERS LIBRARY PUBLISHERS, INC.
P. O. BOX 148, STATION B, NEW YORK, N. Y.

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PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

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209

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword	5
Foreign Relations During the Civil War	7
Breakdown of the Economic and Political Blockade	12
The Struggle for Disarmament	19
The Struggle for Peace in the Period of the Stalin Five-Year Plans	24
The Anglo-French Bloc Miscalculates	34
Pacts of Non-Aggression and Friendship with Germany	40
Liberation of the Peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia	46
The Pacts of Mutual Assistance with the Baltic Countries	50
Safeguarding the Northwestern Frontiers	59
The Policy in the Far East	66
Peaceful Settlement of the Bessarabian Question	70
The War and the Neutral Countries	73

FOREWORD

THE CAPITALIST world, rent by internal antagonisms which have been exacerbated by the general crisis of capitalism, has again launched into the bloody path of war. The second imperialist war has drawn quite a number of countries of the Eastern and Western hemispheres into its vortex. A thousand million people and more have already been plunged into this bloody shambles. The fight is being waged for a new forcible redivision of the world, for the seizure and plunder of foreign territories.

"As we see," said V. M. Molotov on the occasion of the twenty-second anniversary of the October Revolution, "the springs of further development of the internal forces of modern capitalist society are more or less exhausted and are drying up altogether. That we must regard as the fundamental reason for the new foreign adventures of the imperialist powers. That is the root cause of modern wars, the number and dimensions of which are growing under our eyes."

The war in Western Europe, and the war which Japanese imperialism has been waging against China for three years, show how real is the danger of the present imperialist war developing into another world war.

The British and French imperialists exerted no little effort to embroil the two biggest countries in Europe—the U.S.S.R. and Germany—in a military conflict. But their efforts were vain. The Soviet Union and Germany have concluded pacts of non-aggression and friendship. These pacts are of the utmost international importance; they are designed to strengthen the cause of peace and have established good neighborly and

peaceful relations between the two countries. They have narrowed the possible theater of the war and have prevented the spread of hostilities to Eastern Europe, for which the British and French imperialists had been striving so hard.

Speaking of the changes that had taken place in the relations between the U.S.S.R. and Germany, V. M. Molotov said:

“The art of politics in the spheres of foreign relations does not consist in increasing the number of enemies for one’s country. On the contrary, the art of politics in this sphere is to reduce the number of such enemies and to make the enemies of yesterday good neighbors, maintaining peaceable relations with one another.” *

When the second imperialist war broke out and Finland became a highly dangerous seat of military machinations, the Soviet Union took the necessary measures to safeguard the security of its Northwestern frontiers. The firm position adopted by the Soviet Government in the Soviet-Finnish question and the vigorous rebuff given by the Red Army to the attempts at military provocation have now fully safeguarded the security of the Northwestern frontiers of the U.S.S.R.

Recent events have shown that no international problem of any importance can be solved without the Soviet Union. The U.S.S.R. is pursuing an active foreign policy in the interests of universal peace and to safeguard its own security. It is the constant endeavor of Soviet policy to support and strengthen friendly and businesslike relations with all countries, “as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country.” **

* V. M. Molotov, *The Meaning of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact*, p. 11, Workers Library Publishers, New York.

** J. V. Stalin, *From Socialism to Communism in the Soviet Union*, p. 17, International Publishers, New York.

FOREIGN RELATIONS DURING THE CIVIL WAR

THE GREAT October Socialist Revolution ushered in a new era in the history of mankind. It divided the world into two systems—socialist and capitalist. It vanquished capitalism on one-sixth of the territory of the globe, took away the means of production from the bourgeoisie and converted the factories, fields, railways and banks into the property of the entire people, into the property of the state. It established the dictatorship of the proletariat and placed the direction of the state in the hands of the working class.

During the twenty-two years that have elapsed, the foreign policy of the Soviet state, while remaining fundamentally unchanged, has passed through various stages determined by the international position of the U.S.S.R., the relation of forces in the world political arena and the steadily growing might of the Soviet Union. During the early years of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the efforts of Soviet diplomacy were directed toward rescuing the young republic from the clutches of imperialist war and then towards breaking the ring of economic and political blockade.

For the first time in history, a socialist state came into being and pursued a foreign policy fundamentally different from, and independent of, the capitalist states. The foreign policy of the Soviet state has from its inception fully coincided with the interests of the working people of the whole world.

On the morrow of its establishment, the Soviet Government issued the Decree on Peace and called upon "all the belligerent nations and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just and democratic peace."

The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets appealed to the class-conscious workers of England, France and Germany to help "to bring about the success of the cause of peace, and at the same time the cause of the emancipation of the toiling and exploited masses of the population from all forms of slavery and all forms of exploitation." But, Great Britain and France, engaged in their war with Germany, rejected the Soviet Government's call for peace, whereupon the latter decided to start independent peace negotiations with Germany and Austria. On December 5, 1917, an armistice was signed between Germany and Russia, and on March 3, 1918, at Brest-Litovsk, the first international treaty of the Soviet Republic was signed, a treaty of peace with Germany and her allies—Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey.

In the interval between the conclusion of the armistice and the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, Lenin and Stalin were forced to wage a bitter struggle against the enemies of the working class—Trotsky, Bukharin and others—who had started a furious campaign against the conclusion of the peace treaty.

Trotsky, the chairman of the Soviet delegation in Brest-Litovsk, traitorously violated the explicit instructions of the Bolshevik Party. Notwithstanding the fact that Lenin and Stalin, acting on behalf of the Central Committee of the Party, had given instructions to sign the peace treaty, the Trotskyites broke off negotiations in Brest-Litovsk. Trotsky not only refused to sign the peace, but obligingly informed the German delegations that the Soviet Republic would not fight and would continue to demobilize its army. This was a heinous act of treachery. The Kaiser's government broke the armistice and began an offensive which threatened the fall of Petrograd (now Leningrad).

The Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government issued the alarm: "The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger!" The working class responded to the call by forming units of the revolu-

tionary Red Army, which heroically resisted the armed assault of the invaders.

On February 22, 1918, the German Government intimated its willingness to conclude peace; but on terms that were incomparably more onerous than those proposed during the original peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk. Thus, Bukharin and Trotsky, as Lenin declared at the time, "in fact *helped* the German imperialists and *hampered* the spread and development of the revolution in Germany." *

In order to settle the question of peace once and for all, the Seventh Congress of the Bolshevik Party was summoned, at which a resolution submitted by Lenin was adopted proclaiming the necessity of concluding peace on the terms proposed by Germany.

The Brest-Litovsk Treaty will go down in history as a testimony to the tactical genius of Lenin and Stalin, as a brilliant example of the diplomacy of a socialist state surrounded by a capitalist world.

"In the period of the October Revolution Lenin taught the Bolshevik Party how to advance fearlessly and resolutely when conditions favored an advance. In the period of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Lenin taught the Party how to retreat in good order when the forces of the enemy are obviously superior to our own, in order to prepare with the utmost energy for a new offensive." **

The Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty between Soviet Russia and Germany was a serious political defeat for the Entente, whose representatives had done everything in their power to prevent its conclusion. When during the peace negotiations a divergence arose between the Soviet and German views, the Entente

* V. I. Lenin, "A Grave Lesson and a Grave Responsibility, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Russian ed.

** *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 219, International Publishers, New York.

was at once fired with the hope of a resumption of war between the two countries.

Bruce Lockhart, the British "representative" and a notorious spy, visited the Soviet Commissariat of Foreign Affairs almost daily, offering money, arms and instructors, only to embroil Soviet Russia once more in war with Germany. The United States of America cynically offered 100 rubles for every Russian soldier who would remain on the German front.

By concluding the Brest-Litovsk Peace, the Bolshevik Party secured a breathing space in which to consolidate the Soviet regime and introduce some measure of order in the economic affairs of the country.

Germany and Austria still continued at war with the Entente. This and the revolution that broke out in Germany undermined the strength of German imperialism, one result of which was the annulment of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in November, 1918.

The Brest-Litovsk Peace and the growing strength of the Soviet Government caused profound alarm among the imperialists of the West, especially among those of the Entente countries. The Entente governments decided to intervene in order to overthrow the Soviet Government by force of arms, restore capitalism in Russia and convert her into their colony.

The Entente assisted its puppets, Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich and Wrangel. It also incited the bourgeois governments of Poland and the Baltic states to start war on the Soviet Republic. Towards the end of 1918, Clemenceau submitted a plan for the political and economic isolation of the Soviet Republic. The Allies came to an agreement as to the division of the spheres of influence: the Ukraine, the Crimea, the Don Regions and Poland were to form part of the French sphere of influence, while Northern Russia, the Baltic countries, the Caucasus and Turkestan were to form part of the British sphere of influence.

But the broad plans of the Entente were not destined to

be realized. The proletarian revolution, as Lenin said, won over the soldiers of the Entente. A revolt broke out in the French fleet which was stationed in the Black Sea and revolutionary unrest grew rife in practically all the units of the forces of intervention. The workers of Britain and France sympathized with Soviet Russia and supported her. The attempts of the Allies to utilize the Baltic countries against the Soviet Republic likewise ended in failure. These states realized that the restoration of a bourgeois and landlord Russia would be a threat to the independence they had secured as a result of the victory of the great October Socialist Revolution.

Moreover, in 1919, the internal dissensions within the Entente itself began to become acute. Although Britain and France were in a hurry to divide up the spheres of influence, they acted without unanimity.

The victories of the Red Army compelled the intervening powers to propose a peace conference to the Soviet Republic. Negotiations for the exchange of prisoners of war had already begun in Copenhagen on November 25, 1919, between representatives of Soviet Russia and Great Britain. This was followed by similar negotiations with France, Austria, Hungary and other countries. The rout of the armies of Kolchak, Yudenich and Denikin had fundamentally altered the political situation in favor of the Soviet Republic.

BREAKDOWN OF THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BLOCKADE

THE VICTORY of the Soviet state over the Russian White Guards and foreign invaders, and the growing strength of its economic position at home forced the capitalist countries to revise their policy towards Soviet Russia. The change in the policy of the Great Powers affected the attitude of the countries bordering on the U.S.S.R. and which originally belonged to the Russian Empire.

Towards the end of 1919 a series of peace negotiations began between Soviet Russia and the Baltic states which ended with the conclusion of peace treaties. The Soviet Government recognized the newly-formed states of the Baltic and in conjunction with them defined their borders with Soviet Russia. Nevertheless, the capitalist countries did not cease to plot and conspire against the land of Soviets.

In 1920 one more attempt at intervention against the Soviet Republic was made. Poland was the instrument chosen this time for the realization of the interventionist plans of the Entente.

On March 27, 1920, the Soviet Government made overtures of peace to Poland. Poland rejected the overtures. Instead, she concluded an agreement with Petlura for the division of the Ukraine and invaded Soviet Russia. The action of Poland was supported by Wrangel. They were, as Lenin expressed it, the two hands of international imperialism in its attempt to stifle the Soviet country.

When the Red Army had repulsed the attack of the Polish White Guards and had reached the outskirts of Warsaw, Great Britain came forward in the guise of mediator and proposed the conclusion of peace.

Unable to continue the war, Poland was obliged to consent

to peace negotiations, and on October 20, 1920, a treaty of peace between Poland and Soviet Russia was signed at Riga.

This treaty defined the Western frontiers of the Soviet Republic, with the exception of the frontier with Rumania, whom the Soviet Republic had not recognized on account of the seizure of Bessarabia.

The failure of the plans of armed intervention, coupled with the post-war economic crisis, compelled the capitalist countries to enter into trade relations with the Soviet Republic. On January 16, 1920, the removal of the economic blockade of Soviet Russia was announced. This was followed by the breakdown of the political blockade. Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, tried to prove that trade relations with the Soviet Republic would inevitably lead to the restoration of capitalism in that country. In a speech delivered in the House of Commons on February 10, 1920, Lloyd George suggested that trade might be a more potent weapon than force in restoring Russia. "Commerce has a sobering influence," he declared. "The simple arithmetic which it demands will quickly dispel all outlandish theories."

A new stage began in the foreign policy of the Soviet Republic, which was now being recognized by one capitalist country after another.

In 1919, Afghanistan, which during the past century had been fighting for its independence against Great Britain, entered into diplomatic relations with the R.S.F.S.R. This was subsequently followed by a number of friendly agreements between the two countries.

In February, 1921, normal diplomatic relations were established with Iran (Persia). In accordance with this treaty (February 26, 1921), the Soviet Government denounced all treaties which had been concluded by the tsarist government with third powers designed to limit the sovereignty of Iran.

On March 16, 1921, when Turkey's struggle for independence was at its height, a Treaty of Amity and Fraternity was

signed between that country and Soviet Russia. In 1925, the two countries concluded a treaty of friendship and neutrality, prolonged in subsequent years by special protocols.

On March 16, 1921, an agreement was signed with Great Britain, and a similar agreement with Germany on May 6, 1921. This period also marked the beginning of negotiations for the establishment of trade relations with a number of other capitalist countries.

With the adoption of the New Economic Policy by Soviet Russia, the international bourgeoisie conceived the hope that the Soviet system would gradually degenerate into a capitalist system.

In 1922, the Soviet Republic was invited to an international economic and financial conference in Genoa, Italy, at which the imperialist governments, emboldened by the defeat of the revolution in the capitalist countries, tried to bring new pressure to bear on the Soviet Republic, this time in diplomatic form. The imperialists presented brazen demands to the Soviet Republic. They demanded that the factories and plants nationalized by the October Revolution be returned to the foreign capitalists; they demanded the payment of the debts of the tsarist government. In return, the imperialist states promised some trifling loans to the Soviet Government. The Soviet Government rejected these demands.

However, the capitalist governments could not but reckon with the fact that with the defeat of the forces of intervention and the Russian White Guards the position of Soviet Russia had been stabilized. The first diplomatic successes of the young republic forced the Allied Powers to declare at the Genoa Conference that they renounced all further intervention in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. The Soviet delegation read a statement which declared that:

"... while remaining true to the principles of communism, the Russian delegation is of the opinion that in the present period

of history, which renders it possible for the old system and the new and growing social system to exist side by side, economic collaboration between the states representing these two systems of property is imperatively demanded in the interests of universal economic restoration.”

At this conference, too, the Soviet delegation proposed a universal reduction of armaments and declared that it would support every proposal designed to lighten the burden of militarism, but this proposal was not accepted.

The Genoa Conference failed to settle the fundamental problems for which it had been convened by the capitalist governments; but it was incidentally of value to Soviet Russia in demonstrating in the face of the united diplomatic front of the capitalist powers the increased might of the Soviet system and its determination to pursue an independent foreign policy.

On April 16, 1922, while the Genoa Conference was still in progress, a treaty between the Soviet Republic and Germany was signed in Rapallo (not far from Genoa) restoring normal diplomatic relations between the two countries and registering their renouncement of mutual economic claims. Thus the Soviet Republic succeeded in forcing a breach in the united front of the capitalist powers. The Rapallo Treaty was of particular significance because it meant the failure of the plans of the Entente to embroil Germany and Soviet Russia in war.

At the beginning of 1920, the Far Eastern Republic was formed. But Vladivostok was still under the control of the Japanese invaders (the first Japanese forces had been landed on April 5, 1918). In October, 1922, the People's Army of the Far Eastern Republic cleared its territories of Russian White Guards and Japanese invaders, and on December 13, 1922, the Far Eastern Republic joined the R.S.F.S.R. Lastly, in 1925, Japan returned to Soviet Russia the northern half

of Sakhalin which had been occupied by Japanese troops. This made it possible to regulate Soviet-Japanese affairs, and in 1925 a treaty was concluded in Peking establishing peaceful relations between the two countries.

On December 30, 1922, the First All-Union Congress of Soviets adopted the Declaration and Treaty Constituting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The consolidation of the political might of the Soviet Union and the successful economic restoration of the country meant the complete defeat of the attempts to blockade and isolate the Soviet Republic. In the course of 1924 the Soviet Union was recognized *de jure* by France, Italy and other countries.

On May 31, 1924, the Agreement on General Principles for the Regulation of Questions Between the U.S.S.R. and the Republic of China was concluded in Peking. By this agreement the Soviet Government denounced all treaties and agreements affecting the sovereign rights and interests of China concluded by the tsarist government with any third party or parties. This was one more confirmation that the policy of the U.S.S.R. towards China fundamentally differed from the predatory policy of the imperialist countries and of former tsarist Russia.

But the more reactionary imperialist circles did not abandon their attempts to engineer military action against the U.S.S.R. and to plunge the latter into war. Thus, in May, 1923, V. V. Vorovsky, a distinguished Soviet diplomat, was nefariously assassinated in Lausanne, Switzerland. About the same time, Lord Curzon, the diehard British Foreign Secretary, presented an insolent ultimatum to the Soviet Union. He demanded the cessation of "propaganda" in the Near East and the recall of the Soviet ambassadors from Persia and Afghanistan. This provocative note aroused profound indignation both in the Soviet Union and among the British masses. Lord Curzon met with the rebuff he deserved. But the

Conservatives did not cease their efforts to engineer intervention against the Soviet Union.

Britain's main efforts were directed towards drawing Germany into the anti-Soviet front. The Locarno pact (October, 1925), was designed to bring Germany into the anti-Soviet bloc and to pave the way for a military conflict between Germany and the U.S.S.R.

Referring to the Locarno pact in a speech he made in October, 1925, Ormsby-Gore, a member of the Conservative British government, expressed the opinion that the solidarity of the Christian countries was imperative in order to defend civilization against the darkest force the history of Europe had ever known. The question that the conference at Locarno had to decide was whether Germany would bind her destiny with that of the great powers or whether she would collaborate with Russia to destroy civilization. Locarno is of vast importance. It signified that the German Government was backing away from Russia and throwing in her lot with the Western countries.

But nothing came of the Locarno policy—the attempt to form an anti-Soviet bloc which would include Germany—owing to the acute antagonism of interests between Germany and the Entente. The Locarno Conference, moreover, brought the Anglo-French antagonisms into sharp relief.

The Locarno pact guaranteed the Eastern frontiers of France and Belgium with Germany (established by the Versailles Treaty), and also guaranteed Germany against possible attempts at expansion on the part of France. France endeavored to have the guarantee extended to the frontiers of her allies, Poland and Czechoslovakia, but did not get the support of Great Britain. Having established a "balance of power" of this kind, Britain hoped to counteract French hegemony in Europe with a restored Germany and thus play the part of arbitrator and guarantor.

As we know, the entry into force of the Locarno pact was

made conditional on Germany's joining the League of Nations. But having become a member of the League, Germany was reluctant to renounce her policy towards the U.S.S.R. as determined by the Rapallo Treaty. The German Government was not anxious to have the British and French bosses of the League of Nations involve Germany in any anti-Soviet machinations by operating Article 16 of the Covenant of the League (on international sanctions), and this found expression in the Soviet-German Pact of Non-Aggression concluded in Berlin on April 24, 1926. In the exchange of notes which formed an annex to the Berlin Treaty it was declared that if the League of Nations, on the basis of its Covenant, resolved to apply sanctions against the Soviet Union, and demanded accordingly the transit of troops through German territory, this demand would require the consent of Germany.

But with the failure of Locarno, the British Conservatives did not abandon their hope of embroiling Germany in a war with the U.S.S.R.

In 1928, a group of British public men (known as the Birkenhead mission) visited Germany with the purpose of reaching an agreement with the German Government for common action against the U.S.S.R. The following is the estimate of the aims of the Birkenhead mission given by a correspondent of the *Vossische Zeitung* (April, 1928):

“For several months past British Ministers have been sounding German diplomats to learn whether the German Reichstag would consent, in exchange for the fixing and consolidation of the reparations payments, to break off relations with Russia, immediately denounce all treaties with her and establish an economic boycott of Soviet Russia. It is presumed that during the boycott, Germany, France and Britain would form a syndicate for the reconstruction of Russia and would lend their support to the bourgeois-democratic Russian Government that would arise with the collapse of the Soviet regime.”

THE STRUGGLE FOR DISARMAMENT

THE PART played by the Soviet Union in international affairs steadily grew in importance. Its consistent efforts for peace were once more confirmed in its attitude towards the question of disarmament. The Covenant of the League of Nations declares that "the members of the League recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations." For a long time the League of Nations ignored this clause of the Covenant, and only remembered it when the antagonism among the imperialist powers began to assume new force and the danger of military conflicts to become more acute. But none of the capitalist governments had any serious intention of disarming, their sole purpose being to use the cry of disarmament as a screen for their preparations for a new imperialist war and for an armed attack on the U.S.S.R.

The Preparatory Disarmament Commission held endless and fruitless sittings. The capitalist states could not ignore the Soviet Union and were obliged to reckon with it when dealing with international questions of any importance. In December, 1925, the Council of the League was constrained to invite the U.S.S.R. to a preliminary disarmament conference.

The Soviet Government expressed its willingness to participate in any effort to secure a reduction of armaments, and used its participation in the interests of real peace. As against the mongrel and spurious projects discussed in various commissions of the League of Nations, the U.S.S.R. submitted a project for a convention providing for complete and universal disarmament. But as might have been expected, it was

rejected by the Preparatory Disarmament Commission (at its fifth session in March, 1928).

The Soviet delegation thereupon submitted an alternative plan for partial and gradual disarmament on a quota basis. This plan proposed the destruction of weapons of warfare of greatest danger to the civil population. But this proposal was also shelved at one of the countless sessions of the Preparatory Commission, at which a convention was drafted. The discussion of the Soviet proposals revealed the sharpest diversion between the various imperialist powers, each of which was anxious to disarm its rival while leaving its own armaments intact.

“Have there been attempts,” asked Stalin in December, 1927, at the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, “at the ‘peaceful regulation’ of impending military conflicts during the period under review? Yes, there have. Much more than might have been expected. But they have led nowhere, absolutely nowhere. More, these attempts have turned out to be only a screen for the preparations of the ‘powers’ for new wars, a screen designed to deceive the workers and peasants.

“Take the League of Nations, which in the opinion of the lying bourgeois press and of the no less lying Social-Democratic press is an instruments of peace. What has all the talk of the League of Nations about peace, disarmament and reduction of armaments resulted in? Not in anything good; it has only resulted in fooling the masses, in new outbursts of armament, and in fresh exacerbation of the impending conflicts. Can we regard it as a matter of chance that for three years the League of Nations has been talking about peace and disarmament and that for three years the so-called Second International has been supporting this lying talk, and yet the ‘nations’ are all arming and arming, extending the old conflicts of the ‘powers,’ piling one new conflict on another and thus undermining the cause of peace? . . . The corrupt bourgeois press of all countries, from

Japan to England and from France to America, keep shouting at the top of their voices that the Soviet proposals for disarmament are 'insincere'—why then not test the sincerity of the Soviet proposals and proceed at once to practical disarmament, or at least to an effective reduction of armaments? What is the hitch?"

The position of the Soviet Union in the matter of disarmament has demonstrated to all the peoples that it is striving to live at peace with all states which do not harbor aggressive intentions towards it. At the same time, the false pacifist talk of the spokesmen of capitalist countries at numerous conferences could not but expose the real designs of the instigators of a new world carnage.

"In order to show," said V. M. Molotov, "that the talk of disarmament serves as a screen for persistent work in preparation for new imperialist wars and for an armed attack on the U.S.S.R., we must dwell on the results of the labors of the Preparatory *Disarmament* Commission. Despite all the attempts of the Soviet delegation to secure a real reduction of armaments, the commission in its labors—if the word 'labors' is appropriate in this case—was guided by a different motive, namely, to mask the furious growth in armaments by talking about disarmament."

The resolute and consistent advocacy of universal disarmament by the U.S.S.R. exposed the preparations for a new imperialist war, hampered the militarist policy of the imperialist powers and impeded the rabid race for armaments. The Soviet Union utilized Geneva as a platform in its struggle against militarism.

The position taken up by the Soviet Union in the matter of disarmament helped to enhance its prestige in foreign politics and to strengthen the confidence and sympathy of the masses of the capitalist countries for the U.S.S.R. On the other hand, its unswerving struggle in the cause of peace

aroused the frenzied hatred of the imperialists for the Soviet Union. The capitalist countries looked upon the growing strength of the socialist economic system of the U.S.S.R. as a menace to the existence of the capitalist system, and the imperialist governments accordingly resorted to all ways and means of bringing fresh pressure to bear on the U.S.S.R. so as to frustrate, or, at least, to retard its program of industrialization.

The anti-Soviet campaign was led by Great Britain. In May, 1927, the diehards at the head of the British Government instigated a provocative raid on Arcos, the Soviet trading society in England. On May 26, the Conservative British Government broke off diplomatic and trade relations with the U.S.S.R. On June 7, 1927, P. L. Voikov, the Soviet Ambassador to Warsaw, was assassinated by a Russian White Guard who had become a Polish subject. In the summer of the same year, raids were made almost simultaneously on the Soviet representations in Berlin, Peking, Shanghai and Tientsin. But the U.S.S.R. did not succumb to the pressure of the imperialists and was not intimidated by these provocative acts. Britain's attempts to isolate the U.S.S.R. ended in failure.

Speaking at the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Stalin vividly demonstrated the growing strength of the Soviet Union in international affairs and the failure of the anti-Soviet designs of the capitalist states.

"We have two series of factors," he said, "and two different tendencies acting in opposite directions:

"1. The policy of undermining economic relations between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist countries, provocative assaults on the U.S.S.R., open and clandestine efforts to prepare intervention against the U.S.S.R. These are factors menacing the international position of the U.S.S.R. It is the operation of these factors that explains facts like the rupture of diplomatic

relations with the U.S.S.R. by the British Conservative Cabinet, the seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway by the Chinese militarists, the financial blockade of the U.S.S.R., the clerical 'crusade' headed by the Pope against the U.S.S.R., the organization of wrecking through our technical experts by the agents of foreign states, the organization of explosions and arson, like those which were organized by members of the staff of the Lena Goldfields, attempts on the life of representatives of the U.S.S.R. (Poland), attacks on our exports (U.S.A., Poland), etc.

"2. Sympathy with and support of the U.S.S.R. by the workers in the capitalist countries, the growth of the economic and political might of the U.S.S.R., the growth of the defensive capacity of the U.S.S.R., the policy of peace undeviatingly pursued by the Soviet Government. These are factors which consolidate the international position of the U.S.S.R. It is the operation of these factors that explains events like the successful liquidation of the conflict on the Chinese Eastern Railway, the restoration of relations with Great Britain, the growth of economic relations with capitalist countries, etc.

"It is the struggle of these two factors that determines the external position of the U.S.S.R." *

* J. V. Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. II, pp. 261-62, International Publishers, New York.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE IN THE PERIOD OF THE STALIN FIVE-YEAR PLANS

DURING the period of the Stalin Five-Year Plans the relation of forces in the international arena underwent a change. While the U.S.S.R. rapidly and successfully developed its socialist economic system, the capitalist world was shaken by the economic crisis that began towards the end of 1929 and grew steadily more profound and acute in the subsequent three years. The industrial crisis in the capitalist countries was interwoven with an agricultural, an agrarian crisis. During the three crisis years (1930-33) the industrial output of the U.S.S.R. more than doubled.

On the other hand, industrial output in the U.S.A. had dropped by the end of 1933 to 65 per cent of the 1929 level, in Great Britain to 86 per cent, and in France to 77 per cent. In 1932 there were in the capitalist countries, according to official and obviously underestimated figures, twenty-four million unemployed condemned to starvation and extinction. Tens of millions of ruined farmers were suffering from the agrarian crisis. The bourgeois press was unable to conceal from the masses the advantages of the socialist economic system over the capitalist system. The proletariat of the world followed the achievements of the socialist country with profound interest. The fulfilment of the First Five-Year Plan had an immense effect internationally. It helped to muster the revolutionary forces of the working class in all countries. It transformed the Soviet Union into a powerful industrial country. Speaking in his report to the Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on January 7, 1933,

on the results of the First Five-Year Plan in the sphere of industry, Stalin declared that:

“The Soviet Union has been converted from a weak country, unprepared for defense, into a country mighty in defense, a country prepared for every contingency, a country capable of producing on a mass scale all modern weapons of defense and of equipping its army with them in the event of an attack from without.”

And summing up the general results of the First Five-Year Plan, he said:

“1. The results of the Five-Year Plan have refuted the assertions of the bourgeois and Social-Democratic leaders that the Five-Year Plan was a fantasy, delirium, an unattainable dream. The results of the Five-Year Plan show that the Five-Year Plan has already been fulfilled.

“2. The results of the Five-Year Plan have shattered the well-known bourgeois ‘article of faith’ that the working class is incapable of building anything new—that it is capable only of destroying the old. The results of the Five-Year Plan have shown that the working class is as able to build the new as to destroy the old.

“3. The results of the Five-Year Plan have shattered the thesis of the Social-Democrats that it is impossible to build socialism in one country, taken singly. The results of the Five-Year Plan have shown that it is quite possible to build a socialist society in one country; for the economic foundations of such a society have already been laid in the U.S.S.R.

“4. The results of the Five-Year Plan have refuted the assertion of bourgeois economists that the capitalist system of economy is the best of all systems—that every other system of economy is unstable and incapable of standing the test of the difficulties attending economic development. The results of the Five-Year Plan have shown that the capitalist system of economy

is bankrupt and unstable; that it has become obsolete and must give way to another, a higher, Soviet, socialist system of economy; that the only system of economy that has no fear of crises and is able to overcome the difficulties which capitalism cannot solve is the Soviet system of economy.

"5. Finally, the results of the Five-Year Plan have shown that the Party is invincible, *if* it knows its goal, and if it is not afraid of difficulties."

The general economic crisis which had begun in 1929 definitely put an end to the temporary and partial stabilization of capitalism and resulted in a contraction of foreign trade and a fierce commercial and currency war. New customs barriers were raised. International conferences, repeatedly convened, were unable to solve any of the political problems by mutual agreement. The attempts to ameliorate the economic difficulties by reviving trade with the help of new favorable customs agreements ended in a complete fiasco. The world economic crisis only served to aggravate the antagonisms of the imperialist states. The Versailles system was being steadily shaken by capitalism's internal contradictions. All talk of disarmament ceased and an open and feverish rivalry in armaments among all the capitalist states began.

In September, 1931, the roar of Japanese guns on the fields of Manchuria announced to the world that the period of relative stability in international relations had come to an end. In its search for a way out of the crisis, Japanese imperialism launched into war. The armed attack on Manchuria met with no resistance from the signatories to the Washington Treaty.* The imperialists hoped that this war would be the signal for a new armed invasion of the Soviet Union. Representatives of the Second International were some of the most active of the

* The Nine-Power Treaty concluded at the Washington Conference on February 26, 1922, by which Japan, the U.S.A., Great Britain and other powers undertook "to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of China."

warmongers. But the designs of the imperialists and reactionary Social-Democratic leaders were thwarted and the Soviet Union once again avoided being drawn into war.

It is significant that at the very moment the Japanese army was occupying Manchuria, the Geneva "disarmament" conference met in session, only to draw up a fresh batch of pacifist resolutions. The purpose of these resolutions was to leave the road free for Japanese aggression in Manchuria. The Soviet Union vigorously exposed the League of Nations as an instrument for concealing the real aims of the imperialists in paving the way for a new bloody war.

Said Stalin in a speech on the results of the July, 1928, plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:

"There are many who think that imperialist pacifism is an instrument of peace. That is a mistake. Imperialist pacifism is an instrument for the preparation of war and for the masking of these preparations by pharasaical talk about peace. Without this pacifism and its instrument, the League of Nations, the preparations for war under present conditions would be impossible.

"There are simpletons who believe that since there is such a thing as imperialist pacifism there will be no war. That is absolutely wrong. On the contrary, he who would have the truth should reverse the proposition and say: since imperialist pacifism, with its League of Nations, is flourishing, there will most certainly be new imperialist wars and intervention.

"And the most important thing in all this is the fact that Social-Democracy is the principal conveyor of imperialist pacifism among the working class, and is, therefore, the principal support of capitalism within the working class in the matter of preparation for new wars and for intervention."*

* J. V. Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. II, pp. 41-42, International Publishers, New York.

In 1933-34, the international situation underwent a change owing to the growing acuteness of the antagonisms among the imperialist powers. The threat of a new imperialist war loomed on the horizon.

The role of the Soviet Union as a consistent champion of peace had grown immensely. The U.S.S.R. had developed in economic and military might and had become a great industrial power, and a number of capitalist countries were obliged to change their attitude towards it. In particular, diplomatic relations were established between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. in 1933.

The Soviet Union began to play an increasingly important part in world politics.

The internal political situation of the West European capitalist countries had also undergone a change. The protracted industrial and agrarian crisis, the huge volume of unemployment and the acute deterioration in the condition of the poorer classes, served to increase the discontent of the workers and peasants and the middle classes in the capitalist countries. Discontent was particularly rife in Germany where the laboring masses were languishing under the yoke of their own bourgeoisie and the yoke of the British and French victors in the first imperialist war.

At the same time it became more and more clear that the bourgeoisie was seeking a way out of the crisis, on the one hand, by suppressing the working class at home, and, on the other, by launching a war for the repartition of the colonies and spheres of influence at the expense of the weak and defenseless countries. The seizure of Manchuria by the Japanese imperialists and the war they were promoting against China as a whole, the preparations for an attack on the U.S.S.R., the growing armament of the European and American imperialist powers, in short, the two seats of war that were forming—in Central Europe and in the Far East—eloquently showed that the capitalist world was feverishly

preparing for a new world war and for an attack on the Soviet Union.

The U.S.S.R. could not but react to an international situation that had grown so acute. Continuing to pursue its peace policy, the Soviet Union at the same time set to work to further strengthen its defensive power.

In September, 1934, on the invitation of thirty-four countries, the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations. In doing so it fully realized the weakness of the League, but hoped that in the existing international situation it might serve as an instrument of peace, however weak, which might to some extent hamper the attempts to unleash war. In May, 1935, the U.S.S.R. concluded a treaty of mutual assistance against possible aggression with France, and then with Czechoslovakia.

It goes without saying that when it joined the League of Nations, the U.S.S.R. assumed no responsibility for the earlier decisions adopted by that body, or for the Versailles or other treaties in which the Soviet Union had had no part.

“The fact that we have joined the League of Nations,” said V. M. Molotov in January, 1936, at the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R., “does not mean that there is no longer a radical difference in principle between Soviet foreign policy and the policy of capitalist powers. The Italo-Ethiopian war shows that the contrary is the case. . . .

“The Soviet Union alone has taken up a definite position of principle with regard to the Italo-Ethiopian war, a position hostile to imperialism, a position hostile to a policy of colonial conquest of any kind.”

The attitude of the Soviet Union to the League of Nations was fully and extensively formulated by Joseph Stalin in an interview he gave to Walter Duranty, the American journalist, in 1933. In reply to the question: “Is your attitude to the League of Nations a negative one always and under all circumstances?” he said:

"No, not always and not under all circumstances. I do not think you quite understand our viewpoint. . . . The League may well become a brake to retard or hamper military action. If that is so, if the League is even the tiniest mound, helping somewhat to slow down the drive toward war and help peace, then we are not against the League. Yes, if such will be the course of historical events, it is not excluded that we shall support the League despite its colossal deficiencies."

The Soviet Union took advantage of its membership in the League of Nations to carry on a consistent struggle for peace and against aggressors and their accomplices. Of major importance was the definition of an aggressor submitted by it to the disarmament conference on February 6, 1933 (even before it joined the League of Nations). The purpose of the definition proposed by the U.S.S.R. was to lend precision to the concept "aggression," so as to leave no loophole for denial or justification of the acts of an aggressor. The Soviet definition was adopted against the votes of Great Britain, France and Italy.

At the disarmament conference which met in 1934, the Soviet Government, as a counterblow to the attempts to dissolve the conference, proposed that it be converted into a permanent peace conference whose function it would be to keep an eye on violations of international treaties and to work out measures for collective security.

The Soviet Government did everything it could to utilize the League of Nations in the interests of peace. The Soviet Union insisted on applying every measure envisaged by the Covenant of the League against aggressors. But the League, which was controlled by Britain and France, did nothing to prevent Italian aggression in Ethiopia and Albania, or Japanese aggression in China, or military intervention against the Spanish Republic. While a member of the League, the Soviet Union never departed from its principles and was

always a real champion of peace and international good will. The British and French bosses of the League, on the other hand, sabotaged all aid to the victims of aggression and in effect connived at aggression and assisted the aggressors.

The League of Nations was, properly speaking, nothing but a tool in the hands of the Anglo-French military bloc.

The methods of the warmongers were thoroughly exposed in Stalin's historic report to the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:

"It is characteristic," he said, "that before Japan invaded North China all the influential French and British newspapers shouted about China's weakness and her inability to offer resistance, and declared that Japan with her army could subjugate China in two or three months. Then the European and American politicians began to watch and wait. And then, when Japan started military operations, they let her have Shanghai, the vital center of foreign capital in China; they let her have Canton, a center of Britain's monopoly influence in South China; they let her have Hainan, and they allowed her to surround Hongkong. Does not this look very much like encouraging the aggressor? It is as though they were saying: 'Embroid yourself deeper in war; then we shall see.'" *

Speaking from the platform of the Eighteenth Party Congress, Stalin exposed the efforts of the British and French imperialists to plunge the two biggest states in Europe—the U.S.S.R. and Germany—into the maelstrom of war.

"The hullabaloo," he said, "raised by the British, French and American press over the Soviet Ukraine is characteristic. The gentlemen of the press there shouted until they were hoarse that the Germans were marching on Soviet Ukraine, that they now had what is called the Carpathian Ukraine, with a popula-

* J. V. Stalin, *From Socialism to Communism in the Soviet Union*, p. 13.

tion of some seven hundred thousand, and that not later than this spring the Germans would annex the Soviet Ukraine, which has a population of more than thirty million, to this so-called Carpathian Ukraine. It looks as if the object of this suspicious hullabaloo was to incense the Soviet Union against Germany, to poison the atmosphere and to provoke a conflict with Germany without any visible grounds.”*

The Soviet Union could not but draw the necessary conclusions from this state of international affairs. Stalin defined the principles of foreign policy of the Soviet Union as follows:

“The foreign policy of the Soviet Union is clear and explicit:

“1. We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country.

“2. We stand for peaceful, close and friendly relations with all the neighboring countries which have common frontiers with the U.S.S.R. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass, directly or indirectly, on the integrity and inviolability of the frontiers of the Soviet state.

“3. We stand for the support of nations which are the victims of aggression and are fighting for the independence of their country.

“4. We are not afraid of the threats of aggressors, and are ready to deal two blows for every blow delivered by instigators of war who attempt to violate the Soviet borders.

“Such is the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.”**

In its foreign policy the Soviet Union relies on its growing

* *Ibid.*, p. 14.

** *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

economic, political and cultural might, on the moral and political unity of the Soviet people, on the mutual friendship of the Soviet nations, on its valorous Red Army and Red Navy, on the moral support of the working people of all countries, who are vitally concerned in the preservation of peace, and on the good sense of the countries which, for one reason or another, have no interest in the violation of peace. Stalin declared that the tasks of the Bolshevik Party in the sphere of foreign policy were as follows:

"1. To continue the policy of peace and of strengthening business relations with all countries;

"2. To be cautious and not allow our country to be drawn into conflicts by warmongers who are accustomed to have others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them;

"3. To strengthen the might of our Red Army and Red Navy to the utmost;

"4. To strengthen the international bonds of friendship with the working people of all countries, who are interested in peace and friendship among nations."*

* *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

THE ANGLO-FRENCH BLOC MICALCULATES

THE DEVELOPMENT of events in Europe signified the complete collapse of the Munich Agreement, which was designed to leave Germany a free hand in the East and involve her in a war against the Soviet Union. In order to maintain their supremacy on the European continent, the British and French imperialists resorted to the device of "guaranteeing security." Such guarantees were given by Great Britain to Poland, Rumania and Greece. The underlying purpose of these guarantees was revealed by subsequent events. In April, 1939, the British and French governments made proposals to the Soviet Government to begin negotiations with the purpose of drawing up measures for the strengthening of peace. The Soviet Union expressed its readiness to conclude a defensive pact with these countries provided it would in no way bear the character of a military offensive alliance. But this was not what Britain and France wanted.

"While guaranteeing themselves," V. M. Molotov said, "from direct attack on the part of aggressors by mutual assistance pacts between themselves and with Poland, and while trying to secure for themselves the assistance of the U.S.S.R. in the event of attack by aggressors on Poland and Rumania, the British and French left open the question whether the U.S.S.R. in its turn might count on their assistance in the event of it being directly attacked by aggressors, just as they left open another question, namely, whether they could participate in guaranteeing the small states bordering on the U.S.S.R. and covering its northwestern frontiers, should these states prove unable to defend their neutrality from attack by aggressors."

The governments of Britain and France used every pretext

to avoid the conclusion of a clear-cut agreement between those countries and the U.S.S.R. They tried to get the Soviet Union to take upon itself obligations towards the countries which had been guaranteed by Great Britain, without its obtaining in return definite obligations on the part of Britain and France with regard to the countries situated on its own north-western frontiers. The British and French diplomats hoped to get their interests "guaranteed" in Poland, Rumania and Greece at the expense of the Soviet Union.

In the negotiations conducted between the U.S.S.R. and Britain and France two fundamentally different lines were revealed: the purpose of the U.S.S.R. was to safeguard peace in Europe, while the aim of Britain and France was to engineer war on conditions most favorable for themselves. They did their best to embroil the Soviet Union in a war with Germany, in order to have others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them. But the U.S.S.R. refused to act as a catspaw for the British and French imperialists.

The Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations lasted for four months. Even a number of bourgeois politicians were moved to criticize the line of the British and French governments in sabotaging the negotiations with the U.S.S.R. For instance, on June 12, 1939, the following questions were put and answers received in the House of Commons:

Mr. Dalton: "Does the Prime Minister not realize that these very long delays in reaching an agreement with the Soviet Government are causing disquiet in the country, and causing doubt as to whether His Majesty's Government really means business in this matter at all? Are they not spinning out the time until they can wriggle back to the Munich policy?"

Mr. Chamberlain: "The honorable gentleman is very offensive in his suggestions. I see no reason why the delay should be attributed to His Majesty's Government."

Mr. Adams: "In order to dispel these disquieting reports,

can my right honorable friend assure us that the completion of a general alliance against aggression is not being subordinated to any other purpose?"

No answer was given to this question.

The British and French governments entrusted the negotiations with the leaders of a country like the Soviet Union to minor individuals. Asked in the House of Commons whether, in view of the statement he had made on the eve of the Munich negotiations that personal conversations between the heads of governments were of exceptional value he deemed it expedient to pay an official visit to Moscow, Mr. Chamberlain replied that the application of this principle would naturally depend on the prevailing circumstances and conditions. Under the present circumstances he was of the opinion that an official visit to Moscow was uncalled for.

As the Anglo-French negotiations seemed to be dragging on endlessly, several British Members of Parliament became growingly insistent in their expressions of alarm and began to realize that the British Government was directly working for the breakdown of the negotiations. On June 21, 1939, the following questions were put to Chamberlain and Butler in the House of Commons:

Mr. Mander inquired whether the Russian Government had ever asked for the visit of a British Cabinet member to Moscow in connection with these negotiations.

Mr. Chamberlain: "No, Sir."

Mr. Mander asked if the Prime Minister would bear in mind that he himself went to see Herr Hitler three times in the course of two weeks, and if it was not possible that the Foreign Secretary might go to Moscow.

No reply was forthcoming.

Mr. Leach asked the Prime Minister if Mr. Strang had been granted plenipotentiary powers in the Moscow discussions.

Mr. Butler said that his Majesty's Ambassador at Moscow was responsible for the conduct of the negotiations now taking

place. Mr. Strang was assisting him in an advisory capacity.

Mr. Leach asked whether if neither of them had plenipotentiary powers it would not be very advisable that these powers should be granted in order to get on with the treaty.

Mr. Butler: "The government is satisfied that they will conduct these negotiations with dispatch and efficiency."

Notwithstanding the quite obvious intention of the British and French governments to defeat the negotiations with the Soviet Union, the British and French bourgeois press shamelessly deceived public opinion and published reassuring reports to the effect that the negotiations were progressing favorably. The bourgeois newspapers declared that the conclusion of the pact was only a question of days, that all issues that had arisen in the negotiations had already been settled and that all that remained was to append the signatures to the pact. The spokesmen of the British and French circles who were anxious for an agreement with the U.S.S.R. expressed their open dissatisfaction with the behavior of the British and French governments. Thus, on July 26, the French newspaper *Ce Soir* published an outspoken article on the subject by Lloyd George.

"Why did the Prime Minister or Lord Halifax not go to Moscow immediately to settle the details," he asked, "as soon as Russia expressed her willingness to enter into an alliance with the Western democratic states with the purpose of staying the hand of the aggressor?"

Halifax and Chamberlain, he pointed out, had paid repeated visits to Germany and Italy.

"Chamberlain went to Rome ostensibly to congratulate Mussolini and to tender official recognition of the conquest of Ethiopia, but actually to assure him that he (Chamberlain) would not prevent him from intervening in Spain. Why was only an official of the Foreign Office sent to Moscow to repre-

sent us in an incomparably more mighty country which was offering us its aid? There can only be one answer. Neville Chamberlain, Halifax and John Simon do not want any agreement with Russia."

Entangled in their own diplomatic snares, the British and French governments wanted a pact with the Soviet Union which would not specify any definite obligation on the part of Britain and France but would at the same time strengthen the position of these countries in the new international situation that had arisen. On the other hand, the British and French governments feared that if they concluded a serious pact of mutual assistance with the Soviet Government they would be strengthening the position of the U.S.S.R., which was just what they did not want. They endeavored to draw the Soviet Union into the Anglo-French military bloc in order to plunge the peoples of the U.S.S.R. into war with Germany. The negotiations came to nothing.

Britain and France, in their negotiations with the U.S.S.R., as V. M. Molotov pointed out,

"... ignored the prime requisites for such negotiations—they ignored the principle of reciprocity and equality of obligations. Nevertheless, in spite of this, the Soviet Government did not reject the negotiations and in turn put forward its own proposals. We were mindful of the fact that it was difficult for the governments of Great Britain and France to make an abrupt change in their policy, from the unfriendly attitude towards the Soviet Union, which had existed quite recently, to serious negotiations with the U.S.S.R. based on the condition of equality of obligations.

"However, the subsequent negotiations were not justified by their results. The Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations lasted four months. They helped to elucidate a number of questions. At the same time they made it clear to the representatives of Great Britain and France that the Soviet Union had to be seriously

reckoned with in international affairs. But these negotiations encountered insuperable obstacles. The trouble, of course, did not lie in individual 'formulations' or in particular clauses in the draft pact. No, the trouble was much more serious.**

Equally sterile were the negotiations between the general staffs of Britain, France and the U.S.S.R. It is sufficient to mention that the British and French military missions came to Moscow without any definite powers and without the right to sign any kind of military convention. More, the British military mission arrived in Moscow without any credentials at all. It is clear that these tactics were deliberately calculated to discredit and defeat the negotiations.

As we now know from recently published documents, the British and French General Staffs were simultaneously drawing up concrete plans for attacking the U.S.S.R. from Poland, Scandinavia, Finland, the Baltic States, Rumania, Turkey and Iran—the countries bordering on the Soviet Union.

* V. M. Molotov, *The Meaning of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact*, pp. 3-4, Workers Library Publishers, New York.

PACTS OF NON-AGGRESSION AND FRIENDSHIP WITH GERMANY

AFTER the negotiations with France and Britain had reached an impasse, the Soviet Union and Germany decided to conclude a treaty of non-aggression in order to remove the danger of war between the two countries.

On August 19, 1939, a trade and credit agreement was signed in Berlin between Germany and the Soviet Union which compared favorably with all previous agreements of a similar character, not to mention the fact that the Soviet Union had no economic agreement of equal advantage with Britain, France or any other country. Under this agreement, the U.S.S.R. was granted a seven-year credit and the opportunity to order a considerable quantity of such equipment as it needed.

"By this agreement," V. M. Molotov said, "the U.S.S.R. undertakes to sell to Germany a definite quantity of our surplus raw materials for the needs of her industry, which fully answers the interests of the U.S.S.R.

"Why should we reject such an advantageous economic agreement? Surely not to please those who are generally averse to the Soviet Union having advantageous economic agreements with other countries? And it is clear that the commercial and credit agreement with Germany is fully in accord with the economic interests and defensive needs of the Soviet Union. This agreement is fully in accord with the decision of the Eighteenth Congress of our Party, which approved Stalin's statement as to the need for 'strengthening business relations with all countries.'"*

* *Ibid.*, p. 9.

On August 23, 1939, a Soviet-German pact of non-aggression was concluded in Moscow. The pact is in full harmony with the position of the Soviet Union as defined by Stalin. It is a document of the highest value and reflects the consistent peace policy of the Soviet Union.

The pact of non-aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Germany is based on the fundamental principles of the Berlin Treaty of 1926, but at the same time develops these principles with the purpose of strengthening peaceful relations between the two countries.

Article 1 of the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression states that both parties undertake to refrain from all aggressive acts or attacks on each other's territory, whether alone or in conjunction with other powers.

Article 2 provides for the maintenance of neutrality by the one party should the other party become the object of hostilities on the part of a third power.

Article 3 provides for contact between the two governments for mutual consultation and information on questions affecting their common interests.

Article 4 imposes the obligation that neither party will take part in any grouping of powers aimed directly or indirectly against the other party.

Article 5 provides for exclusively peaceful methods of settling all disputes and conflicts by means of a friendly exchange of opinions or, if necessary, by the setting up of commissions for this purpose.

Article 6 fixes the term of validity of the pact at ten years and further provides that if neither of the parties gives notice of denouncing it a year before the expiration of this term, the pact shall be automatically prolonged for another five years.

This treaty shows that the U.S.S.R., in furtherance of its peace policy, has done its utmost to preserve peace in Eastern Europe.

The conclusion of the pact of non-aggression put an end to

the strained relations that had previously existed between the U.S.S.R. and Germany.

V. M. Molotov, speaking at the Extraordinary Fourth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., gave an exhaustive evaluation of the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression:

"The chief importance of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact," he said, "lies in the fact that the two largest states of Europe have agreed to put an end to the enmity between them, to eliminate the menace of war and live at peace one with the other, making narrower thereby the zone of possible military conflicts in Europe. Even if military conflicts in Europe should prove unavoidable, the scope of hostilities will now be restricted. Only the instigators of a general European war, those who under the mask of peace would like to ignite a general European conflagration, can be displeased with this state of affairs."*

The pact of non-aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Germany is of the utmost significance not only for the peoples of the two states concerned, but also for the peoples of all Europe and of the whole world. The treaty "marks a turning point in the history of Europe, and not of Europe alone," Molotov said. A treaty which guarantees peace over a considerable part of Europe fully answers the interests of the peoples of all the European countries.

The Soviet Government had always considered it desirable to improve political relations with Germany, but the conditions that had resulted from the energetic efforts of the war-mongers made it possible to sign this pact only in August, 1939. "We have no other feelings towards the great German people except friendship and sincere respect," said V. M. Molotov at the Eighth Congress of Soviets in November, 1936. When the German Government expressed the desire to

* *Ibid.*, p. 12.

improve political relations with the U.S.S.R., the Soviet Government had no grounds for declining.

On September 28, 1939, after the collapse of the former Polish state, a Treaty of Friendship and Frontier was signed in Moscow between the U.S.S.R. and Germany, under which both governments considered it as coming within their exclusive province to restore peace and order on the territory of former Poland and to guarantee the peaceful existence of the peoples inhabiting this territory in accordance with their national peculiarities.

The Treaty of Friendship between the U.S.S.R. and Germany is based on a sound economic foundation and testifies to the fact that there are no issues between the two countries that, given a sincere desire for peace, cannot be settled by negotiation.

On February 11, 1940, following negotiations between a German economic delegation and the People's Commissar of Foreign Trade of the U.S.S.R., an economic agreement was concluded between Germany and the U.S.S.R. by which the volume of trade provided for in the trade and credit agreement of August 19, 1939, was increased. This economic agreement shows that all the conditions exist for the development of trade between the U.S.S.R. and Germany and that both countries are manifesting a sincere desire for the development of their mutual economic ties.

As a result of this agreement, trade between Germany and the U.S.S.R. will in the first year of its operation achieve a volume larger than any that has been reached between the two countries since the World War. The Soviet Union will supply Germany with raw materials and foodstuffs, while Germany will supply the Soviet Union with manufactured goods, including armaments.

The Soviet Union, possessing as it does a highly developed industry and agriculture, is economically strong enough to be independent of foreign countries, and can develop its trade

despite the difficulties which have been created in its commercial relations with Britain and France through no fault of its own.

The treaties concluded between Germany and the U.S.S.R. fully coincide with the fundamental interests of the Soviet and German peoples, and likewise with the interests of peace and with the interests of the masses in all countries. It was these interests that motivated the Soviet Union in supporting the peaceful proposals of Germany. This, of course, was not to the liking of those who were working for the extension of the war. The corrupt bourgeois news agencies invented the most absurd fabrications.

In November, 1939, the editor of *Pravda* applied to Stalin for his opinion of a statement published by the Havas Agency regarding a speech he was supposed to have made "in the Political Bureau on August 19," in which he was alleged to have expressed the idea that "the war must continue as long as possible, so as to exhaust the belligerents."

Stalin's reply was as follows:

"This, like many other of the statements of the Havas Agency, is a lie. I cannot say, of course, in which particular *café chantant* this lie was fabricated. But however much the Havas gentry may lie, they cannot deny the fact that:

"(a) It was not Germany that attacked France and England, but France and England that attacked Germany, thereby assuming responsibility for the present war;

"(b) After hostilities had broken out, Germany made overtures of peace to France and England, and the Soviet Union openly supported Germany's peace overtures, for it considered, and continues to consider, that the earliest possible termination of the war would radically improve the position of all countries and nations;

"(c) The ruling circles of England and France rudely rejected both Germany's peace overtures and the attempts of

the Soviet Union to secure the earliest possible termination of the war.

"Such are the facts.

"What have the *café chantant* politicians of the Havas Agency to offer in opposition to these facts?"

The growing aggravation of the capitalist antagonisms which gave rise to the second imperialist war has resulted in the fact that a number of the biggest countries of Europe are in a state of war and millions of working people have been condemned to suffering, hardships and death in the interests of the bourgeoisie. The wise Leninist-Stalinist foreign policy has averted the menace of war from the Soviet Union.

LIBERATION OF THE PEOPLES OF THE WESTERN UKRAINE AND WESTERN BYELORUSSIA

IN AUGUST and September, 1939, profound changes took place in the international situation. The most decisive factors in this respect were the changes in the relations between the U.S.S.R. and Germany, the military defeat of Poland and the collapse of the Polish state, and the outbreak of the European war between Britain and France on the one hand, and Germany on the other.

The patchwork Polish state collapsed under the first blows of war. Poland's bankrupt statesmen fled the country in the first days of the war and abandoned the army and the nation to their fate. The Soviet Union could not remain indifferent to the fact that Poland had become a convenient field for every accident and surprise, which might create a menace to the U.S.S.R. Neither could the Soviet Government remain indifferent to the fate of the kindred Ukrainians and Byelorussians whose position under Poland had been that of disfranchised nations. The Soviet Government deemed it its sacred duty to extend the hand of aid to its brothers, the Ukrainians and Byelorussians inhabiting Poland.

On September 17, 1939, V. M. Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., addressed a radio message to the Soviet people in which he stated that, in view of the circumstances, the Soviet Government could not remain indifferent any longer to the situation that had arisen, and that the heroic Red Army had extended the hand of aid to its brother Ukrainians and Byelorussians.

It is an open secret that the Anglo-French bloc sacrificed Poland in order to unleash a European war. A British Government *Blue Book* published in November, 1939, makes it quite

clear how far-reaching were the designs of British policy. It attempted to justify British action in going to war with Germany, but actually it was an indictment of the British imperialists.

Documents published both in the British *Blue Book* and in a German *White Book* show that Polish-German relations had been strained to the breaking point by the "mediation" of Great Britain. The luckless Polish Government had been a blind tool in the hands of the Anglo-French war bloc.

The rapid collapse of the Polish state was not only due to the blows of war but also to the internal instability of its whole political system.

The Polish masses had been barbarously exploited by the capitalists and landlords. For twenty years the Polish gentry had heaped injury and insult on the Ukrainian and Byelorussian peoples and crushed the poverty-stricken rural population beneath a burden of semi-feudal duties and levies. The people resisted, and time and again rose in revolt.

The peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia learned from their own bitter experience the meaning of the national policy of the imperialists, who have an interest in oppressing and exploiting national minorities, in inciting one people against another, and in maintaining the oppressed in disfranchisement and ignorance.

" . . . Leninism has proved, and the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia have confirmed, that the national question can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of the proletarian revolution. . . . " *

These words of Stalin's are vividly corroborated by the great commonwealth of nations of the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union, the national problem has been solved, the friendship among its peoples is growing stronger from day

* J. V. Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, pp. 65-66.

to day, and the working people live a life of freedom, happiness, culture and prosperity. And such also is the good fortune of the peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia who have now been adopted into the great family of free Soviet nations.

For the first time in their history, the peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia elected their deputies to National Assemblies, and did so on the basis of the most democratic suffrage in the world. In the Western Ukraine 92.83 per cent, and in Western Byelorussia 96.71 per cent of the electors voted.

“The recent elections to the National Assemblies of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, conducted for the first time in the history of those territories on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage and a secret ballot, have shown that at least nine-tenths of the population of these regions have long been ready to rejoin the Soviet Union.” *

On October 27, 1939, the National Assembly of the Western Ukraine, and on October 29, 1939, the National Assembly of Western Byelorussia unanimously proclaimed a Soviet regime on the territories liberated from the yoke of the Polish gentry. The entire power in the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia passed into the hands of the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The people's government, the Soviet Government, the hope and reliance of all working people, turned over the land to the peasants, proclaimed the banks, factories and workshops state property and abolished landlord and capitalist exploitation and the oppression of nationalities forever.

These were historic days for the working population of the

* *Molotov's Report to the Supreme Soviet*, p. 11, Workers Library Publishers, New York.

Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, ushering in a new, free and happy life.

In a letter to Joseph Stalin, the National Assembly of the Western Ukraine declared:

"There is no force in the world that can again impose on our people the old yoke of the landlords and capitalists. The days of oppression and exploitation have passed forever. Like our brothers, the peoples of the Soviet Union, and together with them, we will build a bright, free and radiant future.

"The Soviet Union is our beloved fatherland which we will love as true sons and defend with all our strength."

The representatives of the peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia—the plenipotentiary commissions of the National Assemblies of these two regions—came to Moscow, the capital of the socialist country, to report to the highest organ of power of the U.S.S.R. the firm and unanimous desire of the workers, peasants and intellectuals of the liberated regions to join the united family of nations, the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. granted the wish of the National Assemblies of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia and these regions now form part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

"The territory which has passed to the U.S.S.R.," said V. M. Molotov in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., on October 31, 1939, "is equal in area to a large European state. . . .

"The political significance of these events can scarcely be overrated. All reports from the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia show that the population greeted their liberation from the yoke of the Polish gentry with indescribable enthusiasm and . . . hailed this great new victory of the Soviet system."*

* *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

THE PACTS OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE WITH THE BALTIC COUNTRIES

THE PACTS of mutual assistance concluded between the Soviet Union and the Baltic countries—Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania—were of immense historic importance. They saved the latter from the danger of being drawn into the second imperialist war, in which over half the population of the world has already been plunged, and guaranteed the mutual security of the contracting parties and the development of friendly relations between the Baltic countries and the great socialist country.

These pacts were a striking demonstration to the whole world of the profound respect which the Soviet Union entertains for small countries, and was one more illustration of the fundamental difference between the foreign policy of the Soviet state and that of the imperialist states.

Addressing an All-Russian Conference of the Russian Communist Party in December, 1919, Lenin gave a vivid description of the attitude of imperialist states towards small countries:

“Each of these small countries has already been under the paw of the Entente. They know that when the French, American and British capitalists say, ‘We guarantee your independence,’ this means in practice, ‘We shall buy up all your sources of wealth and hold you in servitude. What is more, we shall treat you with the insolence of an officer who comes to govern and profiteer in a foreign country and does not give a hang for anybody.’ They know that it is a regular thing in such countries for the British ambassador to have more weight than their own kings or parliaments. And if the petty-bourgeois democrats were unable to understand these elementary truths till now, today the

realities of life are forcing them to understand them. We find that in relation to the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements of small countries which are plundered by the imperialists, we represent, if not allies, at least neighbors who are more reliable and valuable than the imperialists."

The entire peace policy of the Soviet Union is a vivid illustration of the fact that the socialist state is the surest and most reliable ally of the small nations.

The treaties concluded between the U.S.S.R. and the Baltic countries furnish fresh corroboration of the unswerving peace policy of the U.S.S.R. and a clear demonstration of the fact that, while concerned for the protection of its own frontiers, it extends a helping hand to the peoples of small countries, to save them from being crushed beneath the juggernaut of imperialism. These treaties have radically altered the strategic situation in the Baltic. The position of the peace-loving countries has been strengthened and the likelihood of an extension of aggression thus reduced. The strategic value of the naval bases received by the Soviet Union in the Baltic may be judged from the experience of the imperialist war of 1914-18, when the Russian navy time and again repulsed the blows of a powerful adversary who endeavored to force his way into the Gulf of Finland and the Gulf of Riga. More, the Russian navy was not only able to defend the Baltic coast, but also to launch vigorous attacks on the enemy's lines of communication in the Baltic Sea.

On September 28, 1939, a pact of mutual assistance and a trade agreement was signed by the U.S.S.R. with the Republic of Esthonia. The independent Esthonian Republic, which prior to the Revolution of October, 1917, formed part of the Russian Empire, was formed in February, 1918. Its relations with the U.S.S.R. were based on the peace treaty signed on February 2, 1920.

In 1932, the U.S.S.R. and Esthonia concluded a pact of

non-aggression. Under the Soviet-Esthonian pact of mutual assistance of September 28, 1939, the Esthonian Republic granted to the Soviet Union the right to maintain naval bases on the Esthonian islands of Oesel and Dagö and in Baltic Port, and to lease several aerodromes. The Soviet Union was also granted the right to maintain on the territory of the naval bases and aerodromes a certain number of land and air forces for their protection.

The strengthening of the strategical position of the U.S.S.R., and the cooperation of the military forces of the Esthonian Republic have ensured peace and the security of navigation in the Baltic.

The trade agreement between the U.S.S.R. and the Esthonian Republic has enabled the latter to improve its foreign trade. Foreign capital, especially British, endeavored to seize the key positions in the foreign trade of Esthonia. It suffices to say that in 1937 trade between Esthonia and Great Britain totalled 55,000,000 Esthonian krone. As a result of the trade agreement, Soviet-Esthonian trade has increased four and a half times. Esthonian economy has been rendered economically independent of the West European imperialist countries. The trade agreement saved Esthonia from the disastrous economic effects of the present war and ensured her a steady supply of Soviet raw material. The Soviet market has been thrown open to Esthonian agricultural produce and manufactures.

Esthonian industry, having lost its chief market after the secession of Esthonia from Soviet Russia, fell into profound decline. It need only be mentioned that whereas before the first imperialist war Esthonia's heavy industry employed 48,000 workers, in 1930 it employed only 23,000. The character of Esthonian industry also underwent a marked change: the principal branches before were armaments, shipbuilding and the manufacture of agricultural implements and electrical equipment. Today, the chief branch of Esthonian industry is textiles.

Commenting on the conclusion of the Soviet-Esthonian pact of mutual assistance, the Esthonian newspaper *Rahvaleht* stated: "This treaty of collaboration has solved problems which elsewhere would have led to bloody conflicts."

On October 5, 1939, a pact of mutual assistance was concluded in Moscow between the Soviet Union and the Latvian Republic.

The Latvian Republic granted the Soviet Union the right to maintain naval bases in Liepaja (Libau) and Wentspils (Windau), to lease several aerodromes, to establish shore batteries between Wentspils and Petragge, and also to maintain a certain number of Soviet land and air forces for the protection of these bases and aerodromes.

The U.S.S.R. was the first country to recognize the independence of the Latvian Republic and to establish diplomatic relations with it. The basis of friendly relations between the two countries was laid by the peace treaty signed in 1920. The peaceful policy of the U.S.S.R. towards Latvia found subsequent expression in the treaty of non-aggression and peaceful settlement of conflicts concluded on February 5, 1932, which in 1934 was prolonged for a period of ten years. The Soviet-Latvian pact of mutual assistance of October 5, 1939, and its complementary trade agreement were the logical consummation of the consistently friendly policy of the U.S.S.R. towards Latvia.

The effect of the Soviet-Latvian trade agreement has been to increase trade between the two countries very considerably. In the old days the Russian market absorbed from 75 to 90 per cent of Latvia's industrial output. The economic prosperity of these regions was to a large measure based on the transit of Russian raw materials and goods through the ports of Riga, Libau and Windau. In 1913, over 20 per cent of the imports and 22 per cent of the exports of the former Russian Empire passed through these ports.

The imperialist powers tried time and again to utilize

Latvia as a base of operations against the U.S.S.R. She was under the tutelage of Great Britain, which endeavored to transform her into a colony. This was bound to affect the economy of Latvia, which from an industrial country became an agrarian country. Today Latvia has practically no large-scale industry.

The conclusion of the Soviet-Latvian treaty put an end to the tutelage of the imperialists over Latvia. The Soviet Union supplies Latvia with raw materials and industrial equipment in return for articles of Latvian export. Latvia has revived economically, and unemployment has been reduced.

Another convincing illustration of the peace policy of the U.S.S.R. was the treaty signed in Moscow on October 10, 1939, providing for the transfer to the Lithuanian Republic of the city of Vilna and the Vilna region, and a pact for mutual assistance between the Soviet Union and Lithuania. There is no other case in history of a powerful state voluntarily ceding territory to a weak state.

The Soviet Government was the first to recognize the independence of the Lithuanian Republic. Friendly relations between the two countries were established by the peace treaty of 1920. In September, 1926, the U.S.S.R. and Lithuania concluded a treaty of neutrality and non-aggression.

In 1927, relations between Poland and Lithuania became sharply strained and an armed conflict seemed inevitable, but thanks to the energetic intervention of the U.S.S.R. war was averted.

In April, 1934, the Soviet-Lithuanian treaty of non-aggression was prolonged for another ten years. In March, 1938, imperialist Poland concentrated armed forces on the Lithuanian frontier in preparation for an attack. The Soviet Government informed the Polish ambassador in Moscow that it did not advise Poland to resort to force and reserved to itself freedom of action in the event of a Polish attack on Lithuania.

The Soviet-Lithuanian treaty concluded on October 10,

1939, strengthened the friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and the Lithuanian Republic. This treaty, based on the complete equality of the two parties, provided for the common defense of Lithuania's frontiers, for which purpose, under Article 4, the Soviet Union was granted the right to maintain in certain parts of Lithuanian territory, determined by mutual agreement, a definite contingent of land and air forces. The Soviet Union undertook to supply the Lithuanian army with arms and other military material on favorable terms. This treaty was equally to the interests of the Soviet and the Lithuanian peoples.

The thoughts and sentiments of the Lithuanian people with regard to the treaty between the U.S.S.R. and Lithuania of October 10, 1939, were expressed by the well-known Lithuanian writer, Petras Tsvirka:

"The city of Vilna," he said, "has been restored to Lithuania. The piratical seizure of the Lithuanian capital by the Polish generals nineteen years ago has now been rectified. The Soviet Government has understood the aspirations of the Lithuanian people, and once again the U.S.S.R. has revealed itself as a true defender and protector of small nations. The Lithuanian people all rejoice at the return of Vilna to Lithuania and especially at the pact of mutual assistance between the U.S.S.R. and Lithuania. We now know that we are backed by the mighty Soviet Union and that conditions for peaceful labor have been guaranteed.

"Progressive Lithuanian writers, in whose name I speak, express their profound gratitude to the Soviet Union and to its leaders, the great Stalin, Molotov and Voroshilov.

"In the face of new historical events the hope of the Lithuanian people in a better and more just life has been strengthened."

However, the reactionary governments of Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia, which were fundamentally hostile to their own

people, grossly violated their pacts of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union and formed a secret triple military alliance against the U.S.S.R. Secretly, closer connections were formed between the general staffs of Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia. There were several instances of the Lithuanian authorities kidnapping soldiers of the Soviet forces (quartered on Lithuanian territory in accordance with the terms of the Soviet-Lithuanian pact of mutual assistance). These men were subjected to torture with the object of extorting military secrets from them. One of the kidnapped men was murdered; another disappeared without trace. The Lithuanian authorities likewise adopted absolutely unwarranted punitive measures against Lithuanian civilians serving the needs of the Soviet military units in Lithuania. All this showed that the reactionary Lithuanian Government, in conspiracy with the reactionary governments of Latvia and Esthonia, was grossly violating the pact of mutual assistance concluded with the Soviet Union and was making preparations for an attack on the Soviet garrison in Lithuania.

Naturally, the Soviet Government could not but react to such hostile actions on the part of the Latvian, Esthonian and Lithuanian Governments towards the Soviet Union, which had always pursued an exceptionally friendly policy towards its Baltic neighbors.

In order to ensure the honest and conscientious observance of the pacts of mutual assistance, the Soviet Government, guided by consideration for the mutual interests of its own people and the people of the Baltic countries, demanded that governments be formed in Latvia, Lithuania and Esthonia that would be able and willing to carry out these pacts. At the same time the Soviet Government demanded the admission of Soviet troops to the territory of these countries.

All these measures taken by the Soviet Government completely concurred with the national interests of the working people of Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia. Thus, the U.S.S.R.

helped these people throw off the yoke of their plutocratic governments.

Broad prospects of free democratic development and a happy life have now been opened to the peoples of Latvia, Lithuania and Esthonia. At meetings and demonstrations, the working people of these countries express deep gratitude to the Soviet Government for enabling them to live a new and free life. They acclaim the peaceable policy of the U.S.S.R. and express their determination to strengthen the ties of friendship between their countries and the Land of Socialism.

The Soviet troops entered the most important centers of the Baltic countries amidst the jubilation of the population. The people came out en masse against their plutocratic governments and forced them to resign. New people's governments were formed, friendly towards the U.S.S.R.

In a radio speech on June 24, Vares, the new Esthonian Premier, spoke of the friendship between Esthonia and the U.S.S.R.:

"Having liberated themselves from the yoke of the reactionary government," he said, "the Esthonian people have begun a new life. They stand shoulder to shoulder with their true friend, the Soviet Union, and the valiant Red Army is capable of defending our country and the Soviet land. . . ."

Leituvos Aidas expressed the sentiments of the Lithuanian people when it declared on June 22:

"Darkness reigned everywhere, and it seemed that it would never pass. The working people of Lithuania always gazed with hope at the only socialist country in the world, our great neighbor, the Soviet Union, founded by the blood and efforts of the people. Light from the U.S.S.R. penetrated to our country. But the agents of the foreign bourgeoisie, the former rulers of Lithuania, were concerned only with their own welfare, while the working people lived the lives of slaves. We have now put

an end to this with the aid of the friendly Soviet Union. We express our profound gratitude to the leader of the peoples of the Soviet Union—Stalin.”

The elections to the Latvian Sejm, to the State Duma of Esthonia and to the Lithuanian People's Diet held on July 14 and 15, 1940, which were successfully carried by the candidates of the "Working People's Alliance" in each country, displayed a public spirit and unanimity among the masses such as had never been known before.

These elections were a true demonstration of the free will of the workers, peasants and intellectuals of the Baltic countries and their desire to work actively together to build up a brighter and better fatherland in close union with the U.S.S.R.

And finally on July 21 and 22 the genuine people's parliaments of Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia came together in Kaunas, Riga and Tallin respectively, and unanimously adopted declarations establishing Soviet power in these countries and requesting the admission of the new Soviet Socialist Republics to the Soviet Union.

A new path has been laid for the peoples of the new fraternal republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia—to a bright and happy future.

SAFEGUARDING THE NORTHWESTERN FRONTIERS

RELATIONS between the U.S.S.R. and Finland took a different course. This was due to the fact that Finland was more under the influence of imperialist power than any other Baltic country, notwithstanding the fact that she owed her independence to the great October Socialist Revolution. Addressing a Congress of the Finnish Social-Democratic Labor Party in Helsingfors in November, 1917, Stalin said:

“ . . . I declare that we would have betrayed socialism had we not taken all measures to restore fraternal confidence between the workers of Finland and Russia. And everybody knows that without the emphatic recognition of the right of the Finnish people to free self-determination it would have been impossible to restore this . . . confidence.

“And the important thing here is not merely the verbal, if official, recognition of this right. What is important is that this verbal recognition will be confirmed by the Council of People’s Commissars by deeds, that it will be unfalteringly applied in practice. For the time for words has passed. The time has arrived for the old slogan: ‘Proletarians of all countries, unite!’ to be put into practice. Complete freedom for the Finns, as well as for all the other nationalities of Russia, to build their own life! A voluntary and honest alliance of the Finnish people with the Russian people!” *

But the Finnish people were not allowed to enjoy their newly-won freedom and independence. The Finnish bour-

* V. I. Lenin, J. V. Stalin, *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 269-70, International Publishers, New York.

geoisie with the assistance of foreign intervention seized power.

For over twenty years the imperialists regarded Finland as a base for an eventual attack on the Soviet Union. Great Britain, which headed the anti-Soviet crusade, negotiated with the Finnish White Guards for a joint offensive against the Soviet Union.

"During Yudenich's campaign," declared Lenin on March 1, 1920, "when he was quite close to Petrograd, an article appeared in the *Times*, the richest of the British newspapers—I read this editorial myself—which implored, ordered, demanded that Finland should help Yudenich: 'The eyes of the whole world are upon you; you will save liberty, civilization and culture all over the world. Take the field against the Bolsheviks!' This was said to Finland by England, who has Finland completely in her pocket; to Finland, who is up to her ears in debt, and who dares not utter a squeak because without England she has not enough bread to last her a week."

The imperialists systematically worked to build up a most dangerous seat of war on Finnish territory. As far back as April, 1919, the London *Times* spoke of Finland as the key to Petrograd.

"So far as stamping out the Bolshevik is concerned," wrote the *Times*, "we might as well send expeditions to Honolulu as to the White Sea. If we look at the map we shall find that the best approach to Petrograd is from the Baltic, and that the shortest and easiest route is through Finland. . . . Finland is the key to Petrograd, and Petrograd is the key to Moscow."

The reactionary ruling circles of Finland time and again launched military attacks on Soviet territory. During the Civil War in Russia the Finnish White Guards endeavored to effect their perfidious designs against Soviet Karelia, but all their military schemes ended in failure. But these lessons had

no sobering effect on the Finnish militarists, who continued to dream of a "Greater Finland." The military staffs worked out detailed plans for the seizure of Soviet Karelia, Murmansk, the Kola Peninsula, the Archangel region and the Autonomous Republic of Komi. The Finnish White Guards indulged in dreams of a Greater Finland stretching to the Urals.

With the outbreak of the second imperialist war Finland became particularly dangerous as a potential war base against the Soviet Union. It is therefore not surprising that in reply to the just and well-founded proposals of the Soviet Government, motivated by the necessity of taking measures for the defense of Leningrad and the Northwestern frontiers, the reactionary leaders of Finland, at the instigation of the imperialists, called for a war on the Soviet Union. In spite of the severe censorship, *Soumen Penviljelija*, the organ of the small Peasant Party, wrote:

"The hazardous militarist policy of the government is quite incomprehensible. The mobilization of practically the whole army in connection with the negotiations with the Soviet Union, the evacuation of the civil population and the increase in armaments call for immense funds which at the present time are needed for quite different purposes."

For two months the Soviet Government patiently negotiated with Finland to persuade her to accept the Soviet proposals, which were the least that could be made in view of the necessity of safeguarding the Northwestern frontiers of the U.S.S.R., and especially Leningrad. But under the pressure of the Anglo-French military bloc, the Finnish Government took up an irreconcilable position in these negotiations. It permitted hostile agitation against the Soviet Union, with the deplorable result that Finnish artillery provocatively opened fire on Red Army units near Leningrad, resulting in heavy losses.

The Soviet Government did all in its power to prevent a repetition of such incidents, but the Finnish Government, entangled in its anti-Soviet ties with the imperialists, refused to maintain normal relations with the Soviet Union. In spite of the serious warning of the Soviet Government, the Finnish troops persisted in their provocative actions against the Red Army. The Soviet Government, concerned solely for the safety of the Northwestern frontiers of the U.S.S.R., and especially of Leningrad, the cradle of the proletarian revolution, decided to retaliate to this armed provocation.

Said V. M. Molotov in a radio broadcast on November 29, 1939:

“ . . . We firmly hold that the Finnish people should itself decide its internal and external affairs in a manner it deems necessary.

“At the proper time the peoples of the Soviet Union did what was necessary for the creation of an independent Finland. The peoples of our country are ready also in the future to render the Finnish people assistance in assuring its free and independent development. . . .

“The only purpose of our measures is to insure the security of the Soviet Union and especially of Leningrad with its population of 3,500,000.”*

The U.S.S.R. had requested Finland to consent to a certain modification of frontiers for the sake of guaranteeing lasting peace in the Northeast of Europe. In spite of the modesty of the Soviet demands, and in spite of all the concessions made by the Soviet side in the course of the negotiations, the latter ended fruitlessly owing to the active pressure exerted on Finland by the most aggressive circles in the imperialist countries. In questions concerning the U.S.S.R. and Finland, outside forces intervened with intentions that were in no way calcu-

* *The U.S.S.R. and Finland*, p. 55, Soviet Russia Today, New York.

lated to consolidate peace in this corner of Europe. Finland was driven by the imperialists into a military conflict with the U.S.S.R. All the anti-Soviet forces thereupon came to the aid of Finland, including the League of Nations, which, under the dictation of Britain and France, adopted a resolution expelling the U.S.S.R. from that body.

The result was what Lenin had long ago pointed out in one of his speeches:

“When the Soviet Government makes proposals of peace, be sure to take its utterances and declarations seriously, otherwise we shall get peace on better terms than we offered.”

British and French imperialist circles incited Finland to go to war with the Soviet Union, promising to “guarantee” and support her and fostering the illusion that her fortifications on the Karelian Isthmus, built with the aid of Britain and France, were impregnable to the Red Army. But the gallant Red Army shattered these iron and concrete fortifications. The heroic Red Army and the Red Baltic Fleet showed that there were no fortresses which the Bolsheviks could not take, that the Red Army was a reliable protector of the Soviet Union and a formidable weapon against all its enemies. When the fortifications on the Karelian Isthmus were shattered, it became clear to all that if Finland were to continue hostilities it would lead to her utter military defeat.

The Finnish Government was obliged to appeal for the cessation of hostilities and the conclusion of peace.

On March 12, 1940, a peace treaty between the U.S.S.R. and Finland was signed in Moscow. The Soviet Government had fulfilled the task it had set itself and had fully safeguarded the security of the Northwestern frontiers of the Soviet Union. The treaty between the U.S.S.R. and the Finnish Republic forms a basis for lasting peaceful relations. It guarantees mutual security, and in the first place the secur-

ity of Leningrad and Murmansk, and of the Murmansk Railway. The U.S.S.R. acquired the entire Isthmus of Karelia with the city of Vyborg and the Gulf of Vyborg, the Western and Northern shores of Lake Ladoga with the towns of Kexholm, Sortavala (Serdobol) and Suojarva, a number of islands in the Gulf of Finland, the territory east of Merkjarvi and the town of Kuolajarvi and part of the Rybachi and Sredny Peninsulas.

Under the treaty, the U.S.S.R. secured the lease of the Hangö Peninsula and its adjacent islands for a period of thirty years for the construction of a naval base capable of protecting the entrance to the Gulf of Finland from aggression. Finland pledged itself, as she did under the treaty of 1920, not to build naval ports on its Northern coast and to maintain only small naval vessels in her Northern waters. The U.S.S.R. secured the right of unrestricted transit, exempt from customs control, of goods to and from Norway and to and from Sweden through the region of Petsamo.

The U.S.S.R. agreed to withdraw its troops from the region of Petsamo.*

The U.S.S.R. and Finland undertook not to conclude any alliances or take part in any coalitions against each other.

The terms of this treaty show that the Soviet Union never had any other aim but to safeguard its Northwestern frontiers and especially Leningrad.

The peace treaty with Finland is one more demonstration of the Soviet Union's unswerving fidelity to its peace policy.

The Soviet Union has no desire to take part in the conflicts of the imperialist powers; it pursues its independent policy and will not allow itself to be drawn into war. It has

* The Port of Petsamo, in the Arctic, was voluntarily ceded to Finland by the Soviet Government under the 1920 Peace Treaty. During the war in 1939-40 this region was occupied by Soviet troops. The U.S.S.R. has again ceded the Petsamo region to Finland in order to provide her with an ice-free port.

done everything in its power to facilitate the strengthening of peace in Eastern Europe.

The warmongers have suffered one more drastic defeat. They have lost one of their most important strategical bases in their planned crusade against the Soviet Union.

This new victory of the Stalin peace policy was joyfully hailed by all progressive men and women interested in the strengthening of the international position of the Soviet Union.

THE POLICY IN THE FAR EAST

THE CAPITALIST states have attempted time and again to settle their differences at the expense of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, for its part, bearing in mind what Stalin has said about the capitalist environment, has devoted earnest attention to increasing the military efficiency of its armed forces.

Towards the end of July, 1938, the Japanese militarists attempted to test the strength of the Soviet frontiers. In the battle of Lake Khasan, the Red Army gave a salutary lesson to these lovers of "frontier incidents," and completely routed and destroyed the forces of the enemy who attempted to invade the Soviet soil.

In the summer of 1939, the Japanese military provoked an "incident" on the Mongolian-Manchurian border. Always true to the obligations it has assumed under its international treaties, the Soviet Union came to the aid of the Mongolian People's Army in its fight against the invaders. The Japanese military had expected an easy victory, counting on the remoteness of the area and the strategic difficulties that would be involved in any attempt to aid the Mongolian People's Army. The result of the fighting on the Mongolian-Manchurian border demonstrated the incomparable superiority of the Red forces. For the first time in its history, the Japanese propaganda machine admitted that the Japanese army had suffered complete defeat. The rout of the Japanese imperialist army was so patent that even the Japanese press was obliged to grant the superiority of the Red Army and of its armament.

The Japanese newspaper *Asahi*, in an editorial on October 4, 1939, wrote:

"All credit should be paid by the people to the Japanese

authorities for having frankly admitted that they have done everything in their power. This statement of the military authorities, which has hitherto been kept in strict secrecy, has dissipated all suspicion. Such an explanation has been of great value. At the same time we express our condolence with the bereaved, the number of whom turns out to be unexpectedly large. For their dimensions and gravity, the incidents have been so immense that it is impossible to recount everything in one day. The steppe was strewn with the corpses of our brave men.

“Our military authorities have drawn the salutary lesson from these events that in future our military preparations must be carried to the point of perfection. The military authorities have pondered sufficiently over this lesson. The army must be reinforced with motorized units to the utmost. Therein lies the profound meaning of the recent engagements. Till now the people were not aware of the high level of technical efficiency of the motorized units of the Soviet army, and there are now quite a number of people who are astonished at this unexpected fact.”

All this naturally had a sobering effect on the Japanese military; it compelled them to face realities and convinced them that the Soviet Union had worked not without success to strengthen its defensive power.

The Soviet Union has taken up a firm position in the Far East, and the Government has vigorously resisted every attempt to create strained relations between the U.S.S.R. and Japan. While itself scrupulously observing all obligations arising out of its treaties with Japan, it has, at the same time, taken every necessary step to secure the strict observance of these treaties by Japan. For example, when the Japanese Government attempted to vindicate the unlawful actions of the Japanese concessionaires in Northern Sakhalin, it was obliged, thanks to the resolute position taken up by the Soviet Government, to modify its view and admit that the actions of the Japanese concessionaires were impermissible.

The firm position of the U.S.S.R. in the Far East has also helped to introduce clarity in the discussion of other matters affecting Soviet-Japanese relations.

On December 31, 1939, as a result of negotiations conducted in November and December, 1939, between V. M. Molotov, as People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., and M. Togo, the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow, a Soviet-Japanese agreement was concluded which represented a positive step toward the regulation of disputed issues between Japan and the U.S.S.R. Under this agreement, the Japanese Government guaranteed the immediate payment of the last instalment for the Chinese-Eastern Railway in the amount of 5,981,625 yen, with an additional payment calculated at gold parity, to protect the Soviet Union from possible fluctuations of the yen. This addition was fixed in the amount of 792,200 yen. Furthermore, the Soviet Government was to receive interest on arrears of payment at the rate of 3 per cent per annum until the last instalment was paid. With the regulation of the question of the payment of the last instalment for the Chinese-Eastern Railway, favorable conditions were created for the completion of the negotiations on the fisheries question. The Soviet Government consented to extend the term of the Fisheries Convention to December 31, 1940, at the same time pointing out that it was essential for the normal operation of Japanese fishing firms in Soviet waters that they scrupulously fulfil their contracts and strictly observe the Soviet laws and the fish preservation regulations.

All these measures constituted an important step towards the development of economic relations between the U.S.S.R. and Japan.

In August, 1937, the Soviet Union, in its constant endeavor to strengthen friendly relations with neighboring countries, concluded a pact of non-aggression with the Republic of China. In doing so, the Soviet Government once more demonstrated that its foreign policy is firmly based on the

principles of peace and friendship among nations and has nothing in common with the policy of the imperialist states. It need only be mentioned that this treaty was concluded at a time when China was already engaged in its war of national liberation, its war against the policy of conquest of Japanese imperialism.

At a celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, on November 6, 1937, V. M. Molotov said:

“The Soviet Union has already expressed its sympathy for the Chinese people and its attitude towards Japanese aggression by concluding the Soviet-Chinese non-aggression pact. But we know of no step taken by any other state to resist the unparalleled act of aggression against the Chinese people. Here, too, the Soviet Union is distinguished among the concert of the powers by its special position, its honest attitude to and sincere sympathies for a people subjected to foreign aggression.”

On June 16, 1939, a trade agreement between the U.S.S.R. and China was signed in Moscow, based on the principles of equality and reciprocity. It contains a most-favored nation clause, regulates questions of trade and navigation, and defines the legal position of the Trade Representation of the U.S.S.R. in China.

PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE BESSARABIAN QUESTION

AS WE have already said, when the young Soviet Republic in its early years established peaceful relations with its neighbors, it declined to enter into diplomatic relations with Rumania owing to the seizure of Bessarabia by the latter. When subsequently Soviet-Rumania diplomatic relations were established, the Soviet Government plainly declared that the question of Bessarabia remained open and that it did not recognize the forcible seizure of that territory.

In the course of the past twenty-two years the Soviet Union has time and again pointed to the necessity of settling the Bessarabian conflict. At the Sixth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., V. M. Molotov, speaking of Soviet-Rumanian relations, once again uttered a reminder of the existence of "an unsettled dispute, the question of Bessarabia." This was one of those vital but unsettled questions affecting relations between the Soviet Union and other countries inherited from the times when the exhausted and devastated young Soviet Republic was still too weak to defend its sovereignty. Obviously, such a state of affairs could not last long. The situation had now radically changed. The military weakness of Soviet Russia was a thing of the past. The Soviet Union had become a mighty world power. It could no longer tolerate the fact that its ancient territory, peopled largely by Ukrainians, remained under the yoke of foreign conquerors. Furthermore, the international situation demanded the earliest settlement of old disputes so as to lay a sure foundation at last for peace among countries. The Bessarabian question was hindering the establishment of normal relations between the U.S.S.R. and Rumania.

Accordingly, on June 26, 1940, V. M. Molotov notified the Rumanian Ambassador in Moscow that:

“. . . the Soviet Union deems it necessary and timely, in the interests of the restoration of justice, to proceed immediately in conjunction with Rumania to settle the question of the return of Bessarabia to the Soviet Union.”

“The Government of the U.S.S.R.,” the Ambassador was further notified, “considers that the question of the return of Bessarabia is organically connected with the question of the transfer to the Soviet Union of that part of Bukovina, the overwhelming majority of whose population are bound to the Soviet Ukraine, both by common historical destiny and by common language and national composition. This act would be all the more just for the fact that the transfer of the Northern part of Bukovina to the Soviet Union might constitute some compensation—although in a very small degree, to be sure—for the tremendous injury suffered by the Soviet Union and the population of Bessarabia by the twenty-two years of Rumanian rule in Bessarabia. . . .”

On June 28 the Rumanian Government acceded to the demand of the U.S.S.R. for the immediate transfer to the latter of Bessarabia and the Northern part of Bukovina, and that same day Soviet troops crossed the Rumanian frontier and occupied Kishinev, Czernowitz and Akkerman. By July 1, the whole of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina had become Soviet.

Thus the Soviet-Rumanian conflict, which for twenty-two years had cast a shadow on the relations between the two countries, was settled in a peaceful way by mutual agreement between the two interested parties. Unlike the imperialist powers, who settle their disputes by fire and sword, by the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of innocent victims, by

the destruction of scores of towns and villages, by depriving millions of people of their homes and their property, and by annihilating cultural treasures accumulated by mankind in the course of centuries, unlike the imperialist "peace-makers," the Soviet Union settles its disputes with other countries in a way of its own, of which the regulation of the Soviet-Rumanian conflict is an excellent illustration. The peace policy of the U.S.S.R. had scored yet another victory.

"Henceforward," declared *Pravda* in an editorial on June 29, 1940, "Bessarabia, forcibly severed by Rumania from the Soviet Union (Russia) at the beginning of 1918, has been rejoined to the mother country, to the Soviet land. The working people of Bessarabia, which is largely peopled by Ukrainians, like the inhabitants of the Northern part of Bukovina, who are kin brothers and sisters of the inhabitants of Soviet Ukraine, are merging with the great family of nations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

"The dream of the working people of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina has been realized."

THE WAR AND THE NEUTRAL COUNTRIES

THE SECOND imperialist war has been in progress for over a year. It began with the defeat of Poland and then passed into a stage of relative inactivity which earned it the name of *Sitzkrieg*, a "sit-down" war. Germany's offer to terminate hostilities and conclude peace was rejected by the Anglo-French bloc. But neither the French nor the British troops on the Maginot line betrayed any signs of activity. The daily communiques of the British and French General Staffs were usually confined to a single phrase: "Nothing of any importance to report on the Western Front." The British and French ruling circles, while carefully avoiding open clashes with the enemy's forces, hoped to strangle Germany by means of an economic blockade. They also hoped to draw an ever larger number of hitherto neutral countries into the war to fight Germany for them. But the chief hope of the British and French imperialists was that the war could be turned against the Soviet Union.

With this purpose in view they worked indefatigably to create military bases, bases for an attack on the U.S.S.R., in the countries bordering on it.

On October 19, 1939, Britain and France concluded a pact of mutual assistance with Turkey, under which the latter obligated herself to join the side of Britain and France in the event of hostilities breaking out in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean. Documents which have since been published show that bases were being created in Turkey for the bombardment of Baku and Batum. It was planned to build aerodromes for British and French air forces in Diarbekr, Erzerum and Kars.

The British and French imperialists also planned to use Iran

as a base of attack on Caucasian towns, particularly on Baku. Iran was also to take part in the land operations against the Soviet Union.

As we know, the U.S.S.R. has pacts of non-aggression both with Turkey and Iran. All the stranger therefore is the position of the Turkish and Iran governments. And this position in no way conforms to the vital interests of the Turkish and Iran peoples, who prefer to remain friendly with the Soviet Union.

It is, of course, still difficult to say what course the foreign policy of Turkey and Iran will take, but it is perfectly obvious that the peoples of these countries are in no way interested in any bloc with any imperialist clique.

The Anglo-French bloc tried to draw the Scandinavian countries into the war on its side, with the object of transferring the scene of hostilities to their territory and fighting Germany from that vantage ground. As we know, Germany forestalled England and France, and the plans of the Anglo-French bloc with regard to the Scandinavian countries ended in generally admitted defeat.

The military operations in Denmark and Norway signified the end of the *Sitzkrieg* and the beginning of active hostilities. These operations were followed in May, 1940, by the invasion of Holland and Belgium by German troops, ending in the rapid rout of the armies of those countries and then by the rout of the French army and the capitulation of France. In June, 1940, Italy joined the war on Germany's side. The second imperialist war has thus become a war between the British Empire on the one hand, and Germany and Italy on the other.

Throughout this war the British and French ruling circles have done their utmost to transfer the scene of hostilities to the Balkans and to utilize the Balkan countries in their own interests. However, the consistent peace policy of the U.S.S.R. and its firm position of genuine neutrality have had, and are

having, a favorable influence on a number of Balkan countries, making it possible for them to keep out of the war.

The attempts to drag Bulgaria into the war have so far led nowhere. Bulgaria maintains her independent position. On January 5, 1940, after successful negotiations in Moscow, a treaty of trade and navigation for a term of three years and an agreement as to trade and settlements in 1940 were concluded between the U.S.S.R. and Bulgaria. The trade agreement contains a most-favored nation clause on terms of mutuality.

Jugoslavia, the largest of the Balkan states, which until recently had no diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, in May, 1940, concluded a treaty of trade and navigation with the U.S.S.R. In the following month the two countries exchanged diplomatic representatives.

Commenting on the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, the *Belgrade Pravda* of June 27, 1940, wrote:

"The policy of peace, neutrality and neighborly relations with all states has induced Jugoslavia to establish normal relations with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is pursuing a policy of peace. It strives to establish good relations with all countries that understand its interests. It has shown that it is really striving for peace and that it considers that there is no question that cannot be settled in a peaceful way. The policy of peace and neutrality which Jugoslavia is now pursuing has been strengthened by the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The latter is a powerful factor in international politics, and no country can deny that no question of European or international significance can be settled without the Soviet Union."

The same idea was expressed by the *Zagreb Hrvatski Dnevnik* on June 26:

"Normal relations between Jugoslavia and the Soviet Union

mark another big step towards the stabilization of peace in the Balkans."

* * *

The second imperialist war has developed into a slaughter of horrible and monstrous dimensions. It has already taken toll of hundreds of thousands of lives. Scores of towns have been reduced to ashes. Millions of people have lost their homes and their belongings. Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and France are in the hands of the German army. The policy of the Paris and London governments, a policy of sabotaging peace, has ended in disaster.

They did nothing effective to ensure the defense of their countries. Instead, the Blums, Daladiers, Bonnets and Chamberlains did their utmost to smash the People's Front in France, to undermine the strength of the French people, and of the working class, in the first place, from within and from without. They resorted to every device to prevent the Soviet Union forming a bloc of peaceable states interested in averting a new world carnage. By their infamous policy of "non-intervention," which was actually a policy of encouraging aggression, the ruling circles of Britain and France, with the active support of their Social-Democratic lackeys, secured the defeat of Republican Spain, which was friendly to the French people, and the annexation of Austria and Czechoslovakia by Germany. They betrayed the national interests of their own countries and the interests of a number of other countries.

These zealous advocates of "non-intervention" were inspired with only one thought—to direct the fires of the impending war against the Land of Socialism, the fatherland of the international proletariat, and to undermine its economic and political strength. And now the peoples of the warring countries are paying with their blood and their lives for the monstrous crime of the traitors to the working class and to the broad laboring masses.

The Soviet Union—the unshakable bulwark of peace—alone stands firm like a granite rock amidst the surging waves of the second imperialist war. The policy of peace which the U.S.S.R. has pursued from the first day of its existence has helped and is still helping to rally in the fight for peace all who are opposed to imperialist war. All the progressive forces of the world, the working people, the honest and advanced representatives of the intelligentsia, all the peoples whose independence is threatened by imperialist war—in a word all who desire peace are uniting around the U.S.S.R. as the main champion of peace.

The Soviet Union's fight for peace ensues from the very nature of the socialist system, the very nature of the Soviet power which has abolished the exploitation of man by man, abolished capitalist slavery and national oppression.

The masses desire peace. They hate imperialist war. The capitalists need war to maintain their domination, to retain their spoils, to find new markets for the disposal of their commodities and export of capital, to repartition the world for their own rapacious purposes without consulting the desires and interests of the people.

The capitalists need war to divert the discontent of the masses by political adventures abroad and to crush the revolutionary movement at home. Thus the French bourgeoisie and their Social-Democratic agents waged for a number of years a ruthless war inside the country against the working class of France, against the united People's Front, against the revolutionary movement. As recent events have shown the French bourgeoisie acted only in their own narrow, selfish anti-democratic, class interests. Their concern was not to strengthen the defense of France, but to foment imperialist war and consolidate the domination of their class, and they finally betrayed France, betrayed the French people and brought the country to military defeat and the loss of her national independence.

The set purpose of Soviet foreign policy is clear to the

working people of the whole world. It is to safeguard the socialist country against foreign aggression, to secure lasting peace in order to build the new, classless society, to build communism. At the same time the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. aims at entrenching peace throughout the world and rescuing all peoples from the horrors of imperialist war.

In its fight for peace the Soviet Union depends not only on the steady growth of its economic and defensive power but on the sympathy and support of the international proletariat, the sympathy of all the progressive forces of humanity, who have a community of interests with the Soviet Union because they are interested in the preservation of peace among the nations and in the security of the U.S.S.R., the socialist state, the fatherland of the working people of the whole world.

Each new victory in socialist construction is a blow at the exploiting classes, a victory for progressive mankind. Each new victory of the Soviet policy of peace is a victory for the forces of peace in all countries, because it strengthens their positions, inspires them to struggle against imperialist war and the forces which engender it; it indicates to laboring mankind the way to a peaceful and happy life.

But while the Soviet Union fights for peace, its opposition to war, in common with the international proletariat, is not to war *in general*, but to unjust, predatory war, imperialist war.

The peoples of the Soviet Union have the warmest sympathies for the heroic people of China who are waging a just war for their emancipation.

Characteristic of the attitude towards the Soviet Union and its policy of peace, not only by the international proletariat but by the best section of the intelligentsia, is the letter which Anderson Nexø, the Danish author, wrote to the newspaper *Nytt Land*, entitled "Why I Am a Friend of the Soviet Union."

"And now, after twenty-two years, the vast proletarian re-

public towers above the world like a mighty tree of life crowned with verdure, luxuriant with flowers and the fruits of the earth and there is no power in the world which can plunder it. . . .

“Working people want neither war nor plunder—these things are only for the decadent elements of humanity, an expression of their insatiable greed and lust for gain at the expense of others. . . . In the Soviet Union an end has been put to the exercise of these baneful qualities once and for all and having nothing to feed on they will soon perish. . . .”

From the outbreak of the imperialist war the working intelligentsia understood that the Soviet Union alone is the champion of the small nations and their national independence. The Bulgarian newspaper *Burgaski Far*, apropos the peace treaty between the Soviet Union and Finland, said on March 22:

“The initiative of the Soviet Union in the peaceful settlement of the conflict again substantiates the prestige of this country which is defending the interests of small nations and upholding their independence. . . .”

During the war in Finland, when the capitalist press worked itself up into a frenzy of shameless slanders against the U.S.S.R., leading representatives of the intellectuals, like Theodore Dreiser and Bernard Shaw, spoke out indignantly against this disgusting campaign and defended the peace policy of the Soviet Union.

“Why does Finland suddenly need aerodromes for 2,000 airplanes?” wrote Theodore Dreiser. “Perhaps the poor peasants and lumberjacks intend to transport the fruits of their labor by air! Or perhaps there is some other reason?”

Bernard Shaw wrote that if the German or British governments were in the Soviet Union’s place, they would have seized

the whole of Finland and perhaps gone further into Norway, to Norwick. "But you will never convince imperialists that the Communists are not like themselves."

And Dr. Hewlett Johnson,* another well-known public figure in Britain, draws the following conclusion from the furious anti-Soviet campaign: "Hatred of the U.S.S.R. cost us peace a year ago, if continued it might cost us the war."

The socialist state is not alone in its fight for peace. All the progressive forces of the world, the enlightened working people have boldly raised the banner of struggle against the imperialist war. In Britain, in the United States of America, in the Balkans a mass movement is spreading in support of the Soviet policy of peace.

The people desire peace and freedom.

The eyes of all working people in all the capitalist countries and colonies, of all progressive men are turned towards the socialist state, the great Soviet Union. And now, as ever, the Soviet Union is the hope of the exploited and oppressed in all lands. Now as ever, the Soviet Union is the true ally and mainstay of all who are willing to fight against imperialist war and fight for peace and amity among the peoples.

* Dean of Canterbury—*Ed.*

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