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Chapter One

OCTOBER 1917 REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA USHERS IN NEW ERA IN HISTORY OF MANKIND

PREPARATION AND VICTORY OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

On the night of October 25-26,¹ long before the break of dawn, workers, soldiers and sailors led by the Bolshevik Party stormed and occupied the former residence of the emperors of Russia in Petrograd²: the Winter Palace, and placed under arrest the members of the Provisional Government, who, in a body, had taken refuge in one of its suites.

Three hours later the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies proclaimed Russia a Soviet Socialist Republic. State power had been taken over by the people; and the proletariat, destitute and exploited more than any other class, and the most revolutionary and best organised of all, now stood at the helm of government.

The Socialist Revolution had won in Russia. It was destined to achieve a noble historic aim, that of building a new society, in which there would be no exploiters and no exploited, no oppressors and no oppressed; a social system, in brief, which is called communism.

The Socialist Revolution: Its Objective Necessity

The Russian Socialist Revolution came as a logical sequel of the foregoing development of the human race; and it was in line with the basic interests of all peoples, even though this was not every-

¹ November 7-8 New Style.—*Ed.*

² Now Leningrad.—*Ed.*

where realised or understood at the time. That the revolution first came to pass in Russia, of all countries, was not a matter of accident. Russia, early in the 20th century, was a land of profound and acute social, political, national and other contradictions. The process of concentration of capitalist production had gone farther than in any other bourgeois country, resulting in the formation of powerful monopolist associations. Yet it had remained an agrarian country, possessing one-fourth of the modern machinery plant of Great Britain, one-fifth that of Germany, and one-tenth that of the United States. And it was particularly backward in agriculture. "The most backward system of landownership and the most ignorant peasantry on the one hand, and the most advanced industrial and finance capitalism on the other!", Lenin commented on the country's economy.¹

Russia's workers were subjected to brutal exploitation by the capitalists, many of whom were foreigners, owners of enterprises in the country. Her peasantry, oppressed, humiliated, and deprived of all rights, eked out, as a general rule, an existence on the brink of starvation. The labouring masses of Russia lived under the heavy tsarist yoke, which tolerated no manifestation of a longing for freedom. The numerous non-Russian peoples suffered particular hardships, for they were an object of degrading national oppression, besides being deprived of their rights. For them tsarist Russia was a veritable gaol.

All these contradictions had grown increasingly acute during the First World War, a war that had brought disaster to the country and the people. And the people had finally lost their patience. In February 1917, in Petrograd, the workers and soldiers, supported by the working people throughout the country, had overthrown the tsarist monarchy. In the days that followed the revolution the workers and soldiers set up revolutionary government bodies known as Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, after the pattern established during the revolution of 1905-07. These Soviets were heartily supported by workers, soldiers and peasants alike. "We recognise the Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies and no one else, not even God," said one soldier-deputy at the March 1, 1917 meeting of the Petrograd Soviet.

Thus backed by a majority of the workers and soldiers, the Soviets could have seized the power and formed a government. But the petty-bourgeois Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties, who formed a majority in the Soviets, failed to do this. They failed to prevent the Constitutional-Democratic and the Union of October Seventeen parties from forming a self-styled

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 442.

Provisional Government headed by Prince G. Lvov, a wealthy landowner, which they invested with state power, though authorising the Soviets to "control" the Provisional Government's activities. A diarchy thus came into being in Russia, creating a situation in which, to quote G. Lvov, the Provisional Government "was a government shorn of power, while the Soviet of Workers' Deputies was a power but did not govern".

Intoxicated by the early victories of the revolution, the masses innocently trusted the bourgeois government in the hope that it would accomplish the urgent tasks which had been the object of the revolution, i.e., that it would end the imperialist war; allot land to the peasants; introduce an eight-hour working day; banish national oppression; and take up the fight against the famine and the economic chaos.

The Provisional Government, however, did nothing to fulfil these hopes. There was more freedom in the air, no doubt, after the overthrow of the tsarist regime. But the new government's policies were aligned with the interests of the bourgeoisie and the landed gentry. It carried on the imperialist war and renewed its pledge to observe the military pacts concluded by the tsarist government. To force the army and the people to continue fighting the Provisional Government declared that the war was being fought in "defence" of the revolution, and this false slogan was supported by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Landlord ownership of land remained intact and under the special protection of the Provisional Government. As a matter of fact, the capitalists and bankers were keenly interested in protecting landed estates, for 60 per cent of these were mortgaged and, besides, many capitalists owned estates in their own right. Nor was an eight-hour working day legalised. Moreover, the government took no action to combat high prices and speculation, which were a source of great distress to the population. National oppression continued, though in a somewhat milder form. To cap it all, the Provisional Government had retained practically intact the old machinery of state.

Such a policy ran counter to the interests of the people and the vital interests of the country as a whole. The only way out of the quandary lay in continuing the revolution and turning over state power to the workers and peasants, that is to say, in effecting a socialist revolution. As Lenin pointed out in the spring of 1917, humanity's only salvation lay in socialism.

Only a people's government could end the war, confiscate landed estates and distribute them among the peasants, invest ownership of industrial enterprises in the people as a whole, thus ending the chaotic condition of the national economy, raise the

country's economy to a higher level, end national oppression, establish equality of rights for all nationalities and foster cordial relations among them.

The necessity of such a policy was realised by only one of the various parties existing in Russia at the time. This was the party of the Communists (or Bolsheviks, as they were then called). The Communist Party, which had been driven underground by the tsarist government, was legalised after the February 1917 Revolution. Early in April Lenin returned to Russia, after several years' residence abroad as a political émigré. The party membership had begun to grow at a rapid rate, so that by April it numbered 80,000 members, or nearly double its membership of a month ago. This was the pick of the working class, the cream of the Russian intelligentsia. The wisdom, the honour, the conscience of our times: that is how Lenin aptly and deservedly described the Communist Party.

The April 1917 All-Russia Conference of the Communist Party drew up a programme for the transition from a bourgeois-democratic to a socialist revolution. Its basic principle was "All Power to the Soviets!", a slogan proposed by Lenin. This principle envisaged the transfer of state power on a nation-wide scale by peaceful means to the working people as represented by democratically elected Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. Once at the helm of government, the Soviets were to take immediate action as follows: propose a peace on democratic principles to the warring countries; implement urgent revolutionary reforms in the economic sphere; establish, on a nation-wide scale, control over production and distribution, taking over to that end the banks, inasmuch as these were essential to modern economic activities; nationalise the most important branches of industry; confiscate landed estates belonging to the gentry and distribute these among the peasants; introduce an eight-hour working day; annul immediately all restrictions and privileges based on nationality; etc.

The Russian working masses did not at once side with the Bolsheviks, it must be said. For a few months after the February Revolution the workers were under the strong influence of the petty-bourgeois party of the Mensheviks, who pretended to be socialists and, as such, champions of the workers. The peasantry were strongly influenced by the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, which claimed to stand for the distribution of all lands, including private estates, on an equitable basis. On quite a few occasions in the weeks that followed the February Revolution the crowds attending meetings refused to listen to Bolshevik speakers who exposed the Provisional Government and the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who backed it. However, the policies

pursued by the Provisional Government and the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties soon showed them up for what they were. Developing events gradually dispelled the illusions of the masses, who increasingly listened to the Bolsheviks, rallied to their support and intensified their struggle against the bourgeois government.

Three Crises of the Bourgeois Government

The first important mass demonstration against the government's policy on the crucial question of the continuing war occurred as early as April 1917. On April 19, newspapers carried the text of a Note sent the day before to Russia's Allies by Foreign Minister P. N. Milyukov, leader of the Constitutional-Democratic Party. The Note emphasised Russia's determination to fight on to victory and admitted in a veiled form the necessity of annexions, that is, seizure of foreign territory, and contributions.

The Note revealed to the people the real aims behind the intention to continue the war, and this caused a sense of betrayal and a consequent wave of indignation. On April 20 and 21 more than 100,000 workers and soldiers demonstrated in the streets of Petrograd, carrying such slogans as "All Power to the Soviets!", "Down with the War!" and "Down with the Policy of Annexations!" There were impressive demonstrations in various other cities; and it became clear that the Provisional Government had largely lost the confidence of the people. The Soviets could have taken over state power without resorting to force.

But the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders ignored the wishes of the people and came to the rescue of the tottering bourgeois government by securing the representation therein. On May 5, 1917, a new coalition government was formed, including ten ministers representing the bourgeois parties and six representing petty-bourgeois parties which claimed to be socialist. Prince Lvov remained head of the government.

The government's policies remained unchanged. Not a single square inch of land belonging to the gentry was confiscated, even though a Socialist-Revolutionary leader, V. Chernov, now headed the Ministry of Agriculture. Instead, the government increased its efforts to stop the seizure of landed estates by the peasants. The Ministry of Labour was placed under a Menshevik leader, M. Skobelev, but that did not bring legalisation of the eight-hour working day, and the government sided with the entrepreneurs in any conflicts between them and the workers. Nor were any efforts made to combat high prices and profiteering.

A. F. Kerensky, member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and newly appointed Minister of War, did what his predecessor, Guchkov, of the Union of October Seventeen, had hesitated doing: on June 18, 1917, the "socialist" minister ordered the army to launch an offensive. And Tereshchenko, a leading figure in the sugar industry, now foreign minister, continued the policies of Milyukov.

The people, needless to say, could not support a government pursuing such policies, and another huge anti-government demonstration took place in Petrograd on June 18. This time over half a million workers and soldiers took part, bearing such slogans as "All Power to the Soviets!", "Down with the Ten Capitalist Ministers!", "No More Offensives at the Front!", "Workers' Control Over Production and Distribution!", and others.

Taking advantage of the offensive at the front the Provisional Government proceeded to restrict democratic freedoms and to carry out measures of repression. Several revolutionary regiments were disbanded and many soldiers arrested. Stiffer measures were taken to check the growing peasant movement. If compelled initially to reckon with the Soviets, the bourgeois statesmen now decided that the time had come to dismiss them, establish a dictatorship, crush the revolutionary forces, and ensure that the war would be carried on to a victorious end.

In line with this plan the bourgeois ministers seized upon a slight pretext on July 2, 1917, and submitted their resignation, in the expectation that this would frighten the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and force upon them the choice of either carrying on without the bourgeois ministers or agreeing to establish autocratic rule, dismiss the Soviets, and crush all revolutionary organisations.

This insidious manoeuvre failed to fool the population of Petrograd and became in fact the last straw: on July 3, soldiers and workers came out *en masse*, intent on overthrowing the government. Elsewhere throughout the country, however, people were not yet ready to support this action, for the majority of peasants and soldiers, and indeed many workers, had not yet come to realise the necessity of throwing out the Provisional Government. The Bolshevik Party was hard put to it to forestall a premature armed uprising in the capital and steer the spontaneous action of the workers and soldiers into the channel of a peaceful and organised demonstration under the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets!" On July 4, the city's proletariat and garrison poured out into the streets in strength.

The Provisional Government retaliated by ordering the marching columns fired upon, killing and wounding some 400. This dastardly crime was perpetrated with the full approval of the Men-

shevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders. On July 8, Prince Lvov was replaced by A. F. Kerensky of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. His government arrested many of the revolutionary workers and soldiers; re-introduced capital punishment at the front; set up courts-martial; established preliminary military censorship; and dispatched punitive forces to several cities. All of which meant that the Kerensky government had openly resorted to armed force to crush the revolutionary forces. This policy was found very acceptable by the leaders of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, largest among the bourgeois parties, and they decided once more to take part in the government. On July 24, a new coalition government was formed with the participation of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements under the chairmanship of A. F. Kerensky.

The revolution continued to gather momentum, however. The bourgeoisie watched the rising revolutionary tide with a troubled eye, doubting the ability of the Provisional Government to crush it. "There will be no law and order in Russia until we have a dictator invested with the fullest power to act," said Purishkevich, representative of the extreme reactionary elements. Russia's war-time Allies also wanted a military dictatorship set up in the country. Late in August General Kornilov, Supreme Commander-in-Chief, made an attempt to oust the Provisional Government, dispatching important military force against Petrograd. In an effort to aid Kornilov the Constitutional-Democratic ministers resigned in a body, thereby precipitating a government crisis.

The plotters had miscalculated, however; they had underestimated the revolutionary fervour of the people. The workers, the soldiers of Petrograd and other towns, and the sailors of the Baltic Fleet rallied against Kornilov at the call of the Bolshevik Party. Propaganda, meanwhile, had done its work among the Kornilov troops, who refused to move against the capital. And the counter-revolutionary gamble risked by the tsarist generals fell through.

The Kornilov revolt made millions aware of the true situation in the country. It became clear that the counter-revolutionaries were using the parties of the petty bourgeoisie as a weapon in their struggle against the revolution and that the Communist Party was the only one that expressed the true interests of the people; the realisation of this latter fact greatly enhanced the Party's influence, so that before the autumn of 1917 was over a majority of the working class, destitute peasantry, soldiers of the most important sectors of the front, and the Baltic Fleet sailors had given their allegiance to the Communist Party. Moreover, the Party had won a majority in the country's important Soviets, including those of Petrograd and Moscow. And scores of millions throughout Russia

had taken up the Communist Party's slogan—"All Power to the Soviets!"

Nonetheless, the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders, who were still at the helm in the Central Executive Committee (CEC) and the Provisional Government, stubbornly ignored the people's demands and came back into the government again to form a coalition cabinet with the Constitutional-Democratic Party even though the latter had been shown to have organised the counter-revolution and backed Kornilov. This last coalition government headed by Kerensky was formed on September 25. Its main efforts were directed towards fighting the growing revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants.

Economic Disaster Threatens Nation

Economically, meanwhile, the country was rapidly going from bad to worse. In 1917 industrial production came to less than two-thirds of the preceding year's. Many entrepreneurs deliberately halted production and laid off personnel in order to starve them into submission. Ryabushinsky, a leading industrialist, urged seizing the workers by the throat with "famine's bony hand", and the capitalists were all for carrying out his recommendation: over 800 factories were shut down and some 170,000 workers discharged between March and November, 1917. Real wages were nearly halved as compared with 1913. Profiteering in consumer goods assumed tremendous proportions. The value of the ruble dropped to less than ten pre-war kopeks. In the autumn of 1917 workers' families faced starvation, while the approaching winter threatened even greater hardships.

The Provisional Government increased repressions, fearful of its own people, which was waging with growing determination a struggle against the criminal policies of the propertied classes. Moreover, the Provisional Government was planning to lay down arms and let the Germans occupy Petrograd and other important towns. Riga was surrendered to the Germans in August. "If we fail to find the strength and the means to establish order in the country, that order will be established by German bayonets," candidly declared Minister of War A. Verkhovsky.

The American journalist John Reed, who was in Russia at the time, painted a true picture of the situation as he saw it in the autumn of 1917, in his *Ten Days That Shook the World*. "Winter was coming on..." he wrote. "On the freezing front miserable armies continued to starve and die, without enthusiasm. The railways were breaking down, food lessening, factories closing. The desperate masses cried out that the bourgeoisie was sabotaging the

life of the people, causing defeat on the front. Riga had been surrendered just after General Kornilov said publicly, 'Must we pay with Riga the price of bringing the country to a sense of its duty?'

"To Americans it is incredible that the class war should develop to such a pitch. But I have personally met officers on the Northern Front who frankly preferred military disaster to co-operation with the Soldiers' Committees. The secretary of the Petrograd branch of the Cadet party told me that the break-down of the country's economic life was part of a campaign to discredit the Revolution. . . . I know of certain coal-mines near Kharkov, which were fired and flooded by their owners, of textile factories at Moscow whose engineers put the machinery out of order when they left, of railroad officials caught by the workers in the act of crippling locomotives. . . ."

The criminal policy pursued by the bourgeois-landlord government threatened the existence of Russia as a nation. The working people of Russia saw this threat and broke with the parties that were responsible for this situation as well as with those which refused to take the radical steps that could ward off the impending disaster. It is hardly necessary to explain, therefore, why it was that the workers, the peasants, the soldiers, all honest men and women, in fact, rallied round the Communist Party headed by Lenin, which showed the people the only way of saving the country and fought to save Russia from the threat to her national existence.

In the autumn of 1917, a powerful revolutionary upsurge, led by the working class, swept across Russia.

As the strike movement turned into an open revolutionary struggle, workers began to seize industrial plants, removing the old management and arresting those who resisted, and often taking charge of production. Workers' meetings increasingly called for a transfer of state power to the Soviets. Its influence continuously growing, the Bolshevik Party now numbered around 400,000 members. The Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties, on the contrary, were torn by dissent and disintegration.

Peasant action against the landed proprietors often took the form of uprisings. Socialist-Revolutionary influence among the peasantry steadily receded, while that of the Bolsheviks grew day by day. The country's oppressed peoples fought with increasing vigour for national independence and equal rights.

Among the soldiers the mood had radically changed: sick of the war, they had no heart to fight for the interests of the capitalists and landlords. Desertions increased. Soldiers' meetings usually ended with a vote of no confidence in the Provisional Government and a demand for the transfer of state power to the Soviets. A preponderant majority of soldiers and sailors now backed the

Bolsheviks, whose prestige was particularly high on the Northern and Western, that is to say, the most important sectors of the front, as well as among the sailors of the Baltic Fleet. In short, the revolutionary movement throughout the country had reached its apex.

Revolution Wins, Russia Proclaimed a Soviet Republic

When all efforts to achieve a peaceful transfer of state power to the Soviets had failed and it became known that the Provisional Government was about to surrender Petrograd to the German troops and, with their help, defeat the people and crush the Revolution, the Communist Party summoned the workers and soldiers to overthrow the Provisional Government by force and establish a Soviet power.

For the peoples of Russia October 25 (November 7), 1917, was a fateful day, as, indeed, it was for the whole of mankind; for that day saw, in Petrograd, the victory of a people's uprising, gained with a minimum of bloodshed; the overthrow of the bourgeois Provisional Government; and the opening meeting of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets attended by delegates elected by democratic procedures to represent more than 20 million voters, which proclaimed the transfer of state power in the capital and throughout the land to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies and elected a Soviet Government—the Council of People's Commissars—headed by V. I. Lenin.

The Soviet Government lost no time in proceeding to carry out the basic demands of the masses. On October 26 (November 8, Gregorian calendar¹) the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets adopted the historic Decree on Peace. The Soviet Government laid before the warring nations and their governments a proposal to open immediate negotiations for a just and democratic peace, a peace excluding any annexation of territories or payment of war indemnities. These conditions were not in the nature of an ultimatum, for the Soviet Government declared its readiness to negotiate on any other conditions that might be proposed by the belligerents. The Decree on Peace provided for a renunciation of secret diplomacy, and for the publication of secret imperialist treaties (which was shortly done by the Soviet Government) and their unconditional abrogation. The Decree served notice that the

¹ From here on dates will be given only in accordance with the Gregorian calendar.—*Ed*



VLADIMIR ILYICH LENIN

Soviet Government stood ready to end the war and live in peace with all countries.

That same day the Congress adopted a Decree on Land, which proclaimed the confiscation without compensation of land belonging to landlords, monasteries and churches, together with all property and livestock pertaining thereto. In line with the demands of the peasantry private ownership of land was abolished and all land henceforth became the property of the people, of the state. The Decree included the Peasant Mandate on the Land which had been compiled on the basis of local peasant mandates and which determined the method of land distribution and land tenure, etc. The Decree realised the age-long dreams of the peasants, granting them, free of charge, 150,000,000 hectares of land. The peasants were thus no longer obliged to buy or rent land from the landlords, which previously cost them annually around 700,000,000 rubles. Peasant indebtedness, aggregating upward of 3,000 million rubles, was cancelled at the same time.

Three days later the Soviet Government decreed an 8-hour working day, and followed this up by introducing free government unemployment and health insurance for workers and employees. On November 15, the Soviet Government issued a Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia, putting an end to the national oppression and proclaiming equality of rights, sovereignty and the right to self-determination, up to secession and formation of an independent state, for all peoples, and annulling all privileges, restrictions, etc., in respect of nations and national religious faiths.

In December 1917, acting in accordance with the Declaration of Rights, the Soviet Government recognised the independence of Finland, hitherto a part of Russia; the independence of the Ukraine; the right of the Armenians to free self-determination, etc. This piece of revolutionary legislation, so drastically reshaping society in the interests of the people, was a momentous new departure in the history of mankind.

Those were trying times for Soviet Russia. Counter-revolutionary forces everywhere were on the march against the fledgling Republic. Kerensky, who had fled from Petrograd in an American-owned motor-car, was marching on the capital at the head of General Krasnov's Cossack corps. Inside the capital, the Constitutional-Democrats, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were busy organising a counter-revolutionary revolt. In the valley of the Don, in the Ukraine and the Urals, and elsewhere, anti-Soviet fronts were formed by the capitalists and landlords ousted by the Revolution, the reactionary generals and officers of the tsarist army, the Cossack *élite*, a privileged estate under the monarchy, and other elements. All of these received support from abroad.

Workers, peasants, poor Cossacks, Red Guard detachments of workers—the people, in short—led by the Communist Party, smashed all these hotbeds of counter-revolution in a triumphant march from one end of the vast land to the other, winning once and for all the allegiance of the toiling and exploited masses of Russia.

Soviet State in Construction

Thus it came about that the dictatorship of the proletariat was established in Russia: the working class was now the dominant class, standing at the helm of state government. More specifically, state power throughout the country was now exercised by government bodies created by the revolutionary working class, namely, the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies, in the first place; and, in the second place, the leading, guiding role in the Soviet state belonged to the party of the working class, i.e., the Communist Party. The Soviet Government elected by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets was composed of representatives of the Communist Party. In November 1917, following negotiations between the Communist Party and the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party which backed the Soviets at the time, an agreement embodied in a socialist programme was reached, and several Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were made members of the Council of People's Commissars. A majority in the government and leadership therein were retained by the Communist Party, however. In March 1918, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars in protest against the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty with Germany.

The bourgeois parties, which refused to recognise the authority of the Soviets and started a vigorous campaign against them, were soon prohibited. The petty-bourgeois Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties began by participating in the elections to all Soviet government bodies and were represented therein. Gradually, however, their leadership found itself in opposition to the measures proposed by the Soviet Government, and when the foreign military intervention started in the summer of 1918 it openly challenged the Soviet state. This cost the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries the gradual loss of support among the masses, and their membership in the Soviets dwindled with each successive election. Politically, the two parties lost all weight during the Civil War period (1918-20), and in the early 1920s their existence came to an end.

The influence and prestige of the Communist Party among the masses, on the contrary, grew stronger year by year, until it was the sole party in the land backed by all of its working people.

Faced with the momentous task of building socialism in the country, the proletariat could not use the old machinery of government which had served the interests of the bourgeoisie and the landed gentry. It was therefore discarded and a new apparatus of government created in its stead. The highest authority was vested in the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and delegated in the periods between its sessions to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, elected by the Congress. The functions of a central executive and administrative body were exercised by the Council of People's Commissars. The abolished ministries were replaced by People's Commissariats (of the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Labour, Education, Finance, etc.). Another government body was the Committee for Nationalities Affairs, charged with implementing the policy of equal rights and friendship among the peoples of Soviet Russia, as promulgated by the Soviet Government. Still another was the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission specially set up to deal with counter-revolutionary activities. The old judicial system was replaced by local courts and revolutionary tribunals elected by the Soviets. And the old army, now demobilised, was replaced by a new, Workers' and Peasants' Red Army—a nation armed and organised into an army.

Any resistance put up by the foes of the Revolution was mercilessly crushed by the proletarian dictatorship. This proletarian dictatorship represented a new and advanced type of democracy, a democracy for the good of the greatest number, a democracy for the people.

The builders of the new state found themselves compelled at the same time to engage in a bitter struggle against the classes that had lost their domination. The bulk of the civil service officials bent their efforts to sabotaging the Revolution. The bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were certain that the working class would never succeed in managing the affairs of the state, because it lacked qualified cadres and because the bourgeois officialdom would refuse to serve a workers' state. In its issue of November 8, 1917, the *Rabochaya Gazeta*, mouth-piece of the Menshevik Central Committee, commented with open malice on the early results of the campaign of sabotage as follows: "Just twenty-four hours have gone by since the Bolsheviks won their victory, and the Nemesis of history has already begun to deal out harsh vengeance upon them. . . . They are simply unable to take over state power. It keeps eluding them, because they find themselves in a vacuum of their own making, because they are alone, because officials and technicians, in a body, refuse to serve them." As it turned out, however, these "prophets" merely made a laughing-stock of themselves. The Communist Party issued a call for the working people, men and women, to take over the job of run-

ning the country. On November 18, in an appeal to the people Lenin wrote: "Remember that now *you yourselves* are at the helm of state. No one will help you if you yourselves do not unite and take into *your hands all affairs* of the state. *Your* Soviets are from now on the organs of state authority, legislative bodies with full powers. Rally round your Soviets. Strengthen them. Get on with the job yourselves; begin right at the bottom, do not wait for anyone."¹

And the proletariat of Russia did just that. All over the country the Soviets took over the business of administration, eliminating the old government bodies. Deputies to the Soviets who failed to justify the expectations of the people were recalled by their electorate and replaced by deputies better able to handle the work. Workers at factories and trade unions selected their ablest members for work in government establishments. The nucleus of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs staff, for instance, was provided from among the workers of the Siemens-Schuckert factory in Petrograd (now renamed Electrosila) and sailors of the Baltic Fleet. A sailor named Markin was made business-manager of this Commissariat. With the help of a group of university students he published a series of secret predatory treaties concluded by the tsarist government, which had been found in the safes of the Foreign Ministry.

Drastic measures meanwhile had put an end to sabotage by the old civil service officials, and most of them had gone back to their jobs. Thus had the old bourgeois apparatus of government, which had served to oppress the people, now been smashed and a new government, a government of and by the people set up in its place.

The counter-revolutionary elements next tried to play off the Constituent Assembly against the Soviet Government. That body, elected in November 1917, comprised a Socialist-Revolutionary majority, and assumed a hostile attitude towards any and all revolutionary reforms implemented by the Soviet Government. Thus it refused to approve the Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People, which set forth a series of highly important Soviet Government decrees. In view of the openly counter-revolutionary attitude of the Constituent Assembly the All-Russia Central Executive Committee ordered its dissolution by the decree of January 19, 1918. News of this action was received with satisfaction by the masses.

From the very first, the Soviet Government spared no effort to induce the belligerent powers to conclude a general democratic

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 297.

peace that would end the criminal imperialist war, but the Entente powers turned a deaf ear to all talk of peace. In the circumstances, the Soviet Government realised that if the workers' and peasants' state was not to perish and the future of Russia was to be assured, it had no choice but to conclude a peace with Germany and her allies. A peace treaty was accordingly signed at Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918. Extremely harsh terms were imposed by the Germans, including the occupation of extensive territory by German forces, payment of contribution and so on. But for the Soviet Government it was a question of surviving, and the treaty was signed.

Peaceful Construction

Fired with revolutionary zeal, the Soviet people now set about the work of peaceful economic and cultural development, intent on building a new life. The Soviet Government lost no time in taking action to prevent an economic collapse and to develop the nation's productive forces. To begin with, it took over the State Bank and nationalised all other banks. A system of workers' control was established at all enterprises employing hired labour. This measure ran into violent opposition on the part of some entrepreneurs, and there were efforts to sabotage production. The Soviet Government countered by nationalising the enterprises of such entrepreneurs, and this brought it into possession of hundreds of firms, including some which had been foreign-owned. Railways and shipping were nationalised, and so were all major grain-storage facilities. State monopoly of foreign trade was established, and all foreign and domestic loans contracted by preceding governments were annulled. A Supreme Economic Council was set up to ensure the management of the nationalised enterprises and planned development of the national economy.

With the country no longer at war, the Soviet Government concentrated its efforts on the job of peaceful construction. In the spring of 1918 Lenin drafted a concrete programme of economic development with the accent on raising the productivity of social labour, which was to be achieved, in his opinion, by unremittingly perfecting technological processes, raising the workers' cultural and technological level, making wide use of experts and specialists to assure proper organisation of production, using a system of incentive remuneration of labour, introducing socialist emulation, etc. Socialist victory over capitalism in the economic field would be won, according to Lenin, by raising the productivity of social labour and producing a greater volume of material and cultural goods and services for the people.

In accordance with a decision of the Soviet Government planning was initiated for the country's electrification, as well as for production on a regional basis and for specific branches of industry. Industrial facilities were shifting to non-military production. Construction of new industrial plants got under way, as well as of new power stations, such as the Volkhov, Svir and Shatura projects.

Steps were taken to strengthen labour discipline in industrial enterprises, achieve better organisation of production and raise productivity. Workers in nationalised plants came increasingly to realise that they were now working for themselves instead of for the benefit of capitalists; and this realisation prompted them to set, of their own accord, codes of behaviour on the job, which were models of self-imposed proletarian discipline. A case in point was the Bryansk Locomotive Works whose personnel worked out Provisional Regulations for their works.

The government made it a practice to appoint the ablest from among the working class to management, and knew how to induce experts and specialists from among the old cadres to go back to work. Continuous improvements were made in the work of the leading economic bodies, i.e., the Supreme Economic Council and the local economic councils. The Soviet Government thus found itself in a position to proceed with the nationalisation of entire branches of industry: May 1918 saw the nationalisation of the sugar industry; and the petroleum industry, the railways and important plants in other branches of industry were taken over in June. Thus the socialist sector expanded and grew considerably stronger.

First Soviet Constitution

In July 1918, the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets adopted the first Soviet Constitution, which had been worked out under the direct supervision of V. I. Lenin and Y. M. Sverdlov, Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. This Constitution legalised the history-making achievements of the first eight months of the Socialist Revolution, namely, the establishment of the Soviet state; the adoption of a federative state system; the granting of democratic freedoms, i.e., freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of union, and the creation of conditions making it possible to practise these freedoms. The Constitution declared labour to be the duty of all the citizens of the Republic, in accordance with the principle "He who does not work, neither shall he eat". The Constitution further provided for universal military service in the interests of national

defence, with the proviso, however, that arms were to be supplied only to the working people. The right to elect and be elected to the Soviets was granted to all adult working men and women regardless of national or racial origin, sex, education or religious belief, if any. Exploitative and hostile elements were deprived of the franchise. The electorate was free at any time to recall deputies who failed to justify its expectations and to elect new deputies.

Speaking of the first Soviet Constitution Lenin said that "all constitutions that had existed till now safeguarded the interests of the ruling classes. The Soviet Constitution was the only one that served and would constantly serve the working people and was a powerful weapon in the fight for socialism."¹

CIVIL WAR IN RUSSIA

Hardly had Russia begun to recover from the disastrous consequences of the world war when she became the victim of another destructive and sanguinary conflict—the Civil War, which lasted nearly all of three years.

Responsibility for that war rests with the governments of the United States, Japan, Great Britain and France, and also those of Germany and her allies, who organised a campaign of armed intervention against Soviet Russia and instigated the counter-revolutionary forces inside the country to a new uprising. The governments of these bourgeois countries feared that the example set by the workers, peasants and soldiers of Russia might evoke among their own working classes a desire to follow suit and that Russia's withdrawal from the war might lend strength to the craving for peace rife among the peoples of the belligerent states, who had had their fill of misery. The foreign imperialists hoped that with the re-establishment of a bourgeois dictatorship in Russia they would get back their nationalised factories, collect the loans that had been annulled by the Soviet Government, and continue plundering the peoples of Russia as before.

Russia's very existence as an independent state hung in the balance. Early in 1918 the American imperialists offered their scheme of a partitioning of Soviet Russia. A map of Russia, prepared by the US State Department in 1919, showed Russia restricted to the Central Russian Uplands: the rest of the country was to be parcelled out to various "independent states". A supplement to the map said, in part, that all of Russia should be broken

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 105.

up into large natural areas, each with its own distinct economic pattern. And none of these areas should be self-sufficient enough to form a strong state.

Imperialists Attack the Soviet Republic. Civil War Begins

The imperialist states had reached an agreement in regard to a military invasion of Russia as early as December 1917, and had designated the areas each was to take over. Nor did they lose any time getting down to business. Rumania, with her bourgeois-landlord government, backed by France, occupied Bessarabia in December 1917. Pleading the necessity of forestalling an allegedly impending "German attack", French, British and American troops landed at Murmansk in March 1918. In August they occupied Arkhangelsk, where counter-revolutionary elements launched an anti-Soviet revolt. Joining forces, the invaders and counter-revolutionaries overthrew the Soviet power of that city. The invaders established a harsh occupation regime and proceeded to plunder the region.

On the night of April 4-5 two Japanese were murdered at Vladivostok by Japanese agents, and on the morrow Japanese troops landed and occupied the city ostensibly "to protect the life and property of foreign nationals". That same day a British landing party was put ashore. In the middle of August an American expeditionary force arrived. And by autumn of 1918 the Soviets had been overthrown by the invaders and whiteguards all over the Soviet Far East.

Central Asia was another region where British troops were sent and where, with their help, the local nationalist-minded bourgeoisie, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks liquidated Soviet power and set up a counter-revolutionary Transcaspian government. In August British troops entered Baku, crushed the Baku Commune, took twenty-six of its leaders out of town and on September 20, 1918, had them shot without a trial.

There was yet another force in Russia which the Entente powers used in their anti-Soviet campaign. This was a Czechoslovak corps, 60,000-strong, composed of officers and men of the Austro-Hungarian army captured by the Russians during the world war. Upon concluding the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk the Soviet Government had given the Czechoslovak corps permission to go home, via Vladivostok. Allied representatives succeeded in bribing the corps command and conspired with it to incite the soldiers to an anti-Soviet revolt. The revolt broke out on May 25, 1918, and soon spread over the entire stretch of the Trans-Siberian Railway from Penza to Vladivostok, over which the numerous Czechoslovak

troop trains were strung out on their way to the port of embarkation. Over 100,000 rifles and various other arms were supplied to these troops by the United States.

This revolt of the Czechoslovak corps sparked a kulak uprising in the Volga area, in the Urals, and in Siberia. The Soviets were overthrown everywhere between the Volga and the Pacific coast. Counter-revolutionary "governments" appeared at Samara, Omsk and Yekaterinburg, which gave the capitalists back their factories and the landlords their estates.

A 10-hour working day was established for the workers. Punitive detachments terrorised the population in town and countryside. And self-styled governments began forming armies to fight the Soviets.

The Baltic regions, most of Byelorussia, the Ukraine, the Don region, the Crimea and Georgia had been occupied by the German army early in 1918. The Soviets had been overthrown throughout these parts and the bourgeoisie and landlords were once again in power. The Soviet Republic found itself hemmed in on all sides by fronts held by the invading and whiteguard armies, and cut off from its main food, fuel and raw materials sources of supply.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who maintained clandestine contact with the invaders, were quick to profit by the plight of the Republic. During July 1918, anti-Soviet revolts organised by the Socialist-Revolutionaries broke out in twenty-three towns in Central Russia. Early in July Left Socialist-Revolutionaries started a revolt in Moscow, assassinating Mirbach, the German ambassador, in the hope of provoking a war with Germany. A series of attempts against the lives of Soviet Government and Communist Party leaders were made by Socialist-Revolutionary terrorist bands. Lenin, head of the Soviet Government, was grievously wounded on August 30.

In the autumn of 1918, after the end of the First World War, the Entente powers intensified their criminal intervention against the Soviet people, bringing the numerical strength of their expeditionary forces to over 300,000 officers and men. During 1919 the authors of this war of aggression, notably British Minister of War Churchill, worked on a plan of organising a fourteen-power coalition for an anti-Soviet campaign. The fledgling Soviet state was destined to go through a heavy ordeal—a trial by battle.

Soviet People Up in Arms

Answering the call of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, the workers and peasants of Russia rose in arms to defend the Revolution, filled with revolutionary enthusiasm and inflamed

by wrath against the foreign invaders and whiteguards. The Soviet Government declared the nation in danger and summoned the people to turn the country into an embattled camp. To better organise the defence of the country a Workers' and Peasants' Council of Defence was set up under the chairmanship of Lenin.

In a short time-span a large regular Red Army was created, composed of workers and peasants. Hundreds of thousands of workers and indigent peasants volunteered for service. In spite of heavy battle losses the Red Army continued to grow and by the end of 1920 numbered over 5,000,000 men. While Communist workers formed its backbone, peasants were numerically preponderant. Together with the workers the toiling peasants fought in defence of the Soviets, which, besides giving them political freedom, had given them land and freed them of the landlord yoke.

Numerous training centres for workers and peasants provided commanding cadres for the Red Army. Hundreds of talented commanders of battalions, regiments, divisions and larger units came from among people. The Civil War produced such renowned commanders as Vassily Blücher, a worker-Communist, the first to receive the Order of the Red Banner; Vassily Chapayev, born into a poverty-stricken peasant family; Nikolai Shchors, son of a railway worker; Semyon Budyonny, a Cossack, who had risen from organiser of a partisan cavalry detachment to commander of the legendary Cavalry Army that spread terror in the enemy ranks; and Mikhail Frunze, a Communist, who began in 1918 as commander of a workers' detachment and in 1919 was in command of a front.

Thousands of officers of the old army were drawn into the work of building up and training the Red Army. Most of them served the Soviets loyally and quite a few worked up to high army posts and played an important role in the defeat of the invaders and whiteguards, as, for instance, Sergei Kamenev, former colonel of the tsarist army, who was given in 1918 command of the Eastern Front and in 1919 became commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the Republic; and Mikhail Tukhachevsky, a young officer, who commanded an army in 1918, and in 1920 was put in command of the Western Front.

There were, on the other hand, quite a few former officers who deserted from the Red Army to the enemy, and it became necessary to keep an eye on the work of the commanders. This control was carried out by the Commissars—the best men of the working class, battle-hardened Communists, high-principled revolutionaries. They were the soul of the Red Army, cementing it, welding it into a united force. Dmitry Furmanov, Communist, writer, commissar of the famous Twenty-Fifth Division whose commander was Chapayev, described the army commissars as “wearing a plain



Subbotnik at Kazan Railway Station, May 10, 1919

uniform, like the rank and file, eating the same rations, sharing hardships with the men, and—in battle—always in a hurry to be the first to die”.

People in the rear carried on in keeping with the slogan “All for the Front, All for Victory!” coined by the Communist Party. Industrial facilities were geared to the production of weapons, ammunition and army togs. Despite a critical shortage of raw materials, fuel and food, industrial output was generally able to meet the needs of the army. This should be attributed to a mass display of a high order of heroism on the part of the workers, a striking manifestation of which was voluntary unpaid week-end community work projects. Subbotniks or Communist Saturdays they were called; they were initiated by the railwaymen of Moscow in the spring of 1919, and the movement soon swept the country from end to end.

The country's economic policies were planned exclusively in the interests of winning the war. The process of nationalisation of industry was drastically speeded up in order to undermine the economic power of the bourgeoisie and to mobilise the country's entire resources for the war effort. Medium-size and even minor industrial plants were taken over by the state, to say nothing of

the important plants, and a lump revolutionary tax of 10,000 million rubles was imposed on the bourgeoisie. Bourgeois-owned apartment houses and residences were expropriated to house working-class families from slum areas. Members of the bourgeoisie were compelled to work.

Universal labour conscription was introduced to provide manpower for industry and transport. Industrial management was stringently centralised, no enterprises were permitted to do business independently, and all output was required to be delivered to the state.

While the Civil War lasted the Soviet Government was unable to stock enough grain by buying from the peasants or bartering for manufactured goods, inasmuch as money had devaluated and the output of manufactured goods was negligible. To feed the army and the civilian population, therefore, the Soviet Government had to have recourse to urgent measures. Thus a surplus appropriation system was introduced in January 1919, in accordance with which peasants were required to deliver surplus food products to the state. Approximately one half of the value of the products was paid for in manufactured goods and the remainder in paper money, the purchasing power of which was very low. Actually a part of the grain deliveries were appropriated by the state on a loan basis. The system admittedly worked a hardship on the peasants, but it was vitally necessary. The toiling peasants accepted it, well realising that the Red Army had to be fed if it was to beat off the onslaught against the Soviet state.

The sale of the most important lines of manufactured goods and food products was prohibited and replaced by a system of distribution through a co-operative network. Priority was given to the needs of workers and children. Wages were paid in kind, inasmuch as money had very appreciably fallen in value. Food and manufactured goods were rationed and issued to those who worked, on an equitable basis, in quantities just affording subsistence.

The reign of terror unleashed by the counter-revolutionaries and their numerous subversive conspiracies compelled the Soviet Government to counter with "red terror", and the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission set up towards the close of 1917 under F. E. Dzerzhinsky, a revolutionary of an unimpeachable moral character, struck back hard at the foes of the Revolution. A number of important anti-Soviet plots were brought to light, hatched by members of foreign diplomatic missions in collaboration with the Constitutional-Democrats, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. Nothing accounted for the successes of the Extraordinary Commission so much as the whole-hearted support of the masses.

This "red terror" was a defensive measure. In the beginning of 1920, when the foreign expeditionary forces and the whiteguard



Petrograd Railwaymen's Communist Detachment before leaving for Eastern Front (1918)

armies had been defeated in the main, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee repealed the death penalty in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR).

Invading and Whiteguard Armies Defeated

Looking back, it becomes clear that the eventual defeat of the foreign expeditionary forces and whiteguard armies had been assured by the formation of a mass Red Army, militarisation of the home front, adaption of the national economy and economic policy to war needs, and whole-hearted support of the Soviet state by the workers and toiling peasantry.

During the summer and autumn of 1918 the greatest threat to the Republic came from the east, where the Czechoslovak and whiteguard forces menaced the country's vital centres, including Moscow, which had become in March 1918 the capital of the Soviet state. The Red Army's main forces were therefore dispatched to the Eastern Front, and many Communists were sent there in accordance with the plan of Party mobilisation. In the course of September and October the Red Army inflicted a heavy defeat on

the enemy at Kazan, Simbirsk and Samara, liberating these three towns and throwing back the enemy troops to the Urals.

Heavy fighting went on about the same time in defence of Tsaritsyn on the Volga (now Volgograd) against the Cossack army of General Krasnov, which virtually invested the city in August and then again in October. The defenders fought with great *élan*. The slogan was "Die, but Don't Surrender Tsaritsyn!" A contingent of Tsaritsyn workers 10,000-strong fought shoulder to shoulder with the Red Army. After exhausting the enemy in defensive fighting the Soviet forces launched a counter-offensive in October, defeated the besieging troops and threw them back beyond the river Don. The final defeat of General Krasnov's Cossack army was achieved early in 1919.

In the spring of 1918 the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic regions rose in arms against the German forces of occupation. After the November 1918 revolution in Germany the Soviet Government annulled the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, came to the aid of the peoples of the areas which had been seized by the German imperialists, and their joint efforts succeeded in expelling the invaders. The Ukraine, Byelorussia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania proclaimed themselves independent Soviet republics, and were granted recognition as such by the Government of the RSFSR. Before the year 1919 was half over, however, counter-revolutionary elements in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, backed by foreign interventionists, succeeded in liquidating the Soviets and replacing them with bourgeois dictatorships.

Thus it came about that in the spring of 1919 Soviet Russia was fighting back on many fronts. The main attack was being pressed in the east by the Kolchak army which had driven close to the Volga; Denikin's army was attacking from the south; Yudenich was marching on Petrograd; Polish forces had invaded Russia from the west; foreign expeditionary forces and a whiteguard army under General Miller were advancing from the north, and the interventionist and whiteguard forces in Turkestan and Transcaucasia were stepping up their offensive. Weighing the situation, the Communist Party decided to concentrate on halting Kolchak, and within a brief time-span succeeded in mobilising the manpower and *matériel* that were to assure his eventual complete defeat.

On April 28, 1919, undaunted by spring freshets and muddy roads, the southern force of the Eastern Front under Frunze, attacking unexpectedly, dealt the enemy a powerful blow, throwing him back beyond the river Belaya; whereupon a successful offensive was developed by all the armies of the Eastern Front. During July the Kolchak forces were cleared out of the Urals and driven back into Siberia. Invaluable help was given the Red Army by the workers of the Urals industrial plants, who destroyed Kol-

chak's communication lines, attacked his units, supplied the advancing Red Army with important information, and helped recapture one town after another.

In August the Soviet forces undertook an offensive designed to drive the Kolchak army out of Siberia, where a strong partisan movement under Bolshevik leadership was already under way. Some 150,000 workers and peasants were fighting in various partisan detachments scattered over Siberia and Russia's Far East. Their daring operations were of great help to the Red Army in liberating Siberia. On January 6, 1920, at Krasnoyarsk, the main body of Kolchak's army was forced to surrender, Kolchak himself placed under arrest, sentenced to death by the Irkutsk Revolutionary Committee, and shot.

When Kolchak's main forces were defeated by the Red Army back in the summer of 1919 the imperialist powers began feverish preparations for a new campaign against the Soviet Republic. The main blow was struck in the south by the army of General Denikin. By the autumn of 1919 it had succeeded in occupying the Ukraine, the towns of Kursk, Orel and Voronezh, reaching the vicinity of Tula, and creating a threat to Moscow.

Launching an appeal for an all-out effort to stop Denikin, the Communist Party mobilised some 25,000 Communists and sent them to the Southern Front. The Komsomol, in turn, sent 21,000 members, and the trade unions 35,000 workers. In October the troops of the Southern Front started a counter-drive, and heavy fighting took place at Orel and Voronezh, where Denikin's best divisions were smashed. On October 20 the Red Army took Orel, and on the 24th Voronezh. The entire whiteguard front buckled in and began to retreat, pursued by the Soviet cavalry under Budyonny. By March 1920 Denikin's army had suffered a resounding defeat, its remnants withdrew to the Crimea, and Denikin fled abroad, surrendering the command to General Wrangel.

When 1919 drew to a close the forces of General Yudenich had also been completely defeated. They had twice been able to approach Petrograd, once in the spring, and again in the autumn. The defence of Petrograd was a heroic episode of the Civil War. Workers—men and women, all Communists and Komsomols capable of bearing arms fought by the side of the Red Army. Munition factory workers worked round the clock producing arms and ammunition. Backed by so strong a home front the Red Army not only held Petrograd but inflicted a crushing defeat on Yudenich's forces and drove their remnants out of the country.

In the foreign expeditionary forces, meanwhile, battered as they were by the Red Army and subjected to the revolutionary propaganda spread by underground Bolshevik organisations, a process of demoralisation was making rapid headway among the rank and



Fighters of the First Cavalry Army hold meeting

file. Soldiers began refusing to fight against the workers and peasants of Russia. Sailors of the French squadron in the Black Sea mutinied and flew the red flag—to show their approval of the Russian Revolution. The spring of 1919 saw the beginning of a general withdrawal of foreign troops from the Soviet soil. Those in the south of Russia were the first to go. They were followed that summer by those in Central Asia and Transcaucasia. Evacuation of the force in northern Russia was begun in the autumn. And in the beginning of 1920 the US troops cleared out of the Russia's Far East. Lenin speaking in December 1919 said: "The victory we won in compelling the evacuation of the British and French troops was the greatest of our victories over the Entente countries. We deprived them of their soldiers. Our response to the unlimited military and technical superiority of the Entente countries was to deprive them of it through the solidarity of the working people against the imperialist governments."¹

Thus, at the opening of 1920, the Red Army had won a decisive victory in the Civil War: the main forces of counter-revolution at home, that is, the whiteguard armies of Kolchak, Denikin

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 211.

and Yudenich, had been crushed and those of the foreign invaders driven out of the country. The imperialist powers, however, would not give up and continued their criminal aggression against the peoples of Russia. In the spring of 1920 the bourgeois-landlord government of Poland, egged on by the leading imperialist powers, started a large-scale war with Soviet Russia. Early in May the Polish forces succeeded in taking Kiev. And in June the whiteguard army under General Wrangel launched an offensive northward from the Crimea. It was as if international imperialism was reaching out with two hands—Poland and Wrangel—in an effort to throttle the Soviet Republic.

In a series of hard-fought battles the Red Army defeated the Polish forces and forced them to retreat. The war ended with Poland in possession of some Soviet territory, i.e., Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, though less than the Soviet Government had been ready to cede to Poland in order to avoid war.

In the autumn of the same year, 1920, the Red Army had crushed the Wrangel forces. Courage of the highest order was displayed by the Soviet fighters who stormed the powerful fortifications barring access to the Crimea. M. V. Frunze, in command of the Southern Front, telegraphed Lenin as follows: "I wish to testify to the high valour displayed by our heroic infantry in storming Sivash and Perekop.¹ They advanced over narrow passages in the face of murderous fire to break through barbed-wire entanglements. Our losses have been extremely heavy. Some divisions lost three-fourths of their personnel. Total casualties in this operation were no less than 10,000. Our armies have done their duty by the Republic. The last foothold of the Russian counter-revolution has been liquidated and Soviet rule has been re-established in the Crimea."

In Central Asia, too, the Civil War came to an end during 1920 with the clearing of foreign expeditionary forces and whiteguards out of all of Turkestan. Aided by the Red Army, the people of Khiva deposed the local Khan and the people of Bukhara overthrew the local emir. Both Khiva and Bukhara were proclaimed Soviet People's Republics by the respective congresses of people's representatives. For several years to come, however, armed *basmachi*² bands supported by the British terrorised Central Asia bringing much woe to the working people of Turkestan, Khiva and Bukhara.

¹ Sivash—lagoons east of the isthmus of Perekop.—*Ed.*

² *Basmachi* is an Uzbek word meaning oppressor, tyrant or robber. The *basmachi* movement was a counter-revolutionary nationalist movement which survived in Central Asia between 1918 and 1924. Headed by beys and mullahs, the movement was in the nature of undisguised political banditry and aimed at the re-establishment of the rule of the exploiting classes and the detachment of the Central Asian Republics from Soviet Russia.—*Ed.*

Action by the workers and peasants toppled the bourgeois-nationalist dictatorship in Azerbaijan (April 1920), Armenia (November 1920) and Georgia (February 1921), and the three countries were proclaimed Soviet Socialist Republics. Red Army units moved into the new republics at the request of their revolutionary governments to help deal with the remnants of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary elements.

In the Soviet Far East the Japanese invaders managed to hold out until the end of 1922. At Spassk and Volochayevka the joint forces of the Japanese and whiteguards suffered a decisive defeat; on October 25, 1922, the revolutionary troops entered Vladivostok; and the Japanese expeditionary force sailed for home.

This history-making Soviet victory in a three-year-long war against foreign and counter-revolutionary armies showed what a people that had gained its freedom was capable of doing. This victory was made possible by the fact that the workers and peasants of Russia had risen in defence of their own Soviet power, in defence of their right to be free and independent. They won because they had joined together to form a strong and enduring union and because their effort was directed by the Communist Party under the leadership of Lenin.

SOVIET RUSSIA STANDS FOR PEACE

Reluctant Recognition

Now that Soviet Russia had gained an opportunity to turn to the task of peaceful development, the governments of the bourgeois world found themselves in a quandary: what should be their relations with a revolutionary Russia? Should they resume trading with her? Should they meet with her representatives at international conferences? Or should they continue the blockade and ignore the Soviet Government as before?

During the past few years the Soviet Government had repeatedly declared in clear and unequivocal terms that it was interested in peace and in normal economic and political relations with all countries. "Our motto," G. V. Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, used to say, "has invariably been 'peaceful co-existence with other governments, whatever their nature'." More than ten official overtures of peace were made by the Soviet Government just between August 1918 and May 1919. There had been no response. Nevertheless, having suffered a defeat in an armed clash with the Soviet Republic, the leading statesmen of the bourgeois countries undertook a reappraisal of values.

The new trend appeared, earlier and with greater force than elsewhere, in Great Britain, whose government was headed by Lloyd George. Lenin spoke of him as one of the bourgeois world's most adroit politicians. As for the most violent opponents of any deals with Soviet Russia, these were: Winston Churchill, the "greatest Russia-hater"; Lord Curzon, one of the pillars of British colonialism; President Harding of the United States; and Premier Poincaré of France. These four called for another war of intervention against Soviet Russia. No well-wisher of the Soviet state, of course, Lloyd George differed from the four only in that he expected to make short work of that country by economic means.

Anglo-Soviet talks began in London towards the end of 1920. Soviet Russia was represented by L. B. Krasin, one of the first Soviet diplomats. Having received a technical education, Krasin had held responsible posts in the Soviet Government. Lenin described him as a man of exceptional talent. M. M. Litvinov, prominent Soviet diplomat, wrote of him in glowing terms: "In my memory Krasin embodies the virtues of a revolutionary, a Party member, a Soviet leader, and a diplomat. I remember him as a strong, energetic and very charming individual."

The atmosphere at these London talks was extremely strained: the reactionary elements did their best to prevent them from succeeding.

The negotiations ended on March 16, 1921, in the conclusion of an Anglo-Soviet trade agreement. This was an eminent success for Soviet diplomacy. Italy followed suit and concluded a similar agreement. The firmness and restraint displayed by the Soviet Government and its consistent efforts to establish peaceful relations with all countries had produced very tangible results.

These early successes of Soviet Russia in the sphere of foreign relations showed that the Bolsheviks, besides being very able organisers of their country's defence, were also able politicians and diplomats. Friendly interest in the workers' and peasants' state had begun to grow all over the world and in many different sections of its population.

The Genoa Conference

In April 1922, newspapers and magazines in the capitalist world became preoccupied with Genoa, Italy, where the first international conference with the participation of Soviet Russia was shortly to meet. Eminent political figures of the bourgeois world, ministers, big capitalists, diplomats and press correspondents flocked to Genoa. They expected that there would be no more than some general talk about peace and the usual flood of

bourgeois demagoguery. There was also the intention to dictate harsh peace terms to Soviet Russia, which would be made to pay up all the debts incurred by the tsarist and Provisional governments. Not content with that, the bourgeois money-bags wanted the Bolsheviks to admit hundreds of foreign experts into their country to exercise control over the settlement of those debts. The French and British capitalists wanted to put these "experts" and "advisers" in charge of the Soviet economic and financial departments. These plans of theirs were not destined to materialise, however.

The Genoa Conference opened on April 10, 1922, in the crowded hall of the Palazzo di San Giorgio. The Soviet delegation had come to Genoa with a definite programme worked out by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government under Lenin's personal supervision and outlining strategic and tactical objectives for the Soviet diplomats, top priority being given to the establishment of economic and commercial relations between the USSR and the capitalist world. The Soviet programme was a programme of peace and peaceful coexistence.

In accordance with the decision of the Soviet Government and the Central Committee of the Communist Party the Soviet delegation was to be headed by Lenin. Yet the troubled international atmosphere together with the presence of numerous Russian counter-revolutionaries in the various European countries made Lenin's voyage abroad appear dangerous. A stream of letters to the Soviet Government kept pouring in meanwhile from people all over the country, asking that Lenin should not be sent abroad; and both the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars decided to comply with these wishes.

Following this decision the Soviet Government appointed G. V. Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, as vice-chairman of the Soviet delegation with full exercise of the rights of chairman. Since 1918 Chicherin was for twelve years in charge of the Soviet diplomatic service. A man of great culture and an authority on international law, he was a convinced and devoted Party worker. Lenin greatly valued his contribution to the activities of the Soviet diplomatic service.

Chicherin was accompanied to the conference by V. V. Vorovsky, L. B. Krasin, M. M. Litvinov and Y. E. Rudzutak. At Genoa, the interest of those who came to attend the conference was largely focussed on the Soviet delegation. What were they like, these mysterious Bolsheviks from Russia, concerning whom so many yarns were being spun in the capitalist world? Would they be able to hold their own against the crafty politicians of the bourgeois countries?

The atmosphere in the conference hall, on April 10, was one of suspense. Hundreds of reporters and correspondents made ready to take down the declaration about to be made, for the first time in history, by a delegation of a socialist country at an international conference. They saw a man, slight of build, with a keen, intelligent glance, wearing a short beard, mount to the rostrum: this was Chicherin. He spoke in Russian, himself interpreting his speech in French. He read the statement prepared by the Soviet delegation, urging the necessity of peaceful co-existence of their socialist country and the capitalist powers. "While abiding by the principles of communism," the statement read, "the Russian delegation admits that in the present historical epoch, which makes possible the parallel existence of the old and the rising new socialist systems, economic co-operation between countries representing these two systems of property is an imperative necessity for universal economic reconstruction."

The statement further urged a businesslike approach to the problem of a general reduction of armaments and support of any measures designed to lighten the burden of militarism if they provide for a reduction in the size of the armies of all states and an amendment of the rules of warfare completely prohibiting the use of particularly savage methods, such as poison gas, air warfare, destructive weapons aimed at the civilian population, etc. In short, the Soviet statement envisaged peace and disarmament. The statement made it clear to the working people throughout the world that Soviet Russia was determined to fight for peace and universal prosperity, against the policy of aggression and an armaments race.

Among the delegates of the capitalist powers the Soviet statement produced a reaction of extreme irritation and nervousness. Meeting followed meeting, luxurious limousines sped in all directions, carrying perturbed bourgeois diplomats from place to place. They were busy looking for a "satisfactory answer" to the Russian problem and seeking agreement on joint *démarches* against the Soviet delegation.

The peace offers made by the Soviet Republic were turned down by the Western diplomats. "The minute the Russian delegation proposes consideration of the problem [of disarmament.—*Ed.*]," said the French foreign minister, "it will encounter on the part of the French delegation not only a cool reception or a protest, but a pointed, categorical, final and decisive refusal." This declaration was supported by the Italian prime minister; and the Soviet proposals were as good as turned down by Lloyd George as well.

Two attitudes thus became clearly apparent to the judgement of public opinion. Soviet Russia urged peaceful co-existence and

disarmament; and the capitalist countries wanted to re-establish bourgeois rule in Soviet Russia and refused to disarm. The schemes of the bourgeois politicians, however, intended to force crippling economic terms on Soviet Russia, miscarried grievously. The Soviet delegation rejected their importunities. In fact it brought about a schism in the united anti-Soviet front.

It should be mentioned that the Genoa Conference was the first international conference, since the war of 1914-18, to be attended by a German delegation. Under the terms of the Versailles Peace Treaty the German bourgeoisie was carrying a heavy burden which it was anxious to lighten. The situation had given birth to forces among the German ruling circles which considered that it would be useful to establish economic and political relations with Soviet Russia. The Soviet delegation, taking advantage of this development, entered into negotiations with the German representatives. As for the Germans, they were at once anxious for and fearful of any agreement with Soviet Russia.

The German delegation, which had been given accommodations at Rapallo, a few miles out of Genoa, sat up all through the night of April 15 discussing whether to enter negotiations with the Russians or not. At 2 a.m. Chicherin telephoned to inform the German delegation that Germany would receive preferential treatment in trade with Soviet Russia in the event of the conclusion of a Soviet-German treaty. Chicherin's message strengthened the Germans' interest in a treaty. Lengthy consultations by telephone between the German delegates and Berlin took place on the following day, resulting in a decision; and in the evening of April 16, 1922, the two sides signed the Soviet-German Treaty of Rapallo.

This act was a manifestation of the policy of peaceful co-existence between states with different political systems. Under the terms of the Treaty of Rapallo the Soviet Republic and Germany withdrew all reciprocal claims and cancelled all pending payments in settlement of military and other disbursements. Germany and Russia, two great European powers, resumed diplomatic and consular relations, and expressed their desire to establish commercial and economic relations on mutually advantageous terms. The Rapallo Treaty signified the defeat of the imperialist policy of isolating the Soviet Republic.

The ruling circles of Great Britain, France, and other countries met the Soviet-German treaty with extreme irritation and even undisguised anger. French Prime Minister Poincaré called an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers, which decided to lodge a protest. Lloyd George demanded that Germany should abrogate the treaty, threatening to expel the German delegation from Genoa if this were not done. Alarmed by such serious reper-

cussions, the Germans requested the Soviet delegation, on April 19, to abrogate the signed document; which the Soviet representatives, naturally, refused to do. And the treaty remained in force.

The activities of the Soviet delegation at the conference were continuously directed by Lenin, even though it was very difficult to maintain contact between Moscow and Genoa. Telegrams were dispatched via London, so that messages from Genoa reached Moscow nearly twenty-four hours later; diplomatic pouches made the trip in five or six days. The Western publications gave distorted accounts of the proceedings. All these difficulties notwithstanding, the Soviet delegation never for a day felt itself neglected by Moscow. Lenin watched the conference with great attention. On April 18 he brought up in the Political Bureau the question of publishing the text of the Treaty of Rapallo, and on the 19th it was duly given in the Soviet press.

No decisions were made at the Genoa Conference, but it did signify initial success for Soviet foreign policy and the principles of peaceful coexistence as formulated by Lenin.

Soviet Republic Aids Eastern Nations

Under the tsarist regime and also under the Provisional Government, Russia had been a prison-house for her peoples. Besides being that, however, she had been unscrupulous in the exploitation of her economically weak neighbours. For in this respect the Russian rulers were no better than the British, German, French and American imperialists.

Her southern and southeastern neighbours were Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. Never since history began had any of the great powers concluded a single treaty or agreement with any of these countries on terms of fairness and equality of rights. After October 1917, however, the situation changed.

On January 17, 1918, the Soviet People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs notified Asad Khan, the Persian envoy, that the Soviet Government declared all treaties and agreements incompatible with the freedom and independence of the Persian people abrogated. The news caused rejoicing throughout Iran. The Soviet diplomatic representative at Teheran reported: "The impact of this news upon the Persians is beyond description. Teheran has been literally rocked by the burst of universal joy. Endless deputations and individuals coming to greet me leave me not a moment's time. I have been receiving ovations even in the streets."

By the spring of 1918 the Soviet Republic had completed the withdrawal of Russian troops from Iran, thereby opening the road



Representatives of Iran signing treaty with Soviet Union (1921)

to Iranian independence and to the establishment of friendly relations between the two countries.

A Soviet-Iranian treaty was signed in Moscow in February 1921, confirming the abrogation of all unequal treaties, conventions and agreements concluded with Iran by tsarist Russia. It provided for the cancellation of all Persian debts and the return to Iran of all concessions and property acquired by tsarist Russia. That was the first equal treaty ever concluded with Iran, and it proved extremely helpful to the Iranian people.

Progressive elements in Iran expressed a high opinion of Soviet Russia's policy in regard to the Iranian people. The newspaper *Rah-nema* wrote: "In the murk that enveloped our political horizons there came blinding flashes of lightning that created an extraordinary impression in the dark night of Persian politics. . . . This brilliant flash came out of the North, and its source was Moscow. Out of Moscow it flashed with surprising force to illuminate the darkness in which we live."

Relations improved between Soviet Russia and Turkey, too. Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the eminent statesman then at the head of the Turkish Government, realised the importance of friendly relations with Soviet Russia. A Turko-Soviet treaty was con-

cluded on March 16, 1921—the first equal treaty in Turkish history—and in implementation of this treaty there was a heavy movement of export goods to Turkey during 1921 and 1922, to the great advantage of that country.

In 1921 similar treaties were concluded by the Soviet Republic with Afghanistan (February 28, 1921) and Mongolia (November 5, 1921). Thus did Lenin's diplomatic methods lay the foundation of a new, Soviet policy in respect of the countries of Asia, the salient elements of which were: support of national liberation movements; economic and political aid; and defence of sovereignty and independence.

Chapter Two

FIRST WORLD WAR: END AND AFTERMATH. REDIVISION OF THE WORLD

General Crisis of Capitalism

The victory of the 1917 October Socialist Revolution in Russia struck the capitalist system a blow from which it would never fully recover. The general crisis of capitalism set in; an inevitable down-grade trend involved capitalist ideology as well as the economic and political system. The main feature of the general crisis is the breaking up of the world into two opposing social systems. Capitalism ceased being dominant throughout the world after the October Revolution in Russia: a new, socialist system now developed side by side with the capitalist system. The two systems are in conflict, and it is this conflict, this confrontation between them that is the main content of the epoch of capitalism's general crisis.

Another feature of this crisis is the disintegration of the imperialist colonial system. The October Revolution impelled a powerful upsurge of the national liberation movement in the colonies and dependencies. The peoples of tsarist Russia, who had broken the bonds of national slavery and oppression and had struck out for themselves to develop their country, set an inspiring example for the peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies in their struggle against foreign imperialist domination. These peoples had had enough of the old life and were fully resolved to fight on until they achieved independence.

Other features peculiar to the general crisis of capitalism are: aggravation of contradictions among the imperialist powers in connection with markets, sources of raw materials, and spheres of influence; rivalry for leadership in the capitalist world; unprecedented growth of the struggle between the working class and the capitalists; and a growing revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries. Imperialism reduces millions and millions to a state of hunger and poverty, deprives them of their legal rights, makes

them bear the burden of economic crises and suffer the countless calamities of the wars of which it is the cause. That is why the struggle of the working people has been marked from year to year by growing organisation and determination.

The Two Systems: Co-existence and Confrontation

Having split the world into two systems, the October Revolution now carried the basic contradiction of our time—the contradiction between moribund capitalism and nascent socialism—into the sphere of international relations. Developing the teaching of a world-wide socialist revolution as a more or less lengthy process, Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state, showed the inevitability of a temporary co-existence of countries with different social systems. This co-existence postulates a rejection of war as a means of resolving controversial international issues, and their settlement through negotiation; complete equality of rights for nations; non-interference in the internal affairs of nations; and the development of co-operation among states on the basis of mutual advantage. As the two systems compete with one another, the advantages of socialism, as compared with the waning capitalist system, will become abundantly clear. This competition, or struggle, will inevitably end in the victory of socialism.

The principle of peaceful co-existence is applicable solely to the relations among states with different social systems: it is entirely inapplicable to the class antagonisms within the imperialist states or to the relations between the oppressors and the oppressed, that is, between the imperialist colonialists and the victims of colonial oppression. That explains why the Soviet state has repeatedly declared that it has given and will continue to give support to any liberation struggle and all manner of aid to the countries or peoples fighting to end imperialist oppression.

Imperialism is aggressive by its very nature. It refused to put up with the appearance of the Soviet Republic, and the fight against it became, indeed, ever since October 1917, one of the high priority aims of international reaction in the sphere of international politics. Soviet power, points out very rightly F. Th. Schumann, the prominent American historian, lost no time, upon coming to power, in offering peace to the West, but the West's reaction was war, a real hot war with great loss of life and vast destruction.

By defeating the forces of intervention and the whiteguard armies the peoples of Soviet Russia compelled the imperialist powers to adopt a policy of co-existence with the Soviet Union.

The ruling circles of the most capitalist states were compelled to establish diplomatic relations and look to the development of certain commercial and political contacts with the USSR. Nevertheless, the international reactionary forces had not the slightest intention of dropping their plans for weakening and destroying the Soviet state, nor did they abandon their efforts to achieve an economic boycott and diplomatic isolation of the USSR, nor give up forming all kinds of anti-Soviet blocs and alliances whose supreme object was a military expedition against the USSR. The imperialist powers were particularly persistent in their efforts to push Germany into a conflict with the Soviet state, and to that end helped her reconstruct her military-economic potential.

The General Crisis of Capitalism: First Phase

The first phase of the general crisis of capitalism was ushered in as the result of the imperialist world war of 1914-18 and the 1917 October Revolution in Russia. This first phase, which lasted to the beginning of the Second World War, may be broken down into three distinct periods, as follows:

First period, 1917-1923. This was a revolutionary period that rocked the very foundation of capitalism. In power and scope this revolutionary upsurge in the countries of Western Europe and Asia exceeded any of the mass movements of the proletariat in the past and did much to undermine the base of bourgeois domination in a number of capitalist countries, even if the bourgeoisie did succeed in defeating the proletariat, for reasons that we shall examine elsewhere.

In the sphere of international relations the most important event of this period was the enactment of the Versailles-Washington system of treaties which consolidated the victory of the Entente powers and the United States in the First World War and legalised the redivision of the world. But this system of treaties had been worked out without the participation of the USSR and was aimed, moreover, precisely against it; and that was one of its gravest defects. This system was not fit to serve as a sound foundation for the post-war development of international relations, and, what is worse, contained within itself the dangerous germ of further international conflicts, planted there by the resolution of many territorial and other problems in line with imperialist policies.

Second period, 1924-1929. This was a period that was marked by a partial stabilisation of capitalism. Its salient features were a temporary ebb of the revolutionary movement and a certain strengthening of the economic and political systems in the capital-

ist countries. In the sphere of international relations this period was marked by the latent development of contradictions within the Versailles-Washington system of treaties, contributing to the erosion of its foundations. Most of the capitalist countries accorded diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union, faced as they were with its incessantly growing power, though the extreme reactionary circles of the Western powers had not renounced their attempts to weaken the Soviet Union and to organise an anti-Soviet bloc.

Third period, 1929-1939. This decade witnessed a setback for the partial stabilisation of capitalism that had been achieved in the second period, and the preparation of a new world war and its outbreak. The unprecedented world economic crisis that crashed in 1929 and lasted until 1933 strained the contradictions within the imperialist system to a breaking point. The decade also witnessed a considerable upswing of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries, as well as in the colonies and dependencies.

During this period the Versailles-Washington treaty system broke down under the pressure of the contradictions from within and the blows of a bloc of the currently most aggressive powers, namely, nazi Germany, militarist Japan and fascist Italy. The ruling circles of Great Britain, France and the United States, anxious to ward off a possible attack by Germany and her allies against themselves and channel it eastward against the Soviet Union, followed a policy of appeasement in regard to the fascist aggressors. It was precisely this policy that led to a war without parallel in history, which brought untold calamities upon the peoples of the world and took a toll of tens of millions of human lives.

First World War: Central Powers Defeated

In August 1918, the armies of the Entente powers, using great numbers of tanks and artillery, unleashed a general offensive on the Western Front. The strong fortifications which had been erected by the Germans were powerless to halt the onslaught, and the German army was rolled back. The common people of Germany and Austro-Hungary, worn out and exhausted by four years of war, were openly indignant over their governments' policy of carrying on a hopeless war.

Under the hammering of the Allied armies the military and political coalition of the Central Powers began to crumble. Bulgaria was the first to surrender, on September 29, and Turkey

pulled out of the war on October 30. An Allied break-through forced the Austro-Hungarian Government to appeal to the warring powers to start peace talks. The multinational Austrian empire began to disintegrate, giving birth to new independent states, namely, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Austria and Hungary. In Germany herself a revolutionary outbreak was gathering. While the German troops were still in occupation of extensive territories, German imperialism stood on the brink of military disaster. The German people had had enough of war, and early in November 1918, a revolution broke out, toppling the Hohenzollern dynasty, which had ruled first Prussia and then all of Germany for over two hundred years. Germany became a republic.

On November 11, 1918, in the forest of Compiègne, near Paris, in the railway coach of Marshal Foch, commander-in-chief of the Allied armed forces, an armistice was signed between Germany and the Allied powers; and the First World War was over.

The governments of the Western powers, visibly alarmed at the revolution in Germany, abandoned any notion of completely disarming the German army and did not insist on marching their armies into Berlin. By agreement with the Allies Germany maintained her troops in the Baltic lands and took an active part in crushing the revolution in that area. In a show of undisguised hostility towards the Soviet state, Ebert's social-democratic government refused to resume diplomatic relations with it, ruptured through the fault of the German side in the beginning of November 1918.

Peace Conference Meets in Paris

The peace conference convened to work out the terms of a peace treaty with Germany and the other defeated states met at Versailles on January 18, 1919. Significantly, meetings were held in the selfsame Hall of Mirrors where the German empire had been proclaimed forty-eight years ago. Twenty-seven Allied or associated states that had taken part in the war were represented. Neither Germany nor her allies were admitted to the conference, whose meetings were later transferred to Paris. Nor was Soviet Russia, though it was a matter of common knowledge that the Russian armies had made a very substantial contribution to the war effort. The imperialist participants in the conference were guided by a common desire to overthrow as soon as possible the Soviet Government in Russia, "strangle Bolshevism in its cradle", and preclude any repetition of the "Russian experiment" elsewhere.

While nearly thirty states took part in the conference, actually the representatives of the three leading imperialist powers took charge of its proceedings. These were: President Wilson of the USA, Prime Minister Lloyd George of Great Britain, and Prime Minister Clemenceau of France. Serious differences arose from the very outset among the great powers regarding the basic issues on their agenda, the problem of Germany, above all.

Speaking at the opening session, President Poincaré of France made it quite plain that France would insist on the partitioning of Germany in order to prevent any renewal of German aggression. The French imperialists meant to weaken their German competitor as much as possible economically, politically and militarily. They insisted, specifically, on the cession of Germany's western regions which would form a so-called Republic of the Rhine, and certain other areas, and the annexation by France of the coal-rich Saar basin. Moreover, France wanted Germany to pay the maximum in reparations for loss and damage caused by her aggression.

Both Wilson and Lloyd George, however, rejected the French attempts at dismembering Germany and utterly sapping her strength. The reasons for this attitude were an open secret: Great Britain and the United States were interested in keeping Germany sufficiently strong to offset French influence in Europe and, which was still more important, in using her as a weapon against the Soviet Republic, of which international imperialism stood in such terror.

Officially, the conference agenda did not list the "Russian problem", that is to say, the problem of how to combat the proletarian revolution in Russia. Nevertheless, it was just this problem that became the pivot of the proceedings as soon as the conference got to work. The imperialist powers vied with one another in the hatred they felt towards the world's first workers' and peasants' state, planning armed intervention in Soviet Russia, providing generous military, material and technical aid to the whiteguard generals, and making meanwhile every effort to strangle the revolutionary movement elsewhere in Europe. No agreement, however, was reached by the imperialists in Paris on joint military action against Soviet Russia. Differences of opinion among the capitalist countries and doubts entertained by the ruling circles of some of them regarding the probable success of any attempts to impose their will on the revolutionary people of Russia at the point of the bayonet were doubtlessly partly responsible for this failure. But another factor was the opposition of the masses in the West to any plans of armed intervention in Soviet Russia. Lloyd George, for one, frankly voiced apprehension that the war the Allies were planning against the Bolshe-

viks might produce unrest in the ranks of organised labour on an unpredictable scale.

Deliberations on the future of the German colonies and the territories belonging to the Ottoman empire produced a sharp conflict among the participants, notably among the great powers. Great Britain, hopeful of taking over the major part of these possessions, developed the greatest activity in this sphere. But neither were the other predatory imperialist powers inclined to relinquish the share in the booty which they considered themselves entitled to get. In the end, the question was settled mainly in favour of Great Britain, France and Japan and to the detriment of the United States.

League of Nations Covenant Worked Out

An important item on the agenda of the Paris conference was the question of the League of Nations, which was to be the world's first international organisation designed to guarantee the nations of the world peace and security. Projects of such an organisation had been worked out in many countries while the war was still on, and the USA, Great Britain and other members of the Entente had been particularly active in this respect. And for good reason: the peoples of the world, plunged into the inferno of a bloody and destructive war that was taking a toll of millions of lives, resolutely called upon their governments to create a world order that would preclude any possibility of another such calamity in the future. On November 8, 1917, the Soviet Government proclaimed from the rostrum of a Congress of Soviets the history-making Decree on Peace, which represented a new, democratic programme of international relations, a programme which rejected wars of aggression, proclaimed the idea of peace with neither territorial annexations nor indemnities, and called upon all nations to build their relations on the principles of friendship and mutual co-operation. The Soviet proposals met with a downright opposition from the imperialist powers, but the ideas of a stable peace and international security had by then taken a hold on the minds of men the world over. To counteract the Soviet Decree on Peace, the Western powers intensified their efforts to work out a scheme for the League of Nations. Yet each imperialist government—whether British, French or American—while given to a lot of talk about the necessity of maintaining “universal peace” and guaranteeing the security of “all nations”, strove to force upon its partners a project that would primarily serve its own interests and be instrumental in strengthening its own influence.

The United States, which more than any other country in the world had grown stronger and richer as a result of the First World War, openly aspired to a leading role in the matter of establishing the post-war pattern of international relations. These aspirations would be furthered, in President Wilson's opinion, by the draft covenant of the League of Nations which he had submitted to the Paris conference and which he proposed to incorporate in the peace treaty with Germany. However, his plans for setting up an international organisation under the aegis of the United States ran into the opposition of Great Britain and France. Although not rejecting the idea of a League of Nations openly (and having in fact submitted to the conference their own proposals on the subject), the British and French representatives did what they could to hinder the drafting of the covenant, suggested endless addenda and amendments, argued against incorporating the covenant in the text of the peace treaty, and so on. At the same time Great Britain and France could not reach agreement between themselves on certain important provisions of the covenant. A joint Anglo-American draft, agreed upon in unofficial talks, was finally adopted as a basis for the League of Nations covenant to be worked out.

Peace Treaty of Versailles

By the terms of the treaty signed on June 28, 1919, at Versailles, Germany was to return to France the region of Alsace-Lorraine, which she had occupied in 1871. While the ownership of the Saar coal-mines was transferred to France, the district itself was to be governed by the League of Nations for a period of fifteen years, upon the expiration of which a plebiscite was to decide its future. Belgium was to get Eupen and Malmédy, and Denmark—Northern Schleswig.

Germany was to recognise the independence of Poland and to return to her some of the occupied areas (such as Poznan and certain districts of Silesia and Pomerania). Other Polish lands, however, were retained by Germany, which could only aggravate the German-Polish contradictions. Gdansk (Danzig) was made a free city to be governed by the League of Nations. Germany was to recognise the independence of Czechoslovakia, to which it was to cede the region of Hulchin. A special provision of the Treaty of Versailles prohibited the accession of Austria to Germany. Altogether Germany lost one-eighth of her pre-war territory and one-twelfth of her population.

Germany was further deprived of all her colonies. Great Britain and France shared both Togo and the Cameroons. The

German possessions in Southwest and East Africa went to Great Britain, Belgium, the Union of South Africa and Portugal. In the Pacific area, Japan took over the Marshall, Mariana and Caroline Islands, and the district of Kiaochow and the German concessions in the Chinese province of Shantung. Other German colonies in the Pacific Ocean were taken over by Australia and New Zealand.

Germany was to pay reparations to the Allies to the amount of 132,000 million gold marks, the sum being set later, in 1921.

The military provisions of the treaty set limits on Germany's armed forces. Conscription was to be abolished and the numerical strength of the Reichswehr, a volunteer army, was not to exceed 100,000. Germany was prohibited from possessing submarines, heavy artillery or an air force.

Incorporated in the peace treaty was the covenant of the League of Nations. The covenant proclaimed lofty and noble aims, such as: a guarantee of peace and international security; the development of friendly relations among states; the peaceful settlement of international conflicts; the use of sanctions against states guilty of aggression; etc. The subsequent activities of the League bore witness, however, to the fact that the leading imperialist powers—the very ones that had created the League—never really intended it to be an effective instrument for strengthening peace or developing international co-operation. As a matter of fact for a few years after its creation the League was an important centre of the military and diplomatic war waged by the Western imperialist powers against the world's first socialist state. In later years the League of Nations, kowtowing before the Anglo-French ruling circles who called the tune in that organisation, stood out against accepting the co-operation of the Soviet Union.

Moreover, the League soiled its reputation by supporting the shameful system of colonialism. Apprehensive of causing worldwide indignation, Great Britain, France, Japan and the other imperialist powers did not dare to openly annex the colonial possessions of which they had deprived Germany and Turkey. Arguing that the peoples of these territories were as yet incapable of governing themselves the British and the French resorted to the League of Nations mandate system to govern these former German and Turkish possessions, taking the function of "mandatory powers" upon themselves. The mandate system was nothing but a thinly veiled attempt to perpetuate colonialism in a slightly refurbished form.

Lenin called the Treaty of Versailles a predatory instrument. It had nothing to do with the fine words said by the diplomatists of the Entente powers about a "fair peace"; it was the dictate

of the winner to the loser, like that of the German imperialists to Soviet Russia at Brest-Litovsk in 1918. The Treaty of Versailles placed Germany in an inequitable position, provoking deep resentment among the German people, which later put a trump card into the hands of the German nazis in their struggle against the bourgeois-democratic regime in Germany.

In 1919-20 peace treaties were concluded with Germany's former allies, namely, Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary and Turkey. Repeating basically the Versailles pattern, they legalised the territorial adjustments following the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires and the formation of new states. Like the Treaty of Versailles, the treaties with Germany's erstwhile allies constituted a gross violation of the vital interests of the nations directly concerned. Far from promoting a normalising of international relations in Central and Southeastern Europe, they continued to be for years a dangerous source of tension in these relations.

A new redivision of the world was also to be completed in the Far East. A nine-power conference was convened to that end on the initiative of the United States, comprising the United States, Great Britain, Japan, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Portugal and China. It opened in Washington, in November 1921. The United States, relying on its increased economic and financial might, sought to consolidate its dominance in the Pacific area and the Far East. Another US objective was a revision of certain decisions of the Paris conference which it considered contrary to its interests (as, for instance, the decision to recognise Japan's "rights" to the Shantung peninsula).

The decisions made in Washington (the nine-power treaty on policies in regard to China, the five-power treaty on the restriction of naval armaments, and some others) favoured, above all, the interests of the United States and served to weaken the position of Japan. While the Washington treaties did contain certain concessions to China, which the imperialist powers had been compelled to make in view of the growing national liberation struggle of the Chinese people, they nevertheless ran counter to the vital interests of the latter and were therefore incapable of promoting lasting peace in the Far East.

Following the example of the Versailles "appeasers", the sponsors of the Washington conference saw to it that the Soviet Government was not admitted, though the conference took up issues which directly affected the interests of the Soviet state.

The system of international relations established by the peace treaties with Germany and her allies in Europe and by the Washington treaties on Far Eastern issues was profoundly reactionary and imperialistic: glib and flowery phrases about "common



- State frontiers in 1914
- State frontiers as on July 24, 1923 (at conclusion of Treaty of Lausanne)
- States which emerged as a result of the disintegration of Austria-Hungary
- Territories ceded
- ===== by Germany under Treaty of Versailles of June 28, 1919
- ||||| by Austria under Treaty of Saint-Germain of September 10, 1919
- ////// by Bulgaria under Treaty of Neuilly of September 27, 1919
- by Hungary under Treaty of Trianon of June 4, 1920
- Free cities
- ==== Pechenga (Petsamo) region ceded by Russia to Finland under Treaty of October 14, 1920
- Curzon Line
- Frontiers between Soviet Russia and Poland as laid down by the Riga Treaty of March 18, 1921
- ////// Bessarabia seized by Rumania in January 1918
- ////// Wilno district seized by Poland from Lithuania in October 1920
- Figures indicate:
- 1 Schleswig
- 2 districts of Eupen and Malmedy
- 3 Burgenland
- 4 Transcarpathian Ukraine
- 5 Bukovina
- 6 Istria
- 7 Kraina
- 8 Hercegovina

Europe under Treaties of 1919-23

interests", "peace" and "international co-operation", which abounded in the body of the Versailles and other similar treaties, served as a smoke-screen to conceal the thoroughly selfish, imperialist interests of the predatory powers that came out victorious in the clash with their rivals.

As a consequence of the Treaty of Versailles the contradictions between the victors and the vanquished were to continue for years to come. Yet Germany and the other defeated countries were not the only marks aimed at by the Versailles system. That system was also aimed at the Soviet state. The Western powers hoped to be able in due course of time to prod Germany into an armed conflict with the USSR and also have her strangle the revolutionary movement in Europe. With this in mind, they refrained from destroying militarism and the armaments industry in defeated Germany, and winked at her systematic infraction of the military provisions of the Treaty of Versailles and her surreptitious rearming. This made it easier to prepare for a war of revenge which had begun to haunt the dreams of the German militarists the day following the signing of the Treaty of Versailles.

A *cordon sanitaire* was established all the length of the Soviet frontier. It was made up of minor countries with reactionary regimes, subservient to the influence of the Western powers. The Anglo-Franco-American reactionaries meant these countries to constitute a "barrier against communism" and a springboard for an attack on Soviet Russia.

One in their hatred of the world's first socialist state, the victor powers were yet unable to see eye to eye on quite a number of international issues. Great Britain and France were continuously vying for supremacy in Europe, and French plans for sapping further Germany's strength and subjecting her to French domination were running into strong opposition on the part of the British. The United States, who failed in its efforts to prevent Great Britain from strengthening her positions in the Middle East, France in Europe and Japan in the Pacific, refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles and the covenant of the League of Nations. Sharp differences cropped up between Italy, which felt that she had been cheated of her share of the "plunder", and the other leading Entente powers.

The authors of the Versailles system kept saying that it would end wars for all time. As a matter of fact, however, it was precisely at Versailles that further wars for a redivision of the world were made inevitable.

Chapter Three

BUILDING SOCIALISM IN THE USSR

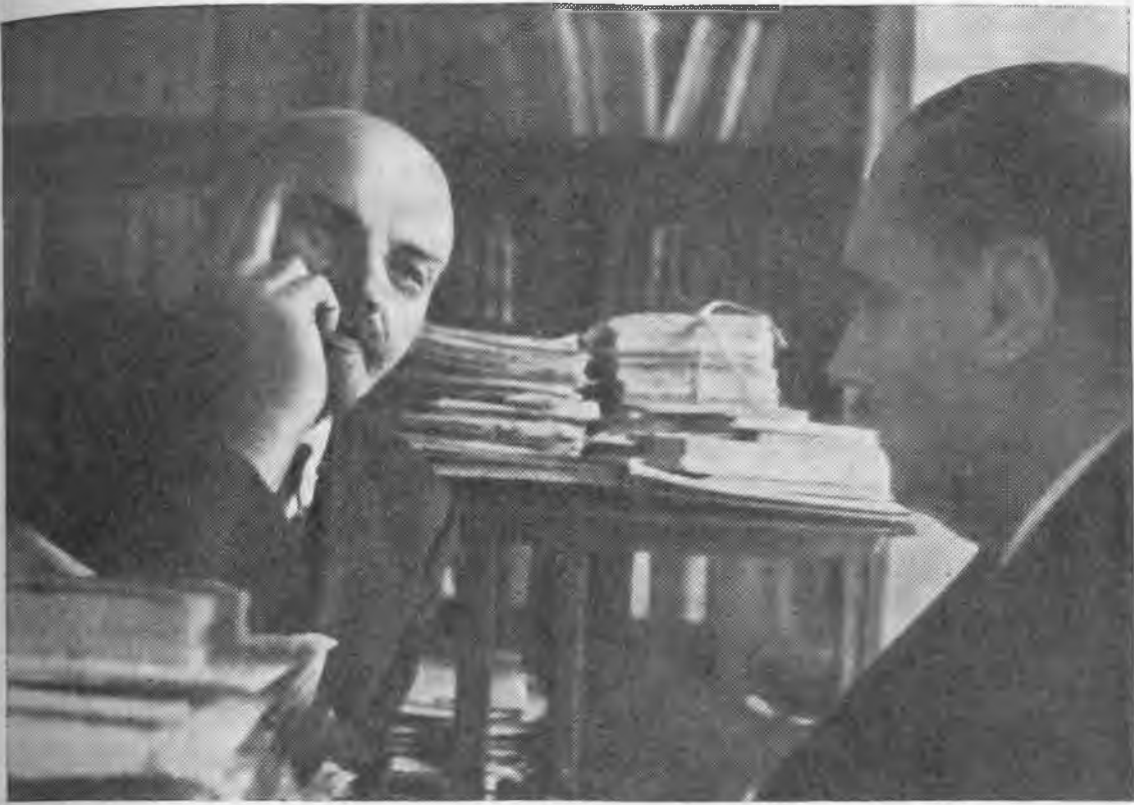
ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Post-War Dislocation

H. G. Wells, the well-known English writer, made a trip to Russia in the autumn of 1920, which resulted in a book which he called *Russia in the Shadows*. An English or American reader could hardly picture to himself, wrote Wells, the devastation and poverty which prevailed in Russia. And that was the bitter truth, for the country did lie in ashes and ruins. The decrease in population over the period of the First World War and the Civil War that followed topped the 20,000,000 figure. The 1920 output of heavy industry was but one-seventh of that of 1913, the output of cotton textiles was back where it was in the middle of the 19th century and that of cast-iron—200 years ago. Transportation had broken down. Agricultural production was down to half of what it used to be. There was a critical shortage of the barest necessities.

This appalling destruction and devastation must be ascribed to international imperialism and the counter-revolution at home. Wells did not share the principles and aspirations of the Bolsheviks, but he was fair, and he was not going to conceal the truth; and this is what he told his readers: "And this spectacle of misery and ebbing energy is, you will say, the result of Bolshevik rule! I do not believe it is." "...Bolshevik government in Russia is neither responsible for the causation nor for the continuance of these miseries." "It was not communism that plunged this huge, creaking, bankrupt empire into six years of exhausting war. It was European imperialism. Nor is it communism that has pestered this suffering and perhaps dying Russia with a series of subsidised raids, invasions, and insurrections, and inflicted upon it an atrocious blockade. The vindictive French creditor, the journalistic British oaf, are far more responsible for these deathbed miseries than any communist."¹

¹ H. G. Wells, *Russia in the Shadows*, New York, 1921, p. 36.



V. I. Lenin conversing with H. G. Wells, English author (1920)

In addition to the economic difficulties there were difficulties of a political nature. Now that the Civil War was over and the danger that the landlords might come back had passed, the peasants began to openly show their resentment of the surplus appropriation system which required them to deliver surplus grain to the government. Demands were voiced that this system should be ended and that they, the peasants, should be free to sell their surplus grain in the market, using the money thus earned to buy manufactured goods.

Peasant discontent with the surplus appropriation system was used by the Socialist-Revolutionaries who organised kulak uprisings in various localities, which were supported by rather numerous groups of middle peasants. More dangerous than all others was the revolt at Kronstadt in February 1921, where the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had succeeded in instigating some unenlightened elements of the Baltic Fleet sailors to action.

The grave difficulties caused by the war bred discontent among a section of workers as well. This, too, was made use of by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who strove to provoke strikes. To make matters worse many workers were going to the country to make a living and taking to handicrafts inasmuch as most factories were idle, and this process of dispersal of the working class presented a very real danger.

Planning Russia's Economic Reconstruction

Such were the exceptional hardships and difficulties that the Soviet people had to face when it turned to the work of peaceful construction. By the time the Civil War ended a vast programme of economic revival on the basis of nation-wide electrification was already in existence. It had been worked out in 1920 by a special commission made up of prominent experts in energetics, economists and other members of the technological intelligentsia and headed by G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, specialist in energetics, old Party member and Lenin's personal friend, who, in 1921, was put in charge of the State Planning Commission. The electrification plan was adopted by the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets in December 1920. It provided for the construction in the span of from ten to fifteen years of thirty large power plants with an aggregate capacity of 1,500,000 kw, that is to say, one and a half times more than that of all the power plants built in previous years. It also provided for a re-equipment of existing industrial plants, further development of industry with special emphasis on heavy industry, that is, metallurgy, engineering, etc. In short, the plan envisaged the development of a material and technical basis of a socialist society.

The vast scope of the plan astounded even H. G. Wells, author of fantastic tales that he was. "Can one imagine," he said, "a more courageous project in a vast flat land of forests and illiterate peasants, with no water power, with no technical skill available, and with trade and industry at the last gasp?" He referred to Lenin as the "Dreamer in the Kremlin" and said that he had "succumbed at last to a Utopia, the Utopia of the electricians". But he was greatly mistaken, for Lenin's electrification plan was implemented ahead of schedule.

New Economic Policy Adopted

The most urgent task that the Soviet state had to face when it turned to the work of peaceful construction was to establish proper economic relations between town and country, which had been sadly lacking during the years of the Civil War. No recovery or development of the national economy was possible until this problem was solved. It was necessary to evolve an economic policy that would help accomplish that all-important task.

Working on the fundamental principles of the new policy, Lenin subjected to a painstaking analysis the measures taken by

the Soviet Government up to date in the economic field. He talked with workers and peasants and read with diligent attention letters addressed by peasants to the newspaper *Bednota* (*The Indigent*) in order to sound out the needs and general frame of mind of the people. Lenin considered these peasants' letters to be genuine human-interest documents. The material he was able to assemble helped him find the right solution to the problem of drafting the new economic policy and outlining ways and means to implement it.

The first step, under the New Economic Policy, was to abolish the surplus appropriation system and to impose on the peasants a fixed tax in kind. A decision to that effect was made by the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921, and subsequently by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. The total collections under the taxation scheme were nearly 50 per cent less than those under the surplus appropriation system. The tax was assessed proportionately to property ownership, that is, indigent peasants paid nothing, middle-class peasants paid a moderate amount, and the kulaks a greater amount. Surplus produce remaining after payment of tax could be freely sold in the market. Trade, then, was to be the main factor in the economic relations between town and country. Private trade was permitted, and state and co-operative trade began to develop.

Introduction of the tax in kind on farm produce and permission to sell surplus produce in the market offered the peasantry a greater incentive to increase their output, which was in the interests of the peasants themselves and the society alike.

The government encouraged and stimulated the organisation of various forms of rural co-operation on a strictly voluntary basis. Government loans were made available to co-operatives, and tax exemptions allowed. Co-operatives gradually began to play an important role in the development of peasant farms and the establishment of close economic relations between town and country.

In line with its policy of accelerating industrial reconstruction and the production of more and more consumer goods, the government concentrated efforts and means on the revival of the major industrial plants, while leasing many of the smaller enterprises to co-operatives and private individuals. Some industrial plants were leased on a concession basis to foreign capitalists. Private individuals were permitted to build small factories.

Management of the state-owned industry was reorganised, excessive centralisation was done away with, and individual enterprises began to be shifted from a government subsidy to a self-supporting basis. Extraordinary methods designed to supply industry with labour were discontinued (as, for instance, labour

conscription or mobilisation) and workers began to be hired through employment bureaus, which kept a record of people seeking employment. The principle of remuneration based on quantity and quality of work done was introduced, and this supplied the workers with an incentive to improve their skill and increase their productivity.

The development of trade and the shift to a self-supporting basis in industry called for a stable monetary system. The Civil War, however, had left the country with a totally depreciated currency. To cope with this situation a currency known as "chervonets", 10-ruble notes fully supported by gold, was placed in circulation in 1922, and a reform put through in 1924 served to strengthen the ruble rate of exchange.

Such features as private trade, concessions and the leasing of state-owned enterprises to private individuals were conducive to a certain increase of capitalist elements in the national economy.

This inevitably led to a keen rivalry between the capitalist and socialist elements, each interested in eliminating the other. The key positions in the national economy, however, such as the major and medium-size industrial enterprises, transportation, land, and monopoly of foreign trade, remained in the hands of the Soviet state, which was taking all the necessary steps to strengthen and develop them, while implementing a policy of restriction and gradual elimination in respect of the capitalist elements. The socialist elements were therefore bound to win. The New Economic Policy cemented the economic union of the working class and peasantry, strengthened the Soviet state, contributed to the development of the nation's productive forces along socialist lines, and guaranteed success in the construction of a socialist economy.

Agricultural Recovery

Russia's workers and peasants welcomed the New Economic Policy and went to work enthusiastically on the reconstruction of the national economy. The spring sowing campaign of 1921 was carried out successfully. But the summer brought a disastrous drought in the country's main grain-growing areas—the Volga area, the Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus. In the Volga area, which was especially hard-hit, the crops perished completely. And famine descended on the country.

The Soviet Government took urgent action to ward off starvation by rushing thousands of tons of grain to the stricken areas and organising free meals to feed the starving, the children first and foremost. The public health services worked hard to prevent

any outbreak of epidemics. Throughout the country aid was organised under the slogan "Let Ten Who Have Enough to Eat Feed One Famine Victim!"

An International Workers' Relief Committee was formed abroad, headed by Clara Zetkin, prominent member of the international communist movement. Workers' contributions were used to buy food and medical supplies for the famine victims and to establish several children's homes in the stricken gubernias. A great deal of help came from F. Nansen, the celebrated Norwegian polar explorer, H. Barbusse and A. France, noted French writers, and other progressive Western intellectuals.

This broad relief campaign saved millions of lives. The very successful autumn sowing campaign of 1921 and the bumper crops of 1922 and 1923 helped cope with the after-effects of the drought, replenish the nation's granaries and improve conditions for the peasantry.

The Government gave the peasants permission to lease land, employ paid labour, and choose the form of land tenure they wanted. Measures were taken to accelerate the reconstruction of industrial plants producing agricultural machinery and implements. In 1924, the Putilov Works in Leningrad and the Kharkov Locomotive Works began to build tractors. Large numbers of tractors and farm machines were bought by the Soviet state abroad and sold to the peasants on generous terms. A Central Agricultural Bank was created in 1924, with numerous branch offices, which made credit available to the peasants on easy terms.

In 1923 peasants encountered difficulties in marketing their produce. Grain prices experienced a sharp drop while prices on manufactured goods, which were still in short supply, rose, on the contrary. As a result there was discontent among the peasantry.

Resolutely attacking these economic difficulties, the Soviet Government lowered prices on manufactured goods and raised the prices it paid for grain and other agricultural produce. The country began to export grain abroad. Recovery in agriculture picked up speed, and may be said to have been accomplished, in the main, before the close of 1925.

Industrial Recovery

The reconstruction of factories, mines, power plants and so on proceeded at an ever increasing pace, so that the aggregate output of state-owned enterprises for 1923 was more than triple that of 1920.

This reconstruction of industrial facilities managed by the state proceeded according to a programme. Priority was given

to the largest and most important plants, where equipment, raw materials, fuel and labour were methodically transferred from plants temporarily laid up.

A piece-work wage system was introduced in state-owned enterprises, that is to say, pay increased proportionately to the increase in productivity and the higher skill required by the job. Outstanding work meant money premiums and honorary titles and medals which were introduced especially for this purpose at that time (the title of Hero of Labour and the Order of the Red Banner).

Realising their responsibility for the operation of state-owned enterprises, leading workers searched for ways and means to accelerate their reconstruction and further development. Production conferences, initiated in 1923, became increasingly useful, for they afforded leading workers and engineers an opportunity to discuss together important production problems and suggestions on improvement of methods and items of production.

In 1924 and 1925 there developed a very successful movement for higher productivity. Leading workers deliberately set themselves higher output quotas, took on an increasing number of machine tools for simultaneous operation, made efforts to reduce idle time, and took a firm stand against any breaches of labour discipline.

This collective effort on the part of the working class and other improvements in industrial production raised productivity over the year September 1924 to September 1925 by 33 per cent as against the preceding twelve-month period. "Heroic conduct in the field of economics is no different from that displayed by our workers and peasants in battle," said, in 1925, F. E. Dzerzhinsky, chairman of the USSR Supreme Council of the National Economy.

Dzerzhinsky, it should be added, made a valuable contribution to the country's economic recovery. Appointed in 1921 head of the People's Commissariat of Railways, he re-established normal operation on the country's railways. He was appointed chairman of the USSR Supreme Council of the National Economy in 1924. Unfortunately, the gigantic task of economic reconstruction he undertook and his uninterrupted strenuous work as head of the country's security organs undermined his health, and, in 1926, heart failure ended his life. Chairmanship of the Supreme Council of the National Economy was given to V. V. Kuibyshev.

The process of industrial reconstruction was completed in a short span of time, taking only five years. This had been made possible by the heroic effort of the working class and the efficiency of management displayed by the government. This achievement was contrary to the expectations that had prevailed in the

West. United States Secretary of State Hughes, for instance, opined just two years earlier, in 1923, that there was no reason to believe that Russia would be able to recover. That proved to be wishful thinking, however. Russia did get back on its feet, and did so, incidentally, much sooner than many other countries that had fought in the First World War, even though they had suffered less. Thus France, whose industrial output of 1920 was 62 per cent of that of 1913 (in Russia the relative figure was 14 per cent), took six years to reach her pre-war level, and Germany nine.

An all-important factor in the acceleration of industrial recovery and subsequent development of the Soviet Republics was their voluntary unification in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics towards the close of 1922.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS: A MULTINATIONAL STATE

Soviet Form of Government— Basis of Union

In the history of the human race there have been many states that were conglomerations of peoples, such as the vast empires of Antiquity, Napoleon's empire, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the British and Russian empires. All of these states had been created, as a general rule, by conquests and the subjugation of many peoples by the ruling circles of some one people. To maintain its domination this ruling minority followed a policy which the Romans defined by the motto "Divide and Rule", that is, it set such conquered peoples against one another, prevented their association, and so kept them from joining forces to fight their common enemy. Such was the case with the Russian empire of the bourgeoisie and the landed gentry. And it made it easier for the Russian monarchy to maintain its domination over the numerous non-Russian peoples, and also the Russian workers and peasants.

The Soviet form of government, that is government of and by the people, is profoundly international in its essence. The Soviet Government is vitally interested in the unification of all peoples, of the working people of all nationalities, since that is the basis of its existence. "We do not rule by dividing, as ancient Rome's harsh maxim required, but by uniting all the working people with the unbreakable bonds of living interests and a sense of class,"¹ wrote Lenin. The Soviet form of government has united

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 480.

a multitude of peoples to create the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a voluntary union of sovereign Soviet Republics enjoying equal rights, including the right of secession. And if none has elected to date to exercise that right the reason is that membership in the Union is to the advantage of each and every republic.

Unification Movement Among Soviet Republics

The Soviet Union was formed late in 1922, after the various Soviet Republics had existed for five years as separate independent states. The experience of those five years and the pattern of mutual relations that had developed among these republics convinced them of the necessity of unification and led them to take that step. This is the way it came about.

On the basis of the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia published by the Soviet Government on November 15, 1917, many peoples of the former Russian empire proclaimed themselves independent Soviet Republics. These were: the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Azerbaijan, Armenian and Georgian Republics. They were accorded solemn recognition by the Government of the Russian Soviet Republic headed by Lenin. In January 1918, the Russian Republic proclaimed itself a Federative Republic, within which in the early years of its existence there emerged a number of autonomous republics and regions, such as the Tatar, Bashkir, Turkestan and Karelian republics, each with its legislative and executive bodies. Autonomous regions emerged likewise in the Azerbaijan and Georgian Republics.

Thus the numerous peoples who lived under tsarist oppression came to acquire national statehood only with the establishment of the Soviet system of government.

As soon as they acquired the status of national Soviet Republics these republics found themselves in mortal danger due to the intervention and the Civil War launched jointly by the foreign imperialists and the counter-revolutionaries. Salvation lay in a military alliance of the republics, and such an alliance was duly formed in the summer of 1919. It came to play an important role in maintaining the independence of a majority of the Soviet Republics, with the exception of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, where the Soviet administration was overthrown by the local counter-revolutionary forces, with the aid of foreign armed forces, which proved decisive. The lessons of the Civil War showed the Soviet Republics the necessity of maintaining their military alli-

ance even in times of peace as a guarantee against any new foreign invasion attempt.

When the country turned to the work of peaceful construction economic relations, economic mutual aid among the independent Soviet Republics came increasingly to the fore. This aid was needed above all by the economically backward republics and those that had been particularly hard-hit during the foreign incursions and the Civil War as situated in the outlying areas. They obtained this aid from the Russian Soviet Republic, to which they turned as being the biggest and economically most developed. At the close of 1920 and during the first few months of 1921 treaties with the Russian Republic were concluded by all of the Soviet Republics, providing for both a military alliance and an economic union. These treaties served to develop economic co-operation among them in scope and volume, this co-operation being based on the division of labour and a common network of means of communication which had taken shape before the Revolution, when the republics were integral elements of the Russian empire.

Joint action by the Soviet Republics in the sphere of diplomacy had been taken on several occasions while the Civil War was still in progress, but the necessity of a united diplomatic front became particularly felt when it was over, when diplomatic and economic contacts were initiated with the capitalist countries and when the governments of the leading capitalist powers shifted their main effort in their struggle against the Soviet Government into the diplomatic and economic spheres.

The convention of a general European financial and economic conference at Genoa in 1922 prompted the Soviet Republics to conclude a diplomatic alliance with Russia, authorising the Russian delegation to represent and protect their interests at the conference. This diplomatic alliance operated at the Lausanne Conference (1922-23) as well, where the Russian delegation took care of the interests of all the Soviet Republics.

Formation of the USSR

There existed, thus, among the Soviet Republics a military alliance, an economic union, and a diplomatic union, based on treaties. Yet their insufficiency and lack of precision were becoming increasingly apparent. Regulations governing the relations between supreme government bodies lacked explicitness and there was insufficient co-ordination in the work of the planning and financial bodies, which impeded economic development. This was chiefly a matter of concern to the smaller, backward repub-



Landless peasant receiving title to land and cattle (Ferghana region, 1925)

lics, who were the first, accordingly, to raise the question of a closer union of the Soviet Republics.

The formula for a union that would be in the best interests of all the members was not discovered right away. Some people in the Party and Government suggested bringing all the independent Soviet Republics into the Russian Federation as autonomous Republics. The defect of that scheme lay in the fact that it could infringe upon the sovereign rights of the republics.

Having revealed the fallacy of the above-mentioned scheme, Lenin urged the creation of a new union state founded on the principle of complete equality. The republics entering into the union would transfer to the union state some of their sovereign rights, primarily in the sphere of foreign affairs, national defence, finance, and national economic planning. They would retain full and equal sovereignty in the sphere of education, public health, social security, domestic affairs, etc. All-Union affairs would be put in the charge of all-Union legislative and executive bodies. Every republic that entered the Union would retain the right of secession.

Lenin's proposal evoked an enthusiastic response among the masses of all nationalities. For several months the issue was discussed at congresses of Soviets, Party congresses, and working people's meetings. A special commission including representatives

from all of the republics drafted the texts of a Declaration and a Treaty on the unification of all the Soviet Republics in a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

On December 30, 1922, there was convened in Moscow a congress of Soviets attended by delegations from the Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian Republics and from the Transcaucasian Federation, which had been formed earlier that year by the Azerbaijan, Armenian and Georgian Republics. The congress adopted an historic resolution creating the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and approved the relative Declaration and Treaty. These documents became the basis of the Constitution of the Soviet Union, which was later drafted by a special commission, carefully studied in the various republics and finally adopted in January 1924, by the Second USSR Congress of Soviets.

The Constitution fully protected the rights of the Union and the interests of the member republics. A special Soviet of Nationalities within the supreme legislative organ of the Union was called upon to represent the special interests of the member republics. The Constitution reserved to every republic the right freely to secede from the Union and proclaimed unrestricted admission into the Union of all Soviet Republics, both now existing and any that may subsequently emerge. Many Soviet Republics which came into existence at later dates availed themselves of this right.

New Republics Form and Adhere to the USSR

There existed in Soviet Central Asia at the time the USSR was being formed, besides the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, the People's Soviet Republics of Bukhara and Khoresm. They did not, at the time, adhere to the Soviet Union, because they were not then socialist republics. Both subsequently elected to follow the socialist way of development, Khoresm in the autumn of 1923 and Bukhara a year later.

It was now both possible and necessary to create national Soviet states in Central Asia. Hitherto the Uzbek, Turkmen and Tajik peoples were divided between three states, namely the Turkestan ASSR, the Bukhara SSR and the Khoresm SSR. That was a vestige of the old tsarist colonial policy. In the autumn of 1924 territorial adjustments were made, on the initiative of the peoples of Central Asia, based on a national criterion, which resulted in the emergence of the following republics: the Uzbek SSR, comprising the vast majority of the Uzbek people; the

Turkmen SSR, comprising practically all of the Turkmen people; the Tajik Autonomous Republic within the framework of the Uzbek SSR; and several separate autonomous regions. The Bukhara SSR, Khoresm SSR and Turkestan ASSR were dissolved.

In February 1925, the congresses of Soviets of the Uzbek and Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republics adopted resolutions on their entry into the USSR, and their appeals were met on May 13, 1925, by the Third All-Union Congress of Soviets. In 1929 the Tajik ASSR, which had by then achieved notable success in the field of economic and cultural construction, proclaimed itself an independent Soviet Socialist Republic and gained admission into the Union as a Union Republic. In 1936, the Kazakh and Kirghiz Republics, hitherto autonomous republics within the Russian Federation, and also Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, till then members of the Transcaucasian Federation, proclaimed themselves independent republics and entered the USSR as Union Republics. The Moldavian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian Soviet Socialist Republics gained admission into the USSR in 1940.

Broad prospects of all-round development now opened up before the peoples that had joined to form a union state. The formation of the USSR strengthened the ties of friendship and brotherhood among these peoples and made available to them additional sources of strength and means to be used to reconstruct the country's economy and build socialism.

LENIN'S BEHESTS

Lenin's Illness

The creation of the USSR was destined to be the last great achievement under Lenin's direct guidance. The immense work, beyond all ordinary human capacity, that he had undertaken and carried through had broken his health.

The grievous wounds inflicted by two poisoned bullets in August 1918, had also had their effect. From the winter of 1921 onward his doctors had repeatedly had to induce him to set his work aside and go off for a brief rest.

In May 1922, he suffered cerebral haemorrhage, resulting in some loss of function of the right arm and leg and some impairment of speech. He underwent treatment and rested at Gorki, near Moscow. Upon recovery, in the early part of October 1922, he returned to Moscow and resumed his work. After two and a half months of strenuous work symptoms of serious overstrain reappeared.

December 12, 1922, was Lenin's last day of work in his Kremlin office. A relapse of his ailment occurred on the night of December 15, which laid him up for a lengthy spell. Lenin fully realised that his ailment could at any moment result in death. This realisation prompted him, as soon as he had somewhat improved, that is, towards the close of 1922 and in early 1923, to dictate a number of letters and articles in which he reviewed and summed up the construction of socialism in the USSR and outlined the tasks that lay ahead. These letters and articles were the political last will and testament that he left his Party and his people.

Industrialisation: Economic Foundation for Socialism

Lenin urged developing the country into a mighty industrial power capable of providing all the various branches of the national economy with modern equipment and assuring the country's economic independence and defence capacity; for this he considered to be an all-important precondition, from an economic point of view, in building socialism. He particularly emphasised the importance of developing heavy industry, the production of means of production, and the role of nation-wide electrification.

Lenin drew attention to the tremendous difficulties associated with the accomplishment of this task. The economic history of the capitalist states showed that backward countries had been able to develop their heavy industry only with the help of long-term and extensive borrowing from the more developed states. The Soviet state had not had recourse to such borrowing, he pointed out, and had thus to finance the development of its heavy industry out of its own savings. It was necessary to cut costs as much as possible by staff reductions in the apparatus of government and even at the expense of schools, but funds had to be found in the state budget for the reconstruction and development of heavy industry. "If we are not able to provide them," wrote Lenin, "we shall be doomed as a civilised state, let alone as a socialist state."¹ He was firmly convinced that the Soviet people would know how to overcome the difficulties and would achieve the country's industrialisation.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 426.

Lenin on Co-operation

Large-scale collective farming was the second important precondition of success in socialist construction, in Lenin's opinion. This, he wrote, should be made as understandable, accessible and advantageous as possible to the working peasants—through co-operation. Co-operatives of the simplest kind should be introduced in rural areas as a first step, for they would offer the peasants definite material benefits, demonstrate the advantage of, and give them training in, collective economic management, and thereby promote a gradual and voluntary association of peasants in large production co-operatives (collective farms or kolkhozes) employing modern machinery and equipment.

Lenin repeatedly warned that "The proletarian state must effect the transition to collective farming with extreme caution and only very gradually, by the force of example, without any coercion of the middle peasant",¹ and that "Associations are only worth-while when they have been set up by the peasants themselves, on their own initiative, and the benefits of them have been verified in practice".² Lenin urged the fullest possible support of the peasant movement to join in co-operatives and all manner of state aid to those who did.

There was yet another precondition that Lenin considered indispensable to the success of socialist construction in the USSR, including a change to large-scale socialist farming. This was a cultural revolution that would completely banish illiteracy, introduce universal compulsory education in the languages of the country's various nationalities, create a genuine intelligentsia of the people, inculcate socialist principles in the people, and raise science, literature and art to the highest level.

Soviet State— Main Tool in Building Socialism

Politically, Lenin pointed out, the most important factor assuring success in the construction of socialism and communism was the Soviet state founded on an indissoluble alliance of workers and peasants, and he called upon the people to unceasingly strengthen this alliance, to cherish it as the apple of their eye. He believed this alliance would guarantee the complete victory of socialism and communism.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 157.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 218.

The power and strength of the Soviet state rests also on friendship, mutual trust and unity among the peoples. Maintenance and incessant development of this friendship was one of the most important requirements for achieving success in socialist construction, Lenin taught.

Lenin considered it highly important to improve the apparatus of government and reduce its overhead expenses, to link it more strongly with the people, to draw the workers and peasants increasingly into state administration. Proper organisation of Party and government control was of the greatest importance in this respect. Lenin suggested that the bodies exercising Party and government control both centrally and locally should be combined, and that all sections of the working people should be induced to participate in their work.

If the Soviet state is to be the main weapon in the hands of the working class in its effort to build socialism, wrote Lenin, it must be headed by the Communist Party—vanguard of the working class; and the Communist Party, if it is to be the directing and guiding force of the Soviet state, must maintain strict unity in its ranks, unceasingly strengthen its links with the masses, teach them and learn from the masses, get millions and tens of millions to take part in the work of communist construction.

Such were the most important directions given by Lenin in respect of the building of socialism in the USSR. Drawing upon the experience already gained in socialist construction Lenin showed that the Soviet Union possessed all that was needed to build a fully socialist society and declared himself deeply convinced that “. . .not in a day, but in a few years—all of us together will fulfil it [the task of building a socialist society—*Ed.*] whatever the cost, so that NEP Russia will become a socialist Russia”.¹

Lenin Gone, His Behests Guide Country

On March 10, 1923, Lenin suffered a third stroke, heavier than before, which resulted in complete impairment of speech and aggravation of paralysis of the right arm and leg. As from March 14 bulletins on his condition began to be published in the newspapers, which were read with great concern by the nation. Letters and telegrams flocked in from all over the country wishing him a speedy recovery.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 443; NEP Russia—Russia in the New Economic Policy period.—*Ed.*

There was some improvement in his condition in May, and he was taken to Gorki. He fought stubbornly to regain his health, and there was marked improvement: he began to walk and read, learned to write with his left hand. On October 18 he came back to Moscow, went to his flat, called at his office in the Kremlin. On the following day he visited the agricultural exposition and then returned to Gorki.

There was universal hope that Lenin would soon be back at work, and when, on January 19, 1924, M. I. Kalinin announced to the delegates at the 11th All-Russia Congress of Soviets that Lenin's treating doctors hoped he might soon be able to resume his duties as head of state there was a storm of applause.

On January 21, however, there came a sudden grave turn for the worse, and at 6:50 p.m. Lenin died of cerebral haemorrhage. Great was the grief of the Soviet people who had lost their beloved leader and friend. "Never since Marx has the history of the great liberation movement of the proletariat produced such a titanic figure as our departed leader, teacher and friend," said the message of the Party's Central Committee to the Party and the people. "All that is truly great and heroic in the proletariat—a fearless mind, a will of iron, unbending, persistent and able to surmount all obstacles, a burning, undying hatred of slavery and oppression, a revolutionary passion that moves mountains, boundless faith in the creative energies of the masses, vast organisational genius—all this found splendid embodiment in Lenin, whose name has become the symbol of the new world from East to West, from North to South."¹

On January 23 the casket with Lenin's remains was brought from Gorki to Moscow and placed in the House of the Soviets, in the Hall of Columns. During the next five days a grieving throng streamed uninterrupted, day and night, past the coffin, workers and peasants, men and women, Red Army men, youngsters. Delegations from all over the country were on their way to Moscow to render homage to the deceased.

On January 26 a special meeting of the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets was convened. M. I. Kalinin, N. K. Krupskaya, J. V. Stalin and Clara Zetkin were among the speakers. On behalf of the workers and peasants, the Communist Party which Lenin had created, they pledged themselves to finish the work he had begun. The Congress adopted a resolution to perpetuate Lenin's memory by changing the name of Petrograd to Leningrad, erecting monuments in the country's leading cities, and publishing Lenin's works. January 21, the day of Lenin's death, was declared a day of mourning. Another resolution carried by the

¹ *Uladimir Ilyich Lenin. A Biography*, Moscow, 1966, pp. 560-61.

Congress was to build near the Kremlin wall and the common graves of those who had fought for the Revolution a mausoleum to contain Lenin's body, which would be open to the people.

The funeral took place on January 27, 1924, at 4 o'clock p.m. There was a five-minute suspension of all activities throughout the country: trains stopped, factories ceased work, locomotive and factory whistles and sirens blew and wailed, as the country mourned the passing of its great leader. All over the world the working class observed a five-minute pause at the hour of the funeral; for the proletariat and the oppressed masses in the capitalist countries also took Lenin's death as a great personal loss.

Meetings and demonstrations in Lenin's memory were organised in many cities the world over. The deep sorrow of the Chinese people is best described by the words of Sun Yat-sen, the prominent Chinese democrat and revolutionary, spoken at a memorial meeting in Canton. "Through the ages of world history," he said, "thousands of leaders and scholars appeared who spoke eloquent words, but these remained but words. You, Lenin, were an exception. You not only spoke and taught us, but translated your words into deeds. You created a new country. You showed us the road of joint struggle. . . . You, great man that you are, will live on in the memories of the oppressed peoples through the centuries."¹

Lenin's death evoked a still closer rallying of Soviet workers round the Communist Party. Tens of thousands of workers filed applications for membership, and the Party Central Committee reacted to this initiative of the leading workers by announcing a membership campaign. In the course of three months over 240 thousand front-ranking workers joined the Party.

If Lenin was dead, his cause was immortal. Led by Lenin's Party and with his teachings to guide it, the Soviet people went on building a new life with all the greater energy and determination, blazing a trail towards socialism for all mankind to follow.

USSR BECOMES INDUSTRIAL POWER

USSR Takes the Path of Industrialisation

There have been milestones on the road of the Soviet people to socialism. One such milestone was the Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party in December 1925. Following Lenin's

¹ *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. A Biography*, Moscow, 1966, p. 564.

behests, the Congress proclaimed industrialisation of the country to be the basic Party line and the principal task of the people.

Historically viewed, the time was ripe for taking up this task. Industrial development was back at the pre-war level by then, though the question could well be asked: was it a level to be taken seriously? The country remained agrarian: agriculture accounted for nearly two-thirds of the output of the national economy, while industry was producing mainly consumer goods. Production of implements and means of production was but poorly developed. Such important industries as the chemical, motor-car, tractor and machine-tool construction, and mechanical engineering were non-existent. Equipment in most industrial plants was obsolete or outworn.

Back in 1917 Lenin wrote: "...either perish or overtake and outstrip the advanced countries *economically as well*."¹ Subsequently he always emphasised that unless Russia created a highly developed large-scale industry, especially a heavy industry, and implemented the electrification plan, she would surely perish as an independent country, to say nothing of building socialism. As soon, therefore, as economic reconstruction became an accomplished fact, the Communist Party announced the commencement of an industrialisation campaign. The aim, as formulated by the Party, was to turn the Soviet Union, hitherto an agrarian country that imported machines and equipment, into an industrial state that produced machinery and equipment. That was a complicated and difficult task. One difficulty was to find the required vast funds at home: the USSR could not expect to obtain large loans abroad, for the capitalist countries practically refused to grant any.

Another difficulty lay in the fact that the industrialisation programme had to be carried out in a relatively short time, for the breathing-spell of peace could be broken by the country's enemies at any moment. Industrial construction had therefore to be pushed as rapidly as possible. To make matters worse, there was an extreme shortage of skilled workers, technicians and engineers. Moreover, among the old specialists quite a few fostered anti-Soviet feelings and instead of contributing to the industrialisation programme did what they could to obstruct, sabotage and wreck the effort.

The Communist Party candidly and openly described these and other difficulties to the people, pointing out at the same time, however, how they could be dealt with. Relatively small groups were discovered within the Party, which either tried to foist upon

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 364.

it the pernicious policy of developing large-scale industry at the expense of the peasantry (Trotsky, Zinoviev, for instance) or opposed rapid industrialisation and the priority development of the heavy industry on which rested the country's defence capacity and independence (as Bukharin and Rykov). These fallacious anti-Leninist policies were rejected by the Party; and the people, putting its trust in the Party, elected to follow the Leninist path it pointed out.

Industrial construction proceeded in accordance with carefully worked out annual and long-term plans. In 1929 the Fifth All-Union Congress of Soviets adopted the First Five-Year Plan for the Development of the National Economy of the USSR. The plan was truly gigantic: it provided for total capital investments 2.5 times greater than over the preceding five years and investments in industry four times greater. Yet the Second Five-Year Plan (1933-37) was even greater, providing for capital investments in the amount of 133,400 million rubles as against 50,500 million of the First Five-Year Plan. As for the Third Five-Year Plan covering the period 1938-42, it surpassed the first and the second taken together. The process of industrialisation, in all its aspects, was directed by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, which detected and identified the difficulties, shortcomings and mistakes unavoidable in so vast an undertaking, rallied the workers, technicians and engineers to deal with them, introduced continuous improvements into industrial management, found additional sources of funds to finance industrial construction, promoted increasingly rapid training of skilled labour and technical cadres, and so on.

Picked Party members and government personnel were assigned to managerial posts in industry. The Supreme Council of the National Economy—the country's highest economic body—was headed, until 1931, by V. V. Kuibyshev, prominent Party member and economic executive. In 1931 he was made head of the State Planning Commission, which now played a much greater role than before, while the post of chairman of the Supreme Council of the National Economy was given to S. Orjonikidze, a remarkable organiser dedicated to the idea of industrialisation. He was well-versed in matters pertaining to the national economy, kept in close contact with various industrial plants and construction projects, and was personally acquainted with many leading workers and technicians. Prominent in the field of business management was A. I. Mikoyan, whose contribution to the development of the food industry and light industry in general was particularly important. In short, the Communist Party produced a great many able industrial organisers, most of whom had started in life as workers.

Financing Industrialisation

The advantages inherent in a planned economy helped the Soviet Government find the funds with which to finance the country's industrialisation. The most important sources of revenue were industry, transportation and trade. Such factors as the continuous growth of productivity and cuts in production costs and overhead expenses served to accelerate the process of accumulation in the national economy. Peasant savings were tapped through taxation and by maintaining prices on manufactured goods at a level slightly above that on agricultural produce. Before the Revolution peasants had to buy or rent land. The Soviet Government saved them this expense by allotting them land free of charge. Taxes, also, were reduced by comparison with pre-revolutionary times. In the light of these facts the Soviet Government found it possible to effect a temporary redistribution of income as between the industrial and agricultural sectors of the national economy, especially since the peasants were extremely interested in the country's industrialisation.

Another important source of funds for industrialisation were private savings, which the government drew upon through savings banks, state loans, state insurance, etc. The First Industrialisation Loan of 1927, issued in the amount of 200,000,000 rubles was subscribed by the population within a fortnight. The Second Industrialisation Loan, issued in 1928 in the amount of 500,000,000 rubles, fared even better. Altogether domestic loans subscribed during the First Five-Year period totalled 5,000 million rubles. These loans accounted for an important share of state revenue in succeeding years as well.

The industrialisation of the country owed much of its success to the state monopoly of foreign trade. Both import and export were planned entirely with a view to contributing to that undertaking. Large quantities of machines, machine tools and equipment were shipped into the country from abroad. Over 7,000 million rubles worth of equipment was imported under the First Five-Year Plan. To pay for these purchases it was necessary to increase the export of such Soviet products as timber, manganese, petroleum and agricultural commodities. The government was obliged to export grain, butter, eggs, etc., even though there were serious food shortages at home at the time. Rationing of bread and other products was introduced. People realised that this was the only way out and were willing to face these shortages in order to hasten the process of national industrialisation which would make the country technologically and economically independent. They knew that the present situation was only temporary.

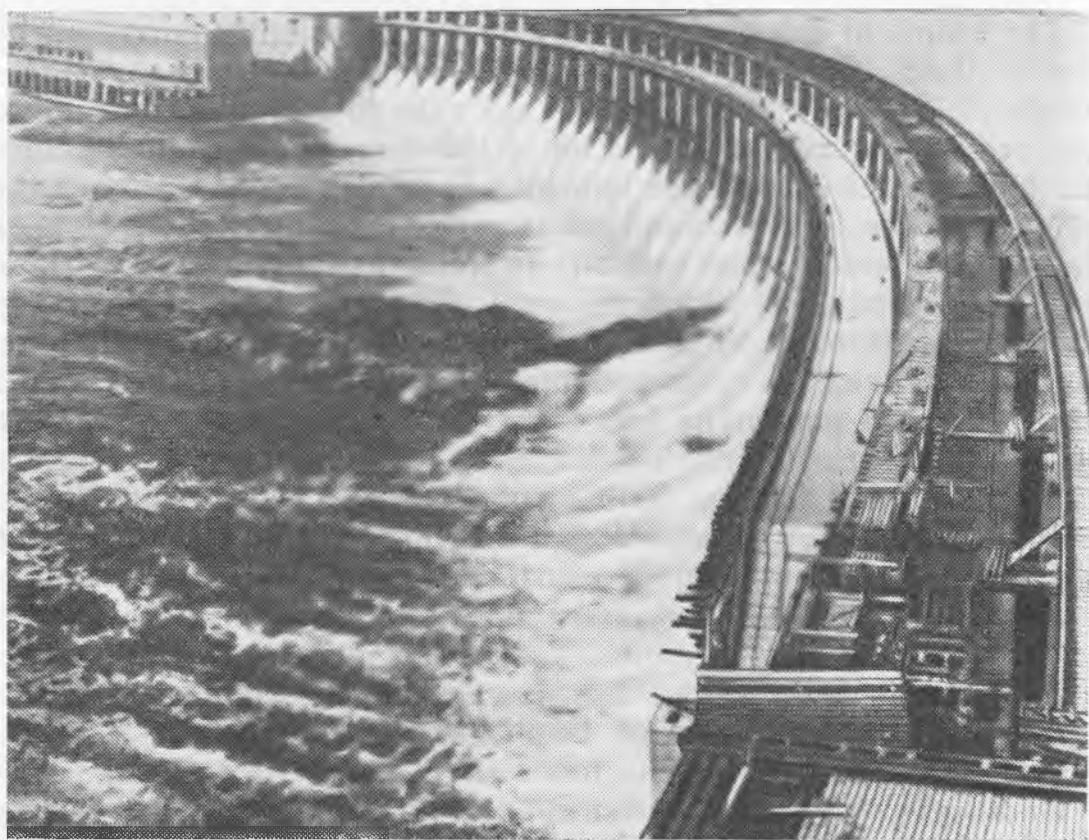
The frame of mind of the workers was eloquently described by one of them as follows: "How are we getting on? Well, it's tough. . . . You ask any woman if it's easy to give birth to a child and you'll hear that there is a lot of suffering to go through before the baby comes. And there is a lot of worries and cares until the baby is on its feet and until it is raised by its mother to be a decent man, or a decent woman. Years and years of hard work go into that. And here we, Russian proletarians, have undertaken to give birth to a new world! And not for ourselves alone, but for all such as you and me. So what would you expect? That it would get on its feet right away? Without any pain or suffering?"

"Take a good look at it: it's young as far as years go, but it stands firmly on its feet. Watch it run, watch it overtake the old world and rebuild it on new lines with its tractor works and iron and steel works."

Vast Scope of Capital Construction

Good progress was made on industrial construction even during the first year (1929) under the First Five-Year Plan. New plants were going up all over the country: tractor works in Stalingrad (now Volgograd) on the Volga, Kharkov and Chelyabinsk; harvesting-combine works at Saratov and Zaporozhye; a huge farm machinery works at Rostov-on-Don; motor-car plants in Moscow and Nizhni-Novgorod (now Gorky); giant metallurgical works at Mt. Magnitnaya in the Urals and Kuznetsk in Siberia; complexes of heavy engineering at Gorlovka, Kramatorsk and Sverdlovsk; chemical works at Berezniki, Solikamsk, and Bobriki near Moscow; the Dnieper hydropower station, biggest in Europe; the Turkestan-Siberian Railway (Turksib), nearly 1,500 kilometres long, etc. Never before had capital construction been undertaken anywhere on so vast a scale. The country had virtually become one huge construction site where work on giant industrial projects went on day and night, the year round. Very little machinery was available in those years; shovel and wheelbarrow were the main tools used by the builders. But the workers worked miracles even with those primitive tools.

The builders of the Stalingrad Tractor Works undertook to complete the project a year ahead of the deadline fixed by the government. They kept their word: the works was commissioned in June 1930. The Turkestan-Siberian Railway, too, was completed a year ahead of schedule and began to handle through traffic in 1930. The builders of the Dnieper power station were



Dnieper power station dam (1932)

in socialist competition with the builders of the Turksib. They set a world record of pouring concrete and were the first ever to carry on this work in winter weather. Under the stimulating effect of socialist competition the Dnieper station began to generate power in 1932, or also a year earlier than scheduled.

Real heroism was displayed by the builders of the giant metallurgical works at Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk, which were to be the largest in Europe. Work on the construction of this new coal and metallurgical base in the East went on even in winter, despite the rigid Siberian frosts. I. P. Bardin, chief engineer of the Kuznetsk metallurgical complex project, recalls those days as follows: "People came flocking from all over the country. Russians, Ukrainians, Kazakhs and many other nationalities worked side by side. The performance of these hitherto illiterate men who had never before laid their eyes on a real industrial plant often attained to epic levels. . . . Excavation labourers sometimes completed ten daily quotas in one shift. Riveting was carried on by the Komsomol members at great heights with the thermometer at 50 degrees below zero. Up to 15 tons of fire-brick were often laid per man per shift. Nothing—neither rain nor blizzard—could

daunt the enthusiasm of the builders inspired by the common will to get the blast-furnace producing cast iron. Construction of the blast-furnace was headed by Party and Komsomol members, and that was enough to guarantee success." The Magnitogorsk works began producing cast iron in February 1932, and the Kuznetsk works in April.

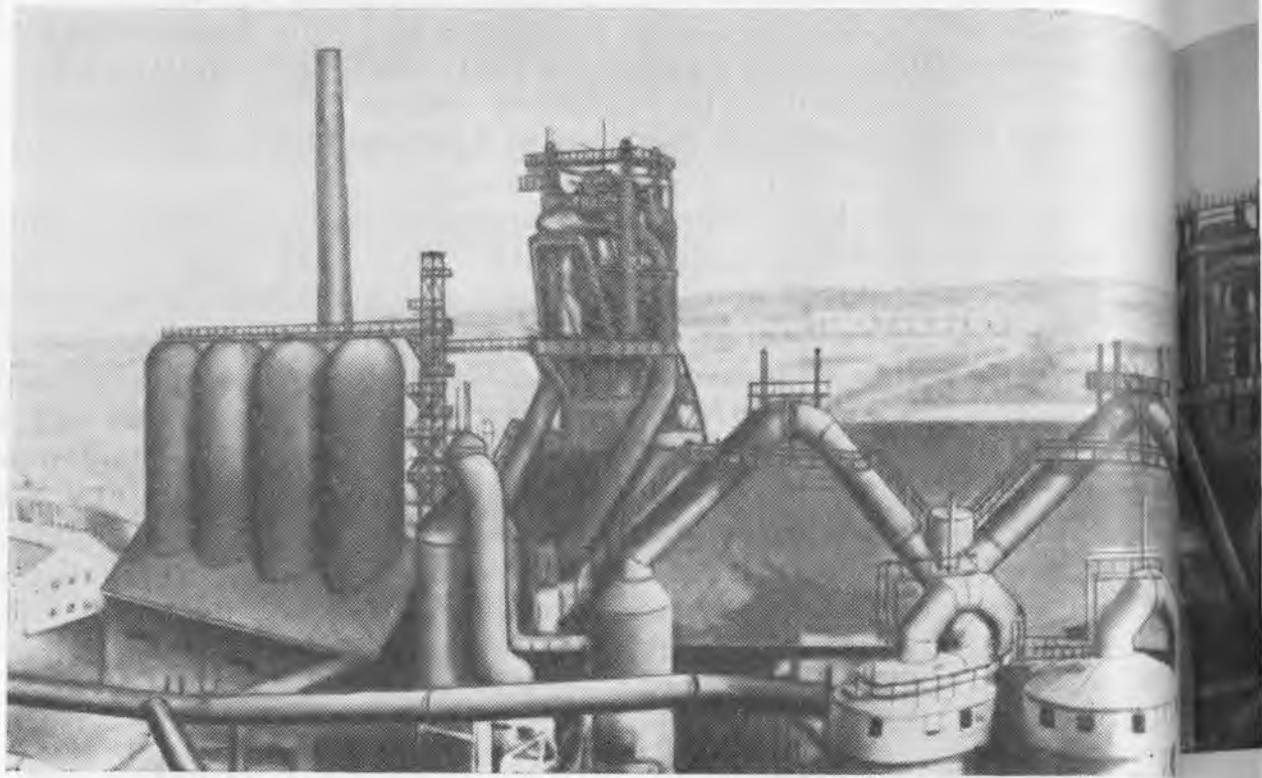
A total of 1,500 important first-class new industrial plants were commissioned under the First Five-Year Plan. Simultaneously, old plants were re-equipped and modernised. Under the Second Five-Year Plan capital construction increased in scope: 4,500 factories and power stations were built and commissioned between 1933 and 1937. During the three and a half years of the Third Five-Year Plan, i.e., between 1938 and 1941, 3,000 new industrial plants were built; so that a total of some 9,000 large plants equipped with the last word in machinery were commissioned during the thirteen pre-war years. A number of entirely new industries were created to produce motor-cars, tractors, chemicals, heavy machinery, machine tools, ball-bearings, harvesting-combines, and many other goods.

Learning to Run the New Plants

Building so great a number of industrial plants in so short a time-span, although a brilliant achievement, was not enough: it was necessary to learn to run them properly, that is, to master the new equipment, to ensure a steady rhythm of work, to operate the machinery at full design capacity. It took some time to achieve this complicated and arduous task, for there was a great shortage of skilled workers, engineers and technicians. Yet the country could not afford to put off construction of new plants while the required technical cadres were being trained. The problem was solved by putting the builders themselves to work learning a new trade, mastering modern machinery.

Meanwhile the Soviet Government did everything in its power to speed up the training of skilled workers. Apprentice training schools were opened at many factories and a wide network of study groups was organised to raise literacy and improve skills. Workers applied themselves with great interest and zeal to the study of machinery and equipment in the knowledge that it saved labour, increased productivity, raised living standards, and generally aided the country's development.

A solution was found to the problem of creating engineering cadres. Many new higher and secondary technical educational institutions were opened during the industrialisation campaign. Thousands of workers were enrolled every year, many of them

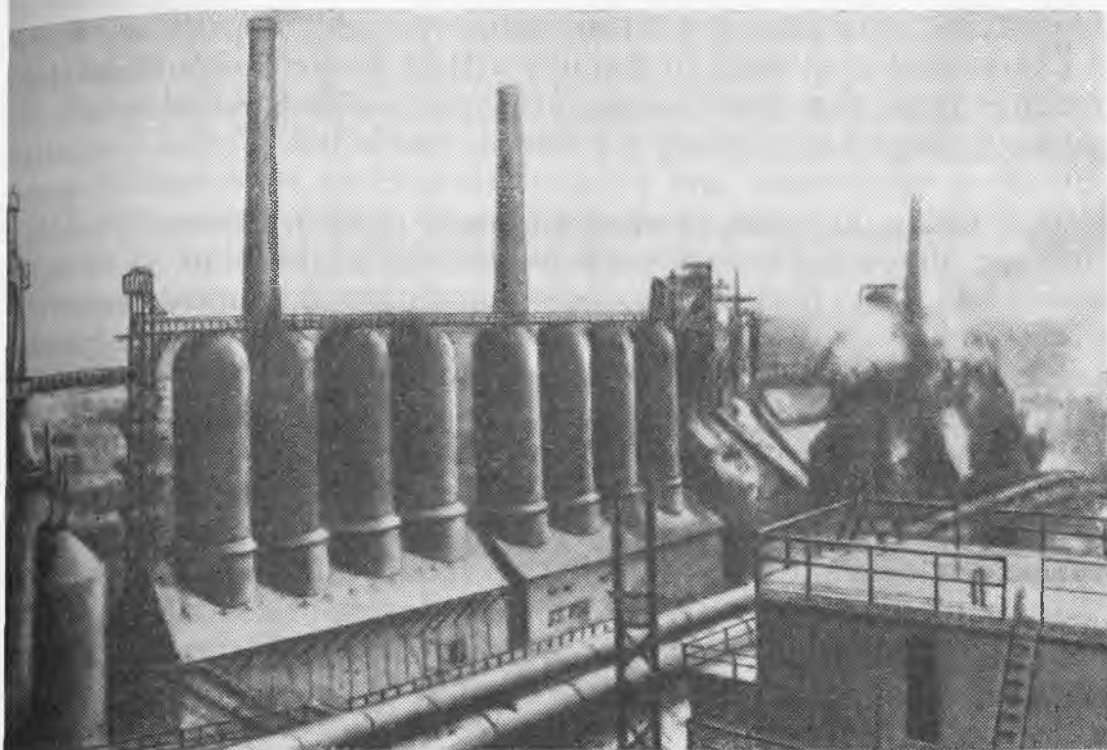


Kuznetsk Metal Works (1934)

were Communists and Komsomol members. The network of workers' day and evening high schools preparing for higher educational institutions was expanded to meet growing need.

The critical shortage of engineering personnel and skilled workers characteristic of the early years of the industrialisation campaign compelled the Soviet Union to invite foreign specialists and highly skilled workers. In the early 1930s these numbered close to 6,000. The vast majority of these complied faithfully with the terms of their contracts and really helped design, build and teach to operate electric power stations, tractor, motor-car and chemical works, etc. Many were awarded Soviet medals and decorations for their useful contribution, as, for instance, Cooper, the American engineer who acted as adviser to the builders of the Dnieper Hydropower Station and was awarded the Order of Lenin. There were, however, some among these foreign specialists who attempted sabotage. Thus, some of the staff of Metropolitan-Vickers, the British concern, were discovered to have organised sabotage at the country's most important power stations.

The country's vast effort in the field of training its own skilled personnel soon made it unnecessary to engage specialists abroad.



Great Feat of the Working Class

The main merit for achieving the industrialisation of the USSR goes to the working class. From the very first day when the Communist Party proclaimed industrialisation a national aim the working class made that historic task their particular concern in the conviction that therein lay the key to overcoming the country's backwardness, strengthening its defence capacity, banishing unemployment, then current, and a basic improvement of the level of living.

Great ideas engender equally great energy. The idea of industrialisation gave rise to a wave of enthusiasm among the people, above all among the workers. It engendered the wide practice of socialist emulation in fulfilling and overfulfilling production plans, which got its start in 1929. January 20, 1929, saw the publication of Lenin's article "How to Organise Competition?", written back in December 1917, in which he emphasised the fact that socialism made it possible, for the first time in history, to actually draw "the majority of working people into a field of labour in which they can display their abilities, develop the capacities, and reveal those talents, so abundant among the people whom capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and

millions". And he concluded by saying: "Now that a socialist government is in power our task is to organise competition."¹

The appeal contained in Lenin's article evoked an enthusiastic response from the country's working people. Individual workers, brigades, shop and factory personnel concluded mutual socialist emulation agreements and pledged themselves to overfulfil production plans, increase productivity and reduce production costs over and above the reductions provided for in the plan. It should be noted that the parties to socialist emulation agreements regarded each other as allies, rather than competitors, and tried to help one another. Leading workers who distinguished themselves in socialist emulation were awarded the honorary title of Shock Worker.

The All-Union Congress of Shock Brigades convened in December 1929, advanced the slogan "Five-Year Plan in Four!", which became the universal slogan of the industrialisation campaign. Worker initiative engendered ever new forms of socialist emulation, such as the movement for drawing up production counterplans based on more efficient operation of equipment, economy of raw materials, etc. Using such methods a number of industries (petroleum production, electro-technical, engineering, confectionery, fish tinning) fulfilled the First Five-Year Plan targets in 1931, or two years ahead of schedule. Industry as a whole fulfilled the plan in four years and three months.

Socialist emulation made new gains under the Second Five-Year Plan. The introduction of modern machinery on an ever increasing scale coupled with the successful mastery of this machinery by the workers contributed to the origination, in 1935, of the remarkable movement of production innovators, that is, workers who strove to attain and did attain productivity levels many times higher than the levels provided for by the plan on the basis of technological quotas. This movement was started by the miners of the Donets Coal Basin and got its name, the Stakhanov movement, from that of Alexei Stakhanov, a miner. On August 31, 1935, Alexei Stakhanov, coalcutter of the Tsentralnoye Irmino Mine, using his air-hammer mined 102 tons of coal in his six-hour shift, or 14.5 times his quota.

Word of the deeds of the Donets miners quickly got around and gave a fresh impetus to efforts to surpass established quotas and raise productivity to a far higher level. Stakhanov's followers strove to achieve high productivity through skilful operation of new equipment and optimum organisation of production, rather than by physical exertion. Alexander Busygin, forgerman of the Gorky Motor-Car Works, forged 1,050 crankshafts in his shift

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 404.

instead of his quota of 675. Evdokia and Maria Vinogradov, Vychuga weavers, began operating 70-100 looms simultaneously instead of 16-24, and later 144 each. In the footwear industry N. Smetanin doubled his output. Engine driver P. Krivonos, of the Donets Coal Basin, began to run his goods trains at double the normal speed.

The Communist Party supported the Stakhanov movement and took steps to make it universal. Industrial productivity started increasing at a rapid rate. By the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period it had increased by 82 per cent instead of 63 per cent as provided for by the plan, which made it possible to fulfil the production plan nine months ahead of schedule. This was a new and important achievement of the Soviet working class.

The proletariat of the capitalist countries watched with admiration the achievements of Soviet workers; for them, the Stakhanov movement testified to the great advantages of the socialist way of working. Any similar movement was out of the question in the capitalist countries, for it would only have boomeranged against them. The thought was aptly expressed in a letter written to Stakhanov by a group of Belgian miners. Asking him to share his experience with them they wrote: "We shall never think of applying your method here. Unemployment is high in the royal mines. By mining double his usual quota each of us would draw the fire on his comrade."

A vivid description of the Stakhanov movement was given by Romain Rolland, the celebrated French writer. "This signifies, evidently, a great awakening of the human consciousness in the field of endeavour. It is possible only in a genuinely socialist society, where the worker feels that he is the boss and not an object of exploitation; where he works not for the enrichment of a class that is hostile to him and is concerned solely with the problem of getting the greatest possible benefit out of him, but for the society as a whole; where the worker rightfully rates the highest. That feeling of dignity and pride is truly thrilling!"

New forms of socialist emulation were discovered under the Third Five-Year Plan. One such form was the drive to secure the simultaneous operation of the greatest possible number of machines under the supervision of one worker, which served to rapidly increase productivity. Another movement which won wide support was for the acquisition by workers of additional trades or skills. A maintenance fitter or plumber, for instance, could substitute for an electrician, or a turner could himself attend to the maintenance, repair and adjustment of his lathe, etc.

In short, the working class of the Soviet Union worked with a will to strengthen the industrial might of their country.

The Soviet Union Becomes a Great Industrial Power

In a brief space of time, unparalleled in history, the USSR made a leap from a state of backwardness to economic progress, it accomplished in fact an industrial revolution that radically changed the country's look. Gone for ever was her age-old economic backwardness. The gross output of large-scale industry in 1940 was 12 times that of 1913. Industry now came to play a dominant role in the national economy, accounting for over three-fourths of the gross national product, while heavy industry accounted for over two-thirds of the total industrial output. The most striking results were achieved in the field of engineering, where the output of 1940 was 35 times that of 1913. The giant strides of the machine-building industry made it possible to effect plant modernisation in all branches of the national economy: agriculture, transport, means of communication, etc. An extensive power base was created, which produced in 1940 over 48,000 million kwh of electric energy, as against under 2,000 million in 1913.

With rapid development and top priority in regard to heavy industry assured, the country turned its attention to the development of industries producing consumer goods. The output of these industries in 1940 surpassed that of 1913 by 4.6 times, though it fell considerably short of the targets set by the plan.

The distribution pattern of industry underwent a radical change. Pre-revolutionary Russia possessed but a single metallurgical base, that of the Ukraine. Under the first five-year plans a second first-class metallurgical base was created in the East. Before the Revolution Russia drew its coal supply solely from the Donets Basin, whereas in the late 1930s the country was being supplied with coal from eight basins (including the Donets, Kuznetsk, Karaganda and Moscow Region basins). A new petroleum producing area has been developed between the Volga and the Urals, now known as the "Second Baku". A great power base has been created in the East, where important engineering and other industrial centres have come into being.

Equipped with a first-class industry, the Soviet Union has achieved complete economic independence. The import of locomotives, motor-cars, tractors, farm machinery, blast-furnace equipment, turbines, electric furnaces, measuring instruments, etc., was discontinued already by the end of the First Five-Year Plan period. Under the Second Five-Year Plan the country was able to meet 90 per cent of its machine-tool requirements out of its own production. In 1936 the turbines of all power stations in the USSR were of domestic make. And the country had begun to export

tractors, farm machinery, motor-cars, sewing-machines and other items.

The Soviet Union's rating in the world economy has also changed. In 1913 Russia lagged behind the United States, Germany, Great Britain and France in respect of the volume of gross output. Her share in the world industrial output was slightly over 4 per cent. In 1937 the Soviet Union rated first and second, respectively, in European and world industrial output, occupying the second place after the United States; while its share in the world industrial output had risen to around 14 per cent. In respect of the output of steam locomotives, harvesting-combines, farm machinery and synthetic rubber the Soviet Union had outstripped all other countries.

Thanks to the advantages offered by the socialist system (such as public ownership of the instruments and means of production, planned economy, the high endeavour of the workers, etc.) the socialist industry grew at a far more rapid rate than the industry of the capitalist countries. Over the period 1930-40 the annual increase of large-scale industry averaged 18 per cent as compared with but 1.2 per cent in the United States and 2.1 in Great Britain. Productivity in the USSR increased three or four times as rapidly as in the capitalist countries.

SOCIALIST RECONSTRUCTION IN SOVIET RURAL AREAS

The Target: Collectivisation of Peasant Holdings

The most difficult and at the same time the most important socialist reform was the transition of the Soviet peasantry from individual small-scale holdings to large-scale, collective, socialist farming. This transition lasted through the first and second five-year plans, but the ground for it had been prepared by the entire process of socialist construction in the country and by the policies followed by the Soviet Government in respect of the rural areas.

By adopting the Decree on Land, on the strength of which land confiscated from the landed proprietors, monasteries and capitalists was distributed among the peasants on an equitable basis, in accordance with their wishes, the Soviet Government had satisfied the age-long aspirations of the Russian peasants. This resulted in greatly increasing the number of small peasant holdings, which reached, in the second half of the 1920s, some 24-25 millions. Millions of indigent peasants and farm labourers were allotted

land, implements and cattle confiscated from the landlords and to some extent from the kulaks, which promoted them to the rank of middle peasants and improved their conditions.

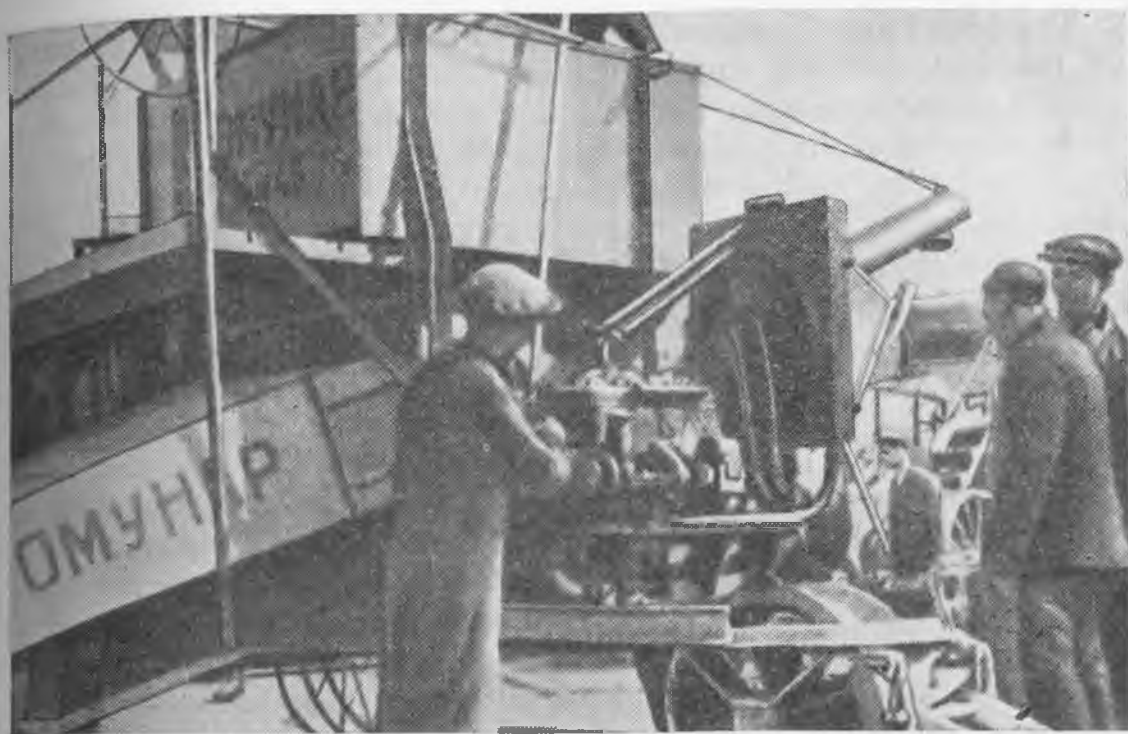
On the whole, however, living standards among the working peasants remained low owing to the low productivity of small-scale farming, which employed mainly manual labour and animal-drawn farm implements. Tractors, so effective for raising the productivity of farming, were beyond the reach of the small holdings, and even horses did not always pay for themselves. Millions of small farmers could not pay for a good plough; over 5,000,000 wooden ploughs were still at work in the 1920s, while about one-third of the peasant holdings owned no implements for ploughing the land. In 1928 nearly 10 per cent of the spring ploughing was done with wooden ploughs, 75 per cent of the land was sown by hand, and roughly 50 per cent of the cereal crops were harvested with scythe or sickle, and threshed with a flail or by other primitive methods, such as were used all of a thousand years ago. Hence the low living standards of most of the working peasants. Millions left for the cities in search of work every year, only to swell the ranks of the unemployed.

The Soviet Government ended completely the peasants' bondage to the landlords, and mitigated their exploitation by the kulaks, though such exploitation did not entirely disappear and continued to be a source of suffering for the poorer peasantry, who were forced to rent horses and implements from the kulaks and lease to them that part of their land which they could not care for fully for lack of adequate implements or animal traction. Indigent peasants whose own holdings could not support them were further obliged to hire themselves out to the kulaks. Personal experience showed the peasants how right Lenin was when he wrote, back in 1917: "If we continue as before on our small isolated farms, albeit as free citizens on free soil, we are still faced with imminent ruin."¹

These small peasant holdings were incapable of meeting the country's growing requirements in respect of cereals and other farm produce or industry's requirements in respect of agricultural raw materials. The marketable surplus of agriculture as a whole decreased by 50 per cent during the first decade after the Revolution owing both to the fragmentation of peasant holdings and to growing consumption by the peasants themselves. The shortage of farm produce compelled the Soviet Government to introduce rationing as from 1928.

The way out was to increase the size of farms. Big farms would be in a position to buy and operate efficiently tractors and other

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 503-504.



Assembling the first harvesting combine at the Kommunar Works, Zaporozhye (1930)

farm machinery, use mineral fertilisers, and introduce many-field crop rotation. The application of scientific discoveries would substantially increase productivity of farm labour and the marketable surplus of agriculture, help meet the country's requirements, and raise living standards among the peasants. Large-scale farming, as a means of achieving higher productivity and marketability, had become essential in the interests of the peasantry and society as a whole. The question was, how to achieve this? How was the transition to large-scale farming to be effected?

It was out of the question for the Soviet Government to support and develop large private farm holdings of the kulak type, as suggested by N. Bukharin, A. Rykov and some others. That would have spelled the ruin of the main body of working peasants to the enrichment of the kulaks. Such a solution would have been unacceptable for the vast majority of peasants, as well as for the working class, inasmuch as it would have strengthened the capitalist elements in the countryside and led to the failure of socialist construction. Lenin's co-operation plan offered the working peasants another way to large-scale farming, namely, through voluntary membership in production co-operatives. That was the sole acceptable and advantageous way for the peasants, since it opened up prospects of high living standards instead of spelling their ruin.

The 15th Party Congress, meeting in December 1927, well aware of the fact that the country's lagging agriculture had begun to retard industrialisation as well and become an obstacle to any improvement of living standards, decided to give top priority to collectivisation and technological reconstruction in agriculture. The Communist Party and the Soviet Government initiated a vast campaign to prepare the ground for mass collectivisation.

Preparing the Ground for Mass Collectivisation

More and more tractors and farm machinery were supplied to the rural areas by the government. Tractors were useless, however, under the open-field system (when the fields of one owner were separated from each other by strips belonging to other owners), being intended for use on extensive unbroken land areas, which, for the peasants, was an argument in favour of co-operation. Large grain state farms began to be set up in 1928. In addition to producing grain, these state farms provided training in the organisation of mechanised production and let the farmers see for themselves the advantages offered by large-scale farming. Thousands of peasants came to the state farms to learn; so that these farms, equipped as they were with modern machinery, made a very real contribution to the collectivisation movement. Here is but one example. The indigent peasants of several villages of the Berezovka district, Odessa region, lacked both horses and equipment and were thus unable to till the land that had been allotted to them, and were compelled to lease it to the kulaks. In 1927 a representative of the association of Ukrainian state farms offered to till their fields with tractors. At first his offer was regarded with suspicion. The kulaks, alarmed, tried to scare the poor peasants into refusing. "You're putting yourselves under servitude, you fools," they said. "This thing means the return of serfdom. Once the boundaries of your strips are gone, you'll lose your lands."

These malicious insinuations did not work, however, and the peasants signed an agreement with one of the state farms. When their crop yield turned out to be 50 per cent better than that of the neighbouring peasants, while the tilling and sowing came 30-40 per cent cheaper than for horse-owning farms, the indigent peasants could appreciate the advantage of mechanised labour. "After seeing the job done by the tractors," they wrote in to the *Izvestia*, "we are through with our miserable farms, we have decided to organise a collectivised tractor farm which will do away with individually owned strips of sown land. The Shev-



Group of workers of Ivanovo-Voznesensk setting off to organise collective farms (1930)

chenko State Farm has undertaken to organise such a farm for us, and we have already concluded an agreement with it.”

With this experiment to go by, the government began setting up machine and tractor stations (MTSs), which were to service individual villages and collective farms on terms specified in agreements, in order to utilise tractors and other farm machinery with maximum efficiency. The first MTS was set up in November 1928, in association with the Shevchenko State Farm in the Ukraine. During the following year 159 MTSs were set up, and their number continued to grow yearly thereafter. They became points of support, so to speak, in the movement for collectivisation.

Increasing aid was made available to collective farms by the government, which extended important credits, sold them machinery and mineral fertilisers on favourable terms, allowed substantial agricultural tax exemptions, and established a network of centres for training collective-farm organisers and managers. Generous support was given to the simplest forms of co-operation, which facilitated for the peasants the shift to collective farming. Thousands of worker teams were sent into the rural areas to help the peasants strengthen existing collective farms, set up new ones, and organise large-scale production. Industrial towns took upon themselves sponsorship over particular agricultural districts, assign-

ing workers to help them with the work of organisation on a permanent basis. Towards the close of 1929, in answer to an appeal launched by the Communist Party, over 25,000 leading workers went to the country to help the peasants with the transition to collective farming. These men made a valuable contribution to the development of collective farms.

As the groundwork was being laid for the mass collectivisation campaign, fresh steps were being taken to eliminate the kulaks as a class. The Soviet Government increasingly restricted their chance to exploit farm labourers and the poor peasants, raised their tax rates, deprived them of voting rights in co-operatives of all kinds, stopped selling them tractors, and, in 1928, bought back whatever tractors they owned and turned them over to co-operatives and collective farms.

Class warfare in the countryside intensified. The kulaks started sabotaging government purchases of grain, hoping thereby to cause famine and so wreck the government's economic policy. In an effort to disrupt the collectivisation movement they set fire to collective-farm buildings and the homes of members, killed collective-farm cattle, murdered collective-farm organisers, leading farm workers, representatives of the Soviet Government, and Communists. These criminal activities evoked determined retaliatory measures on the part of the Soviet Government, which dealt summarily with the incendiaries and terrorists. Those who concealed grain were brought to trial as profiteers. This government action was supported by the poor and middle peasants, as wrath against the kulaks grew in the countryside.

Turning-Point in the Countryside

Following the 15th Party Congress collective farms began to grow numerically at a rapidly increasing pace. Two years later there were four times as many collective farms in the country and five times as many associated peasant holdings as before. The figures for the second half of 1929 speak for themselves: in July, membership in collective farms stood at 1,000,000 peasant households, while by October 1 it had reached 2,000,000. Thus, in two or three months membership had grown as much as over the preceding twelve years; while in the last three months of 1929 2,700,000 more peasant households signed up.

On January 5, 1930, the Central Committee of the Communist Party adopted a resolution "On Rate of Collectivisation and Government Aid to Collective-Farm Construction". Mass collectivisation was to be completed in the main by the end of the First Five-Year Plan period, i.e., in 1933. The most important grain-

producing areas, such as the Northern Caucasus and Middle and Lower Volga, where there were already many collective and state farms and machine and tractor stations, were to complete it, in the main, by the spring of 1931, and the rest of the grain-producing areas by the spring of 1932. The Central Committee stressed in this connection the necessity of observing the principle of voluntary entrance to collective farms. A sum of 500,000,000 rubles was earmarked by the Soviet Government in 1930 for the needs of collective-farm construction.

Peasants were recommended to create agricultural artels, or associations, that is, to pool their land plots, draft animals and basic equipment for the purpose of farming in common, under a board elected by the members. In addition to the common farm economy that constituted his main source of subsistence, each member of the artel was allotted an individual plot, and preserved suitable tools to work it, a cow, and some other livestock and poultry.

In the areas of total collectivisation local Soviets were authorised to expropriate from the kulaks land, implements, cattle, and property acquired by exploitation, which meant the liquidation of the kulaks as a class.

Peasants everywhere organised meetings to discuss the problem of vital importance: should they join together to form a collective farm or should they continue living as before? The kulaks slandered collective farms, well aware that the system would deprive them of a chance to exploit the peasants. Members of collective farms organised earlier came to the meetings to tell about their own experience and try to convince the peasants of the advantages offered by the collective-farm system.

Early in 1930 the working class sent its representatives (these were the men who had answered the Communist Party's appeal towards the close of 1929) to encourage the peasants to accept the new way of life. They succeeded in winning the peasants' confidence, and new collective farms appeared every day.

But while the country rejoiced over the success of the collectivisation movement disturbing reports began to come in from scattered localities, warning that the Leninist principle of voluntary membership in collective farms was not being observed. It appeared that leading government workers in the republics of Central Asia and Transcaucasia as well as in the central industrial regions of the RSFSR and certain other areas had decided to complete total collectivisation in the spring of 1930, that is to say, a year or two earlier than had been planned, though the ground had not been prepared for this. Instead of explaining and convincing, these authorities began forcing the peasants to join collective farms under the threat of disciplinary measures, expropriations as in



Indigent peasants joining a collective farm in Central Black Earth Area (1929)

respect of the kulaks, and disfranchisement. This transition of millions and millions of peasants to the new, collective methods of farming on a nation-wide scale, was something without precedent in the history of humanity, and, therefore, it was difficult to avoid mistakes here.

In certain regions, for instance, strenuous efforts were made to organise communes and socialise not only the basic means of production but also living quarters, small cattle and poultry. Markets and churches were closed here and there, and so on. Well-to-do middle peasants and those middle peasants who refused to join collective farms were sometimes expropriated like the kulaks.

This bred serious discontent among the peasants, which the kulaks lost no time in seizing upon and using for unbridled anti-collectivisation and anti-Soviet propaganda. Lest their livestock went to the collective farms they began to kill off their horses, cows and pigs and urged any middle farmers who intended to join a collective farm to do the same. This caused agriculture a tremendous damage.

Steps to correct such policy distortions in respect of collectivisation were taken both by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government. Instructions were issued to adhere unflinchingly to the Leninist principles in regard to voluntary joining collective farms and free choice of the particular form thereof desired.

Moreover, in order to help the new collective farms get on their feet as soon as possible the government made extensive aid available to them, including greater financial facilities and such measures as a two-year suspension of taxes on livestock, and seed loans to needy collective farms. Greater effort was also put into the construction of machine and tractor stations. These measures produced a favourable reaction among the peasants and served to assuage their feelings.

The trend towards the new way of life continued to develop among the peasants. The turning-point had been reached. Millions of peasants had voted for a new way of life, the socialist way. As foreseen by Lenin, the time had come when a majority of the peasants decided in favour of collective farming.

Fifteen million peasant households (or 61.5 per cent of the total number of such households) had joined to form 210,000 collective farms during the First Five-Year Plan. Total collectivisation had been completed, in the main, in all the grain-producing areas as well as in those producing industrial crops.

Strengthening Collective Farms

So rapid a development of the collectivisation movement entailed certain difficulties. Newly formed collective farms patently lagged in respect of organisation and management.

There were serious defects in the organisation of work, utilisation of equipment and distribution of revenues. In many instances labour discipline was low. Organisers still lacked the experience essential to the management of large collective economies. Former kulaks and other hostile elements had made their way into many collective farms here and there, especially in the Northern Caucasus and the Ukraine, and proceeded to undermine these economies from within by pilfering property, killing cattle, damaging implements, impairing labour discipline, delaying the discharge of commitments to the state, etc.

It became necessary to strengthen the collective farms in matters of organisation and management, without which they would never be able to make use of the vast possibilities of large-scale collective socialist economies. The best patterns of labour organisation and income distribution were discovered through actual practice by the collective farms themselves. Production brigades with permanent personnel were organised in all collective farms. Each brigade was allotted its land, implements and livestock. A system of income distribution based on labour performed in terms of work-day units was adopted by all collective farms. This was an incentive to increased production.



Tractor brigade of P. N. Angelina (1932)

In August 1932, the Soviet Government passed a law declaring socialist property sacred and inviolable and pilfering thereof a criminal offence involving severe punishment.

In the winter of 1933 political departments were organised in state farms and machine and tractor stations by the Communist Party in its drive to strengthen the state and collective farms and organise them into highly efficient economies. Twenty-five thousand picked Party workers were selected by the Central Committee of the Communist Party to work in these political departments, which launched a vast campaign of political propaganda among collective farmers to foster a conscientious attitude towards work and public property, and also promoted socialist emulation among them. The political departments of the machine and tractor stations made a very real contribution to the strengthening of collective and state farms during the two years of their existence.

In the rural areas, following the example set by the socialist city, production pioneers, or innovators, began a drive for more efficient utilisation of tractors, harvesting-combines and other machinery and higher yields of cereals, sugar-beet, cotton, etc. This movement was facilitated by such factors as the growing strength of collective farms, increasing number of modern machinery and specialists equipped to use it, and greater socialist con-

sciousness among collective farmers, and so on. Prominent among such pioneers was Praskovya Angelina, the first woman to drive a tractor, who later took charge of a tractor brigade. In 1935 her brigade ploughed 1,230 hectares per tractor, instead of the established quota of 300. Her example was followed by others. Konstantin Borin, operating a combine, harvested 780 hectares instead of the quota of 160. His record was matched by many other combine operators.

High sugar-beet yields were obtained in the Kiev Region by Maria Demchenko and her brigade of the Comintern Collective Farm. In 1935 they got a yield of 52,400 kilogrammes per hectare. Similar high yields were obtained by M. Gnatenko, A. Shvydko, A. Koshevaya and others.

Collective-Farm System Victorious Throughout the USSR

By the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period the collective-farm system had been victorious throughout the Soviet Union. By 1937, the collective farms accounted for 18,500,000 peasant households, or 93 per cent of their total number. Ninety-nine per cent of all arable land belonged to collective farms. That meant that the process of collectivisation had been to all intents and purposes completed.

By the end of the first decade covered by two five-year plans the agricultural sector had been practically re-equipped technologically. In 1937 the collective farms were serviced by 5,818 machine and tractor stations; 456,000 tractors, nearly 129,000 harvesting-combines, 146,000 lorries and numerous other machines worked in the fields.

The USSR had become a land of large-scale farming.

CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN THE USSR

Soviet Power Makes Culture Within the Reach of the People

Pre-revolutionary Russia had produced quite a few great scholars, scientists, writers, composers, painters and actors, who had made a great contribution to the cultural development of the human race. Yet the land as a whole had remained culturally unbelievably backward. According to the 1897 population census illiteracy in the nine and over age-group stood at 76 per cent and among

women at 88 per cent, while among the non-Russian peoples, as in Central Asia, only rare individuals were literate. Over forty of the peoples inhabiting tsarist Russia had not even a written language of their own. On the eve of the October Revolution the situation was practically the same. Four out of five children of working families could get no schooling, and only a sprinkling ever went on to higher education.

The Great October Socialist Revolution cleared the way to cultural development in Russia. It put an end to a reactionary political regime that had blocked the road to education, besides oppressing the masses economically and politically. It put an end to the oppression of national minorities, which had impeded their cultural advancement; it abolished the division of society into social estates and granted women the same rights as men; it separated the church from the state and the school from the church. In a word, it did away with whatever had blocked the road to knowledge. This was the first time in history that a state had set itself and solved the task of making education, science and culture available to an entire people so that all working people might become educated and cultured men and women.

The Soviet revolution awakened the many varied talents and abilities latent in the people, which the old regime had held in check, and roused the working masses to creative endeavour. In the first months after the establishment of Soviet power working people in town and the countryside began to set up and organise educational councils, community houses, cultural centres, clubs, libraries, reading rooms, lecture centres, etc., and took part in building schoolhouses. Those who were literate joined in the campaign against illiteracy. In the spring of 1918 Lenin noted with satisfaction that the trend towards education and culture among the masses was gathering greater and greater momentum thanks to the reorganisation of the society on Soviet lines.

During the early years the Soviet Government encountered serious difficulties in this field. The times were generally hard, as a consequence of foreign intervention, the Civil War, economic break-down, etc.; and to make matters worse a considerable section of the old intelligentsia closely tied to the bourgeoisie was either hostile to Soviet rule or had adopted a wait-and-see attitude and was only gradually changing its allegiance in favour of the people. The best of the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia however—K. A. Timiryazev, the naturalist, I. P. Pavlov, the physiologist, N. Y. Zhukovsky, the scientist, I. V. Michurin, the biologist, A. A. Blok, V. Y. Bryusov, and V. V. Mayakovsky, the poets, and V. E. Meyerhold, the actor and producer, to name but a few—were with the Soviet Government from the outset. A preponderant majority of teachers, agronomists, and physicians in the country-

side, etc. threw in their fortunes with the people. And in the meantime the workers and peasants had begun to create a new intelligentsia from among their own ranks.

The Communist Party picked well-educated men and women of exceptional organisational talent for work in the cultural field. First to occupy the post of People's Commissar of Education was A. V. Lunacharsky, a man of encyclopaedic education, brilliant journalist, writer and public speaker. When he left this post for diplomatic work in the early 1930s he was replaced by A. S. Bubnov, long a member of the Communist Party and an eminent historian. N. K. Krupskaya, Lenin's wife and comrade-in-arms, worked in the educational field from the earliest days of Soviet rule to the day of her death (in 1938). A valuable contribution to the development of science was made by A. M. Gorky, who was instrumental in winning many pre-revolutionary scholars and scientists over to the Soviet cause.

Campaign For Complete Literacy

The first task, in the cultural field, was to end illiteracy. "A communist society cannot be built in an illiterate country,"¹ wrote Lenin. Even in the difficult years of the Civil War numerous courses in reading and writing were set up throughout the land, and workers were given two hours off their jobs, with pay, to attend these. Some 7,000,000, including 4,000,000 women, learned to read and write over the period 1917-20.

Even greater gains were made in this field after the country turned to the work of peaceful construction, especially under the pre-war five-year plans, the efforts of the government being aided by the people themselves, as in the case of the "End Illiteracy!" volunteer society created in 1923, whose membership, in 1932, topped 5,000,000 men and women actively engaged in teaching reading and writing. Young people, members of the Komsomol in particular, carried on this work in the rural areas; and a great deal was done by the trade unions. This joint effort of government and community brought good results: over 87,000,000 men and women learned to read and write or improved their ability in this respect between 1929 and 1939.

Meantime secondary school education also made progress. The number of schools and the enrolment, which had begun to grow while the Civil War was still being fought, increased still more rapidly when peaceful construction started, especially in the non-Russian areas. In 1930 the Soviet Government found it possible

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 296.

to introduce universal compulsory elementary education in the various national languages spoken in the USSR, and, later, universal compulsory seven-year schooling. Enrolment in all non-specialised schools stood at 35,552,000 in the school year 1940/41, as against 9,656,000 in 1914, and the teaching staff numbered 1,238,000 as against 280,000. By the end of the 1930s illiteracy in the USSR had been virtually banished.

The Communist Party and the Soviet Government gave a great deal of attention to improving school instruction, stressing the necessity of establishing a close link between tuition and practical life and showed great concern for the teachers.

There was a tremendous upswing in the publication of books, with the editions of the best ones running into millions of copies. Love of books is a feature with the Soviet people.

People's Intelligentsia Created

A signal achievement in the cultural revolution in the Soviet Union has been the creation of a people's intelligentsia many millions strong, comprising highly trained specialists in all fields of the national economy, culture, public health and government. Pre-revolutionary Russia's legacy to the Soviet Union comprised 91 higher educational institutions with a student body of 112,000, practically all of them belonging to the propertied classes. The Soviet Government threw the universities and colleges open to the working people, abolished tuition fees, and established scholarships. Workers' departments were established at universities and other institutions of higher learning as early as 1919, for the purpose of preparing workers and children of working families for higher educational institutions. In 1920/21 there were already 244 universities and other institutions of higher learning with double the enrolment of 1914. A particularly notable spurt in the development of higher education came in the period of nation-wide industrialisation and collectivisation in agriculture, with the concurrent vastly increased demand for trained personnel. In the academic year 1940/41 there were 817 higher educational institutions functioning in the country, with an enrolment of 812,000. Unrestricted access to higher education was afforded women only with the establishment of Soviet power, and on the eve of the Great Patriotic War they accounted for 58 per cent of the student body in the country.

Before the October Revolution institutions of higher learning existed only in Central Russia, but with the establishment of Soviet power such institutions were opened in all of the national republics and regions, so that higher education became available

to the formerly most downtrodden and backward peoples of the country. Graduates of the Institute of the Peoples of the North in Leningrad made the following statement in 1936: "We are the sons and daughters of peoples who had for centuries been downtrodden, humiliated and oppressed. . . . Our fathers never even dreamed that they might study and acquire culture. . . . Nor could we have received an education if it hadn't been for the socialist revolution, the Party and the Soviet Government, that have endowed all peoples with the right to work and to education, that have made educated, cultured people out of us whose sole wish today is to be worthy of our great country."

The Soviet Union has outstripped all the capitalist countries in respect of the scope of higher and non-specialised education. On the eve of the Second World War enrolment in Soviet higher educational institutions was greater than that of 22 European countries put together.

Development of Soviet Science

The Socialist Revolution opened up broad prospects of development in the field of science. A wide network of research institutes now covers the country. There were 1,821 such institutes in the USSR in 1941, or over six times the number before the Revolution; and over 98,000 research workers, or nearly ten times as many as in 1914. Institutes of this kind now exist in all of the Union and Autonomous republics.

Notable achievements were registered by Soviet scientists in the 1920s and 1930s. I. P. Pavlov, the well-known physiologist, made an important contribution to modern science by his research into higher nervous activity in human beings and animals and to the entire field of modern medicine. K. E. Tsiolkovsky worked out the theory of rocket propulsion, which served as a starting point for the development of modern rocket aviation and space flight. N. Y. Zhukovsky and S. A. Chaplygin, eminent scientists, discovered the law determining the origin of wing lift and laid the theoretical foundation of modern aviation. Research carried out by Academician S. V. Lebedev enabled the Soviet Union to be the first to organise industrial production of synthetic rubber. Another world "first" was scored in the practical application, in the 1930s, of the principles of radar, thanks to the discoveries of L. I. Mandelshtam, N. D. Papaleksy and other Soviet physicists. The works of Academician A. F. Ioffe are basic to the modern physics of semi-conductors, which are highly important for technological progress. D. V. Skobeltsin, I. V. Kurchatov and other Soviet scientists made a valuable contribution to the study of the

atomic nucleus and cosmic rays. V. G. Khlopin succeeded in obtaining radium preparations in the early 1920s.

Science, in the Soviet Union, became linked increasingly closer to practice, and played an increasingly important role in socialist construction.

Political and Moral Education of Builders of Socialism

Since the building of socialism is a conscientious, rather than a spontaneous, process, it is essential that the people should have a clear comprehension of the aims set and the ways and means of their achievement. That is why the Soviet state has been always concerned with the political education of the masses through the use of such cultural and education facilities as clubs, reading rooms, libraries, museums, theatres, etc. It should be recalled that after the Revolution all existing cultural institutions had been thrown open to the people at large and that the Soviet Government opened a great number of new ones. There were 111,000 club-houses in the Soviet Union in 1939, or 500 times as many as before the Revolution. And 9,000 newspapers were being published, which is ten times as many as in 1914.

In the political and moral education of the Soviet people an exceptional role belongs to literature and art. Courageous fighters for the revolution, for socialism, vividly depicted by the writer, painter, sculptor, or portrayed by the talented actor, have an uplifting effect on the masses. Soviet literature and art preach the noble ideals of love of the country, endeavour and peace, and hatred of all forms of oppression, subjugation, predatory wars, exploitation of man by man. In Soviet literature and works of art the people are the heroes—the working people, those who make history, builders of the new society.

Millions of Soviet readers grew fond of such books written in the 1920s and 1930s as M. Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don*, A. Serafimovich's *The Iron Flood*, N. Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was Tempered*, D. Furmanov's *Chapayev*, A. Fadeyev's *The Rout*, and others which tell of the heroic deeds of Soviet men and women during the Civil War. Among the many popular writers in the twenties and thirties were M. Gorky, A. Tolstoy, L. Leonov, K. Fedin, I. Babel, V. Mayakovsky, N. Tikhonov, and E. Bagritsky. The best of the Soviet films, such as *The Battleship "Potyomkin"*, *The Mother*, *Chapayev*, *Baltic Deputy*, and *We Are from Kronstadt*, blazed a new trail in the art of the cinema. A deserved fame was won by V. Mukhina's Worker and Collective-Farm Woman sculptural group.

By the end of the 1930s the cultural revolution in the Soviet Union may be said to have been accomplished. The Soviet Union has become a land of universal literacy, an unsurpassed system of education and specialised training, and advanced science and culture.

SOCIALISM TRIUMPHS IN THE USSR

Radical Change in Socio-Economic and Class Structure of Society

The age-long dream of those who lived under oppression had been of a system of government under which there would be no oppressors and no oppressed, no dominant and no subjugated peoples, no hungry and destitute men, women and children. The peoples of the USSR were the first to make that dream come true. As a result of far-reaching reforms in all spheres of political, economic and cultural endeavour, socialism may be said to have been achieved in the main in the Soviet Union during the pre-war years. Specifically, the most important achievement was the radical change worked in the socio-economic and class structure of the society. A powerful public economy was set up during the first two decades of Soviet power, a first-class state industry and the greatest mechanised agricultural sector in the world. Thus the material and technical basis of socialist society was laid down. Socialist relations founded on public ownership of the instruments and means of production prevailed throughout the national economy.

This radical socio-economic transformation brought about a complete change in the class structure of the society. The landed proprietors and big bourgeoisie had made their exit from the historical arena in the early years of Soviet power after the confiscation of landed estates and the nationalisation of industrial enterprises. Thoroughly defeated in the Civil War, most of them had fled abroad. A part of the bourgeoisie had remained, however. And when the New Economic Policy was inaugurated there was a certain numerical increase in the urban and rural bourgeoisie, though their share in the total population was never important. The rural bourgeoisie—the kulaks—for instance, accounted for 4-5 per cent of the peasantry. The relative importance of the urban bourgeoisie was even less.

Private capitalist industry and trade had been completely ousted from the national economy in the early 1930s, and the vast majority of the owners had gone to work. The kulaks had been elimi-

nated as producers during the First Five-Year Plan period. The final disappearance of the exploiting classes from Soviet society took place during the Second Five-Year Plan period. The causes that engendered exploiters and exploitation of man by man were eliminated at the same time.

The changes that came into the lives of the working classes of the Soviet society were truly of historic significance. The working class was no longer an exploited, an oppressed class. It was now a new class, one whose existence was founded on free labour in socialised state-owned enterprises. The gigantic growth of socialist industry was paralleled by the numerical growth of the working class: in 1939, workers (and members of their families) accounted for nearly one-third of the country's population. Moreover, the working class had attained a much higher cultural and technical level, made significant gains in the organisational field, and achieved greater political consciousness. Socialist emulation expanded from year to year, testifying to the existence of a new attitude towards work. Therein lay the main driving force behind the unceasing and rapid development of the national economy.

The Soviet peasantry, too, was no longer the oppressed class that it used to be. Its main oppressors had been overthrown in the early years of Soviet power. Complete emancipation of the Soviet peasantry from all forms of exploitation, however, including that at the hands of the kulaks, came with the transition to collective farming.

The tractors, harvesting-combines and other farm machines that had replaced primitive implements and manual labour had made the peasant's work not only easier, but also more productive. Besides, the nature of farm work had changed. Peasants used to work each on his own plot of ground, with an envious eye on their neighbours, if the latter were successful. Fences and boundary strips made for isolation or estrangement in the village. The collective farm brought about a radical change in the situation, getting the peasants to work together. Farming became a work in common and, as such, promoted interest in making the farm a prosperous enterprise, since each collective farmer's well-being depended on that common prosperity. Comradely co-operation and mutual aid became characteristic of relations among them.

Living standards in the countryside improved, both on the material and cultural plane. According to the 1939 census data literacy among the peasants stood at 76.8 per cent (at 66.6 per cent for women). Peasants were taking a much greater interest in political activities, participating in the administrative work of the Soviet Government.

The intelligentsia, too, underwent a change. In pre-revolutionary Russia the intelligentsia had been unconcerned about the needs, the interests of the masses, and these masses quite rightly regarded the intellectuals as an alien and hostile caste, as belonging to the exploiting elements.

The process of socialist construction created a new intelligentsia, millions strong, from among the workers and peasants. This new intelligentsia played an active part in building the new society and loyally supported the Communist Party and the Soviet Government in the communist education of the people.

All these changes in the class structure of the Soviet society led to the creation of social, political and ideological unity of the Soviet people, which is one of the main sources of the strength and the power of the socialist system.

The New Soviet Man

In the process of building socialism the Soviet system moulded the new man. It educated people in the spirit of high moral principles, cultivated in them qualities of courage, staunchness, collectivism, and patriotism, readiness to give their lives for their country. The rescue of the *Chelyuskin* expedition, which won the admiration of all the world, was a striking manifestation of these admirable qualities of the Soviet man. The *Chelyuskin*, a big freighter, left Leningrad on July 12, 1933 carrying an expedition headed by O. Y. Schmidt, prominent scientist and member of the Communist Party.

The purpose of the expedition was to traverse the Northern Sea Route, from Murmansk in the west to the Bering Strait in the east, in one navigation season. The ice situation in the Arctic was extremely unfavourable, however, and in September 1933, the *Chelyuskin* found itself icebound and unable to break out. A powerful ice nip followed on February 13, 1934, and the *Chelyuskin* went down, crushed by the ice. The personnel and crew, numbering 103 men and women and two babies, had disembarked and a stock of supplies and equipment, including food, fuel and tents, had been landed.

Thus "Camp Schmidt" was set up in the heart of the Arctic, with the Arctic winter well advanced. For two months these men and women lived and worked courageously in the face of frightful hardships. Scientific research work went on day after day without a break. The day after the camp had been set up wireless contact was made with the mainland, which operators E. Krenkel, V. Ivanuk and S. Ivanov maintained to the very last day of the expedition's stay in the Arctic.



V. P. Chkalov's airplane on Vancouver airfield (1937)

Meantime a government commission had been set up under V. V. Kuibyshev to direct rescue operations. Planes, ice-breakers and a sledge caravan were sent out to the spot where the *Chelyuskin* had foundered. Overcoming great difficulties, seven Soviet fliers: M. Vodopyanov, I. Doronin, N. Kamanin, S. Levanevsky, A. Lyapidevsky, V. Molokov and M. Slepnev, in an operation that lasted from April 7 to April 13, flew all the inhabitants of "Camp Schmidt" back to the mainland. In acknowledgement of this feat the seven fliers were awarded the honorary title of Hero of the Soviet Union, just established. All members of the *Chelyuskin* expedition were awarded the Order of the Red Star.

Eighth to receive the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, in September 1934, was M. Gromov, a noted Soviet flier, who, with his crew, covered 12,411 kilometres in a 75-hour non-stop flight, setting a world record. In 1937 a similar award went to fliers V. Chkalov, A. Belyakov and G. Baidukov, who flew their ANT-25 non-stop from Moscow to the United States in 62 hours. Their feat was next duplicated by M. Gromov, A. Yumashev and S. Danilin, flying a similar plane over the same route.

Next to receive the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, in 1938, were four prominent explorers of the Arctic: I. Papanin, E. Krenkel, Y. Fyodorov and P. Shyrshov, who were landed, on May 21, 1937, from a USSR N-170 plane piloted by M. Vodopyanov, in

the vicinity of the North Pole. Making their camp on a drifting ice-floe, they kept up their scientific observation work for 274 days, covering in this time over 2,500 kilometres. They carried on their work even when, on February 1, 1938, their ice-floe broke up into several pieces. The four explorers were taken off the floe on February 19 by ice-breakers sent for the purpose.

A remarkable non-stop flight was made in September 1938, by three women fliers: V. Grizodubova, P. Ossipenko and M. Raskova, over a distance of 5,908 kilometres. They, too, were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

Towards Socialism, By-Passing Capitalism

One of the most important results of the development of the Soviet society over the first two decades that followed the October Revolution was the political, economic and cultural renaissance of the formerly backward peoples of Russia and their transition to socialism, by-passing the capitalist phase of development. The peoples of Uzbekistan, Turkmenia, Tajikistan, Kirghizia, Kazakhstan, and many peoples of the Caucasus and the Russian Far East, who were still in the phase of feudalism or in transition to that of capitalism when the socialist revolution occurred in Russia, underwent in the space of twenty years a historic transformation by building—along with the other peoples of the USSR and with their help—a socialist society.

As a result of the October Revolution these peoples created national Soviet states of their own, which, led by the Communist Party, rallied the working people against feudalism and capitalism at home. Ways and means of democratic and socialist construction were devised with reference to local tradition, to the influence of tribal institutions and the priesthood, etc. Here and there Soviet courts of law co-existed for a while with Sheriat or Cadi courts¹ governed by religious rules or customary law. In the economic sphere many reforms were introduced at a slower pace. Such, for instance, was the case with abolition of landlord title to landed estates, which was implemented in Central Russia during the first year of Soviet power and only in the later 1920s in Central Asia.

Whatever the differences in the manner in which the masses were drawn into participating in the work of socialist construction

¹ *Sheriat*—the sacred law of the Moslems, including the teaching of the Koran and governing religious matters and political, economic, civil, etc., affairs.

Cadi—Moslem judge who interprets and administers the religious law of Islam.

and in the rate at which the building of a socialist society proceeded, the pattern followed by the national republics was the same as in Russia proper. Socialism won out in all the republics and regions of the USSR through socialist industrialisation, collectivisation of agriculture and cultural revolution.

Work on the establishment of industrial centres in the outlying areas of Russia was undertaken concurrently with the reconstruction of the national economy. Entire industrial plants, printing houses, etc., were moved from Russia proper to Central Asia and Transcaucasus; power stations were built and other installations set up. In the later 1920s industrial construction was launched on a vast scale in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and other republics; and it was carried on much more rapidly in these erstwhile backward republics than in the old established industrial regions of the USSR. The Union government channelled large funds into the industrialisation of the national republics, and this policy paid dividends: in the Turkmen SSR, for example, which had been among the most backward regions of tsarist Russia, after completion of the Second Five-Year Plan industrial output began to account for over two-thirds of the aggregate output of the republic's economy.

The socialist system helped overcome the inequality which had been left to the peoples of the USSR as a legacy of pre-revolutionary times.

Living Standards Raised

The main, the basic task of the Socialist Revolution, stated briefly, was to make the working man's life free, secure, happy, intelligently lived and supplied with adequate amenities. All for the benefit of the working men, that was the motto of the Revolution.

Tangible material and spiritual benefits, which meant improved living standards, accrued to the working people in the early years of Soviet power, along with the genuine political freedom brought to it by the Socialist Revolution. On the fourth day of the Revolution the working class secured for itself—for the first time in its history—an eight-hour working day and a six-hour working day for youngsters under eighteen, paid annual leaves, social security at the expense of the state and employers in case of sickness or unemployment. The Soviet Government ruled out the employment of youngsters under sixteen and introduced equal wage rates for men and women. Hundreds of thousands of working class families that had lived in slums, basements, barracks, etc., before the Revolution were moved into houses provided with all the amenities, formerly the property of the bourgeoisie.

The Soviet Government nationalised medical establishments, pharmacies, health resorts, etc., and provided the entire population with competent free medical care.

The abolition of landlord ownership of land and a radical curtailment of kulak land tenure were measures which in themselves meant a great deal to the working peasantry. "It was the peasantry as a whole who were the first to gain, who gained most, and gained immediately from the dictatorship of the proletariat," wrote Lenin in 1919. "The peasant in Russia starved under the landowners and capitalists. Throughout the long centuries of our history, the peasant never had an opportunity to work for himself: he starved while handing over hundreds of millions of poods of grain to the capitalists, for the cities and for export. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat the peasant *for the first time* has been working for himself and *feeding better than the city dweller*. For the first time the peasant has seen real freedom—freedom to eat his bread, freedom from starvation."¹

A radical improvement in living standards, however, came with the complete and final elimination of exploitation of man by man in the Soviet Union, along with the causes that bred it. All working people in the Soviet Union are free workers working for themselves and for the society as a whole, instead of for any exploiters. The Soviet people's greatest achievement has been the complete liquidation of unemployment in the land. Back in April 1929, there were still 1,700,000 unemployed; but the vast scale of industrial construction under the First Five-Year Plan put them all to work by 1931.

A seven-hour working day was established under the First Five-Year Plan: the shortest working day in the world. The eight-hour working day was temporarily re-introduced by the Soviet Government in 1940, in the years of the Second World War, only in order to speed up industrial production, including armaments.

Increased prosperity is derived by the Soviet people from the national income, which, in 1940, was six times that of 1913. Inasmuch as there are no exploiting elements in the country, it is distributed entirely for the benefit of the working people, 75 per cent being paid out in wages and 25 per cent going to the social fund, that is, to finance the further development of the national economy, cultural needs, public health, social security, housing, defence, etc.

The growth of the national income was paralleled by a steady growth of the real income of the workers and employees, which

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 112.

comprises individual money wages, social security benefits, other allowances, pensions, scholarships, paid leaves, free tuition, free or cut-rate sojourns at sanatoriums or rest homes, etc. Before the Revolution rent and public utilities took up twenty and sometimes as much as thirty per cent of a working family's income. Since the Revolution this item has been reduced to four or five per cent of its budget. Various payments made by the state or the enterprise over and above earned wages have been growing from year to year.

A history-making achievement of the Soviet people was the establishment of free medical care. Nearly 791,000 hospital beds were available free of charge to the population in 1940, not counting military hospitals. In the event of illness workers and employees drew an allowance of up to 90 per cent of their wages until they were able to resume their work, besides getting free medical care at home or in hospitals. In cases of temporary disablement due to injury on the job or occupational disease this allowance equalled 100 per cent of the wages.

The Soviet Government showed particular concern for mother and child care. A broad network of maternity homes and obstetrical stations was established and made available to mothers and expectant mothers free of charge. All working women were given a four months' maternity leave with pay, and in the case of birth given to two or more babies or abnormal delivery the leave was extended. Mothers of large families were paid a monthly allowance by the state. An extensive system of crèches and kindergartens was set up.

Soviet Constitution of 1936

The victory of socialism made it possible to continue the process of democratisation of the country's socio-political system and to lift the temporary restrictions of democracy which had been necessary during the period of socialist construction, in conditions of violent class struggle within the country.

All of this found an expression in the Soviet Constitution of 1936. The draft of this Constitution was prepared by a special commission in collaboration with a large number of experts. Following its approval in principle by the Party and government authorities concerned the draft Constitution was published for discussion by the people at large. Over 50,000,000 took part in this discussion, which continued nearly six months. This was without precedent in the history of mankind.

The draft Constitution was enthusiastically approved by the Soviet people. Many of the corrections, addenda, amendments and

revised versions suggested during the discussion were taken into account in the text of the Constitution which was adopted on December 5, 1936, by the Eighth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the USSR.

The victory of socialism in the USSR and the fundamental principles of socialism found their legal forms in the new Constitution. "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of workers and peasants," says Article 1. The political foundation of the USSR is the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from the Supreme Soviet of the USSR down to the local Soviets; and the economic foundation is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the instruments and means of production and planned economic management. Exploitation of man by man is precluded.

The Constitution proclaimed work to be a duty and a matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle, "He who does not work, neither shall he eat", and conferred the power of law on the socialist principle, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work". The Constitution confers upon the citizens of the USSR the supreme right to work, to education, to leisure and rest, to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness or disability. Women are accorded all rights on an equal footing with men in all spheres of activity. Equality of rights of citizens of the USSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, is an indefeasible law. Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person, the homes, privacy of correspondence, and the democratic freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings, freedom of street processions and demonstrations, and freedom to unite in mass organisations.

At the same time the Constitution imposes on the citizens of the USSR the duty to abide by the Constitution, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, to respect the rules of socialist society, and to safeguard and strengthen socialist property. "To defend the country is the sacred duty of every citizen of the USSR," says Article 133 of the Constitution.

The Constitution of 1936 provides that members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from the urban and rural Soviets on up to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, shall be elected on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electorate on his work and on the work of his Soviet, while the electors are entitled to recall at any time a deputy who fails to justify their confidence. The Constitution lifted all restrictions on the suffrage rights of non-working citizens and abolished all the advantages

hitherto enjoyed by urban electors by comparison with rural electors.

On December 12, 1937, the Soviet people for the first time took part in the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the basis of the new electoral system. Communists and non-Party people formed a single election block, jointly nominating candidates by electoral districts. Participation was extremely active, nearly 97 per cent of the electorate casting votes. The candidates nominated by the block of Communists and non-Party people collected 90,000,000 votes or 98.69 per cent of all cast. Elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union and Autonomous republics took place in 1938, those to local Soviets in 1939.

The period under review was marked by gross violations of Party and Soviet democracy and socialist legality in consequence of the Stalin personality cult, which were in direct contradiction with the principles of socialist democracy.

J. V. Stalin had held, since 1922, the post of General Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee. He had made important contributions to the implementation of the Party's policy of socialist construction in the USSR, and he had won great popularity by his relentless fight against the anti-Leninist groups of the Trotskyites and Bukharinites. Since the early 1930s, however, all the successes achieved by the Soviet people in the building of socialism began to be arbitrarily attributed to Stalin. Already in a letter written back in 1922 Lenin warned the Party Central Committee: "Comrade Stalin," he wrote, "having become General Secretary, has concentrated boundless authority in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be able to exercise that authority with sufficient discretion."¹ During the first few years after Lenin's death Stalin reckoned with his critical remarks. As time passed, however, he abused his position of General Secretary of the Party Central Committee more and more frequently, violating the principle of collective leadership and making independent decisions on important Party and state issues. Those personal shortcomings of which Lenin had warned manifested themselves with greater and greater insistence: his rudeness, capriciousness, intolerance of criticism, arbitrariness, excessive suspiciousness, etc. This led to unjustified restrictions of democracy, gross violations of socialist legality and repressions against prominent Party, government and military leaders and other people.

Harmful though it was, the Stalin personality cult was unable to change either the nature of the Soviet socialist system or the

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 544.

activities of the Party and the people, aimed at building socialism and communism in the USSR. The Soviet people, directed by the Communist Party, achieved outstanding successes in socialist construction, in the development of socialist relations within the society, and in following a consistent policy of peace, which opened up boundless prospects for the continued advancement of the Soviet society. The personality cult was something quite alien to the Soviet system of government. Marxism-Leninism holds that the people are the true makers of history, creating all material and spiritual values and building a new world under the guidance of the Communist Party. Socialism in the USSR was built by the working class, the working peasantry, the Soviet intelligentsia, under the leadership of the Communist Party and in accordance with the blue-print prepared by Lenin.

THE FIGHT FOR COLLECTIVE SECURITY

General and Complete Disarmament Urged

The peace that followed the First World War proved unstable, and the armaments race was on again in the imperialist countries from the mid-1920s onward. This situation seriously alarmed public opinion throughout the world. In an effort to stifle resentment the bourgeois statesmen launched into an interminable discussion of disarmament problems. A Preparatory Commission was set up within the framework of the League of Nations, at whose endless meetings bourgeois diplomatists argued these problems. Reams of paper were used up and dozens of resolutions drafted. There was everything, in fact, except disarmament.

In November 1927, however, a breath of fresh air swept through the spacious conference halls of the Palais des Nations at Geneva. A Soviet delegation arrived to attend the Preparatory Commission's fourth session. It was led by M. M. Litvinov, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, noted for his activity in the sphere of international diplomacy in the 1920s and 1930s. A brilliant speaker and controversialist, a man of great erudition, Litvinov had ably defended the interests of the USSR at various international meetings.

On the opening day of the session the Soviet delegation read the Soviet proposal on general and complete disarmament. The document created a profound impression: this was the first businesslike proposal in seven years of nothing but twaddle on the subject.

Commenting on the Soviet proposal G. Lansbury, prominent British Labourist, said that if it had been submitted to an assembly

of ordinary men and women it would have been adopted by a unanimous vote. He called it the greatest event in the history of the fight for peace.

As was to be expected, however, the Soviet proposal was voted down by the bourgeois diplomatists on the ground that general and complete disarmament was, allegedly, utopian. In March 1928, the Soviet delegation submitted a draft convention on a partial reduction of armaments; and this proposal suffered the same fate.

In 1932, a World Conference on Limitation and Reduction of Armaments opened at Geneva. Hundreds of politicians, diplomats and journalists once again gathered in the Palais des Nations. And once again the efforts of the Soviet Union to obtain even a partial solution of the problem proved fruitless. The Conference ended in failure because the capitalist countries did not want disarmament. As a matter of fact they were already preparing for a new war.

As to the value of the discussions on disarmament in the late 1920s and early 1930s, it may be said that a new factor had made its appearance in the international arena for all the world to see; a new force which took the issue out of the sphere of fruitless quibbling and proposed a realistic approach. The USSR submitted a broad disarmament programme, which had a tremendous impact even though it was neither accepted nor even approved in principle by the Conference. Morally, the Soviet Union had won a notable victory.

Against the Menace of War

In the mid-1930s the menace of a world-wide conflagration became very real. The Soviet Union fought stubbornly to avert its outbreak. As early as 1933 it offered a draft definition of aggression, of which the central item was the proposal to consider an aggressor any country that declared war on or invaded the territory of another. The decisive importance in the struggle against the aggressive designs of German fascism the Soviet Union attached to the setting up of a system of collective security of peace-loving states. France, Czechoslovakia, Poland and certain other states should conclude, according to the Soviet proposal, a series of mutual assistance treaties and join forces to block any aggression on the part of Nazi Germany.

An event of great significance was the signing, in May 1935, of a Franco-Soviet and a Czechoslovak-Soviet treaties. If these treaties had remained in force, as the Soviet side had wished, events in Europe might have taken a different turn. Instead, they

were treated as scraps of paper, for it had been all along the wish of the governing circles of Great Britain, France and the United States to bring about a clash between Germany and the USSR, which should weaken the one and the other. They worked against any system of collective security and did nothing to block German plans of aggression, in the expectation that Hitler would restrict himself to an eastward expansion.

On March 13, 1938, Hitler occupied Austria without firing a shot. The Western powers took no notice. The only protest came from the Soviet Union. People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs M. M. Litvinov sharply condemned the seizure of Austria and warned that this action constituted a threat to all countries. "Tomorrow may be too late," Litvinov said in a special statement, "but today there is still time, if only all states, especially the great powers, take a firm, unequivocal stand in regard to the problem of collective action to keep the peace."

The ruling classes of the Western states, however, were far from sharing this point of view. Hitler, having dealt with Austria, now began preparations for dealing in a similar manner with Czechoslovakia.

The Soviet Government repeatedly called on Great Britain and France to act jointly in defence of Czechoslovakia, on the one hand, and, on the other, urged that country to offer resistance to the aggressors with the help of the Soviet Union. On September 25, 1938, the Soviet Government advised France that thirty Soviet divisions had been moved up to the western frontiers of the USSR and that the air force and tank units were in combat readiness. All the USSR needed was a Czechoslovak request for assistance. But that request never came.

The last act of the tragedy opened towards the end of September. The Munich deal was to be that last and decisive act of the governments of Great Britain and France, which cleared the way for Hitler to unleash the Second World War. The USSR had been the only country to fight in defence of Czechoslovakia and peace in Europe.

The short-sighted policy followed by Great Britain and France had miscarried. Contrary to their cherished ambition, which was to push Germany into a war with the USSR, the war broke out between Germany and the Anglo-French coalition.

Great Britain, France and the United States would not come to an understanding with the Soviet Union, a socialist state, and the latter was forced to look to its own security. The threat of war had become still more apparent after the Munich deal. The Soviet people realised that an imperialist assault could not be averted and therefore set about strengthening the country's defences.

In August 1939, Germany offered to conclude a non-aggression pact with the USSR. The Soviet Government was perfectly aware that the offer by no means reflected any German desire for peaceful relations with the USSR, but it needed time the better to prepare for the impending war and was thus left no choice but to accept the offer, and a Soviet-German non-aggression pact was accordingly signed on August 23.

Soviet foreign policy, in the 1930s, had pursued one aim, and one only: that of averting war; a policy that was just and consonant with the aspirations of all peoples. And if it proved impossible to save the world from disaster in the shape of a world war unleashed by Germany, Italy and Japan, the blame lies with the Governments of Great Britain, the United States and France, which refused to ally themselves with the USSR to defend the peace and avert a war.

Chapter Four

THE CAPITALIST WORLD BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

The First World War, which lasted a little over four years, inflicted incalculable damage upon mankind. Casualties totalled some 10,000,000 killed and 20,000,000 wounded and maimed. Unparalleled chaos reigned in industry and agriculture. And the heavy loss of life in battle, the widespread poverty, starvation and epidemics had driven millions of people to despair.

Besides disastrously affecting the economic situation of the belligerent nations the war aggravated class contradictions to the extreme; and it was natural, in the situation, that the heroic example the Russian proletariat had set by overthrowing the autocratic regime that ruled Russia should have had a great impact upon workers, poor peasants and soldiers everywhere, and given a powerful impetus to their revolutionary struggle.

1917-1923: THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT GATHERS MOMENTUM

Revolution in Germany

The victorious October Revolution in Russia and the first decrees of the Soviet Government, which were enthusiastically received by the German proletariat, contributed to the mounting revolutionary movement in Germany. The heavy defeat suffered by the German armies on the Western front in August 1918, hastened the advent of the imminent revolution. On November 3, soldiers and sailors raised a revolt at Kiel, and popular uprisings were successful, in the course of the days that followed, in Hamburg, Bremen, Leipzig, Stuttgart and several other cities. On



Detachment of revolutionary sailors at Brandenburg Tor, Berlin (1918)

November 9, a victorious revolutionary uprising in Berlin sent Kaiser Wilhelm II fleeing to Holland, leaving his family behind. The Hohenzollern empire had ceased to exist. A republic was proclaimed in Germany.

In the wake of this German revolution, bourgeois-democratic by nature, came such measures as the nation-wide repeal of martial law, the announcement of democratic freedoms, an amnesty for political prisoners, and the introduction of an eight-hour working day. At the same time, however, the government which came to power on the crest of the revolution and which was headed by F. Ebert, a Right-wing Social-Democrat, was anxious to curtail the revolution as quickly as possible and prevent its further development. As a matter of fact the Ebert government continued to defend the interests of the German capitalists and Junkers, though using somewhat different methods than its predecessor. In pursuit of this policy it entered into a secret agreement with the reactionary military, made efforts to disarm revolutionary army units, used every opportunity to provoke workers' squads to unauthorised action, arrested their leaders—all this in order to exterminate the Spartacus Union, which stood at the helm of the revolution. The Berlin proletariat

retaliated, on January 5, 1919, with an armed uprising. Inadequately prepared, the uprising was ruthlessly crushed by the Ebert government, which sent troops and volunteer reactionary detachments against the workers. Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, leaders of the German working class, were killed in cold blood. The defeat failed to break the backbone of the proletariat, however; and the month of March saw a renewal of bitter fighting, in which the proletariat was pitted against the counter-revolutionary government troops aided by reactionary volunteer detachments under the Social-Democratic leader "Bloody Dog" Noske. And once again the proletariat suffered a defeat.

Following the Russian example, Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies had been set up in Germany in the early days of the revolution, but the majority of seats in these bodies belonged to the Social-Democrats, who were against further developing the revolution and its evolving into a socialist revolution. The German Communist Party had been organised only as late as December 1918, and the Communists were in a minority in the Soviets.

In February 1919, the Constituent Assembly met at Weimar, with the majority representing the various bourgeois parties. It elected F. Ebert president of the republic and P. Scheidemann, also a Right-wing Social-Democrat, head of the government. A constitution was adopted, establishing a bourgeois-democratic regime in the country, and, before adjourning, the Social-Democrats had the Soviets proclaimed dissolved.

In spite of all this, a series of important strikes occurred in Germany in the spring of 1919. This time the revolutionary movement began in Bavaria. On April 13, 1919, the workers of Munich, the Bavarian capital, seized the power and proclaimed a Soviet Republic. Immediately, however, the young republic found itself facing enemies from all quarters. A regular army of 100,000 was sent to crush the Soviet government of Bavaria. On May 1, it entered Munich—and turned the city into a shambles. That was the end of the Bavarian Soviet Republic.

In the years that followed, bitter class encounters and mass movements continued in Germany. In March 1920, monarchist forces made a bid to restore the order that had existed under the Kaiser by launching a putsch under the leadership of General W. von Lüttwitz and W. Kapp, a landowner. The workers retaliated with a general strike; and close co-operation and united action enabled them to make short work of the putsch. A year later, in March 1921, the whole of Central Germany became the arena of armed resistance, by way of an answer to the government's underhand tactics. Much heavier class battles, however, were to be fought in 1923.



Bavarian Red Army fighters

In January 1923, the French Government headed by R. Poincaré ordered French troops into the Ruhr district. It sought further to weaken Germany and make her strictly observe the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. The bourgeois Cuno government then in power in Germany adopted a so-called "passive resistance" policy, involving a stoppage of coal-mining in the Ruhr, non-cooperation with the forces of occupation, etc.; and also providing for substantial government subsidies for the owners of idle enterprises. These measures had a disastrous effect on Germany's economy. Inflation on an unprecedented scale set in: the mark declined in value, and the real wages of the workers shrank accordingly. The German people found themselves facing hardships and poverty far worse even than privations they had suffered during the war. By way of protest against the government's policy the German working class organised mass demonstrations and strikes. The general strike that began in August 1923, led to the overthrow of the Cuno government. A new government was formed, also with Right-wing Social-Democratic participation, which repudiated the policy of passive resistance and began to look for some arrangement with the French which would leave it free to deal with the revolutionary movement.

By the autumn of 1923 Germany was ripe for a revolution. Workers' governments with the participation of Left-wing

Social-Democrats and Communists had been set up by the middle of October in the Lands of Saxony and Thuringia. Here, as in some other German Lands, armed workers' detachments known as "proletarian hundreds" had been organised. Favourable factors were thus present for initiating a struggle for an all-German workers' government. However, the movement lacked a genuine leadership, for the men who headed the German Communist Party at the time were strongly tainted with opportunism. It was owing to them that the carefully planned armed uprisings in all parts of Germany were never carried out. Only the Communists of Hamburg, led by E. Thaelmann, rose in arms, on October 23, and for three days and nights 300 staunch revolutionaries fought against a force of soldiers and police 6,000 strong. When it became clear that the uprising would receive no support elsewhere in the country, Thaelmann ordered to cease fighting. This uprising is one of the finest chapters in the history of the German revolutionary movement. Once again, just as in 1918-19, the Right-wing Social-Democrats had helped the bourgeoisie to retain the power in their hands. From then on the forces of reaction were to intensify their activity. And Hitler was to become their mouthpiece.



Demonstration in Dresden (1923)

Hungarian Soviet Republic

The bourgeois-democratic revolution in Hungary, which began towards the end of October 1918, quickly developed into a socialist revolution. In March 1919, an ultimatum of the Entente powers, designed to achieve a split of Hungary, produced a violent political crisis and caused the country's bourgeois government to resign. The Social-Democratic leadership, faced with a growing revolutionary movement and fearing to assume alone the task of governing the country, approached the Communist leaders serving sentence in prison at the time with an offer to form a government jointly. Their offer was accepted. The Social-Democratic and Communist parties joined to form a single party, proclaimed the dictatorship of the proletariat and took over state power. On March 21, 1919, Hungary was proclaimed a Soviet Republic, and the new government, for all practical purposes, was headed by Béla Kun, the Hungarian Communist leader.

The proletarian revolution of March 1919 had been won peacefully, without recourse to an armed revolt. The government of the Soviet Republic initiated a series of measures along socialist lines, such as the nationalisation of industry, banks and transport, the introduction of an eight-hour working day, a 25 per cent raise of wages, the confiscation of lands belonging to the landed gentry and the church, etc. A Red Army was created to defend the gains of the revolution. In June, an All-Hungary Congress of Soviets was convened in Budapest, with Lenin elected Honorary Chairman, and the constitution of the Hungarian Soviet Republic was adopted.



Police disperse May Day demonstration in Paris (1920)

The imperialist powers, however, refused to put up with the existence of a socialist state in the middle of Europe, and French, Czechoslovak and Rumanian troops moved against the Hungarian Republic on orders of the Entente governments. Aided by the Hungarian counter-revolutionary forces under Horthy, they were able to defeat the Red Army. It must be said that the victory of the counter-revolution was facilitated in a measure by errors on the part of the republic's government. Gravest among these errors were two: failure to purge the Social-Democratic Party of reformist elements after its union with the Communist Party, and incorporation of the lands confiscated from the church and the landed proprietors in state farms instead of their distribution among landless peasants and peasants with insignificant holdings. Both these errors had grave, though different, consequences for the republic. Whatever the case, on August 1, 1919, the Hungarian Soviet Republic fell, after a heroic resistance that lasted 133 days.

Mounting Revolutionary Movement in France

The victory of the Socialist Revolution in Russia gave a powerful impetus to the revolutionary movement in France. In addition to their demands in the economic sphere, such as better working conditions, higher wage rates, an eight-hour working day, etc., the French workers waged a determined fight for the implementation of a definite political programme. The basic points of that programme were: immediate cessation of armed intervention in Soviet Russia; demobilisation of the armed forces; and amnesty for political prisoners. In the spring of 1919 red flags were hoisted on French warships in the Black Sea waters when the sailors raised a revolt, refusing to bear arms against the Soviet Republic, and the French headquarters were forced to withdraw the fleet from the Black Sea.

Within France, too, workers, soldiers and sailors acted energetically in defence of the Soviet Republic. The May Day demonstration of 1919 in Paris, with more than half a million participants, developed into a huge anti-government demonstration. Strikes, meetings and demonstrations under the slogan "Hands Off Soviet Russia!" swept the country from end to end late in 1919 and in the early part of 1920. This movement, initiated by the French proletariat and actively supported by such leaders of the intelligentsia as H. Barbusse, R. Rolland, A. France and others, was a decisive factor in forcing the French Government to refrain from further armed intervention in Soviet Russia. Moreover, the Clemenceau cabinet (1917-20) was forced

to meet some of the other demands presented by the workers: an eight-hour working day was enacted, wage raises were approved in respect of certain jobs, and trade unions were granted broader powers.

The weak point of the French revolutionary movement of 1918-20 lay in the lack of an adequate revolutionary leadership. Left-wing groups had formed within the Socialist Party, but they were not sufficiently strong and failed to co-operate. It was already December 1920, when a majority of delegates to a Socialist Party Congress at Tours adopted at long last a resolution establishing the French Communist Party.

To divert the masses from the revolutionary movement, the French bourgeoisie launched a broad campaign to arouse nationalistic feeling, and made such good use of the victory over Germany that this soon developed into an orgy of chauvinism. A "national bloc" was formed, embracing all the range of bourgeois parties, from Right-wing to radical. In November 1919, this "national bloc" won the parliamentary elections.

Crisis of the Revolution and Class Battles in Italy

The years 1919 and 1920 were marked by an unexampled upsurge of the revolutionary movement in Italy. When the Italian bourgeoisie attempted to systematically scale down wages in order to make the workers pay for the war, they ran into determined opposition. Workers began to strike all over the country, in greater and greater numbers, until a record 2,200,000 were on strike in 1920. This revolutionary ferment spread into the rural districts. In the south of the country and in Sicily armed peasants began to seize and distribute among themselves the lands of the gentry. Farm labourers and tenant farmers joined the struggle against the exploiting classes by the tens of thousands.

Surpassing in scope all other revolutionary action on the part of the Italian workers during that period was the seizure of industrial plants in August and September of 1920. For roughly three weeks practically all the important plants of Milan, Turin and other towns in the north of Italy were held by the workers. Red Guard units were formed in many towns. Under the protection of their own armed guard the workers themselves operated the plants they had seized.

As in the other European countries, the workers of Italy, while fighting for their rights and a better life, moved decisively in the defence of the world's first workers' and peasants' state, that is, the Soviet Republic.



"Take it back, George, or else . . ." Action Council bids Lloyd George revoke his ultimatum to the Soviet Government. Cartoon appearing in the American magazine *Liberator* (1920)

In the autumn of 1920, it seemed as if the Italian proletariat stood on the threshold of a socialist revolution. The government and the bourgeoisie were in a state of bewilderment. Yet, when the hour of decision struck the working class found themselves without a proper revolutionary leadership. Within the Socialist Party the majority decided to withdraw after delegating the functions of leadership to the reformist leaders in the General Confederation of Labour, who feared and disliked the idea of revolution and preferred to come to terms with the bourgeoisie.

The defeat of the working class opened the road for the fascist offensive. In October 1922, the fascists under the leadership of Mussolini seized the power. The sole effective force to challenge fascism was the Communist Party formed in January 1921, and led by A. Gramsci and P. Togliatti. The balance of power in this class struggle was not in its favour, however, and it was unable to prevent the establishment of a fascist dictatorship.

“Hands Off Soviet Russia!” Movement in Great Britain

In Great Britain, too, the victory of the October Revolution and the successes achieved by the Russian workers and poor peasants in building a new society inspired the workers, when threatened with wage cuts and attempts at worsening their working conditions, to retaliate with strikes. Vigorously pressed, these were generally successful, and the number of strikers steadily increased.

Characteristic of the action undertaken by British workers in 1919-20 was the fact that in the overwhelming majority of cases economic and political demands went hand in hand, the most important political demand being to stop armed intervention in Soviet Russia and accord it recognition. The movement of the British workers in defence of Soviet Russia reached a peak in the summer of 1920, at the time of the Entente powers' third campaign. Some 400 “Hands off Soviet Russia!” committees were organised all over the country. They testified in no uncertain terms to the political maturity of the British proletariat and its determination to prevent the imperialist powers from crushing the world's first workers' and peasants' state.

On August 9, 1920, an all-Britain workers' conference presented the Lloyd George-Curzon cabinet then in office with a strongly worded demand for an immediate cessation of the intervention in Soviet Russia and the conclusion of peace with that country. That the British ruling circles were forced to give up the intervention and, later, to begin negotiations with the Soviet Government regarding the conclusion of a trade agreement, was largely the result of the mass movement of the British workers.

Growing Revolutionary Movement in Other European Countries

In January 1918, a short-lived victory was won by the workers' revolution in Finland, and a Finnish Workers' Republic came into being. Although its existence ended only three months later, its significance for both the Finnish and international workers' movements was very real. Finland had become the first country in the world, after Russia, where state power had passed into the hands of the people. In the course of 1918 and 1919 Soviet Republics emerged also in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and it required the joint efforts of the counter-revolutionary forces within and from without to crush the Soviet Republics in these countries. The revolutionary slogans of the victorious Rus-

sian proletariat were taken up by the workers of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Austria, Yugoslavia and Spain. All over the continent of Europe revolutionary battles were being fought, sparked by the Russian Revolution of October 1917, their form and scope determined by the national character and the level of political and economic development of the country concerned.

“Rice Riots” in Japan

The impact of the proletarian revolution in Russia on the international liberation movement was by no means confined to the continent of Europe, however. It was just as powerful, if not more so, in Asia and Latin America. One of the first countries where the ideological influence of the October Revolution led to mass resistance against class oppression was Japan, where it came to be known as the “rice riots”.

The immediate cause of these revolts were a rice shortage in urban areas and sky-rocketing prices on rice. Production of rice in the country was practically at a standstill in spite of the increased requirements of the growing industrial population. The government, intent on protecting the interests of the landed gentry, refused to raise the customs duties on imported rice, which left the leading dealers free to systematically raise prices. Then, too, having embarked on intervention in Soviet Russia, the government was building up stocks of rice for its army of occupation. Speculators, quick to profit by the situation, began to hoard rice. In August 1918, when the limits of their endurance had been reached, townspeople began to sack the rice stores. The riots soon became nation-wide, and in sixty towns assumed proportions which made the authorities employ armed force to quell them.

Initially a protest against the practices of merchants, the “rice riots”, in which something like ten million took part, soon developed into action directed against capitalists in urban areas and landed proprietors in the countryside. In the urban areas the struggle lasted a few days, the miners holding out longer than all others. The short duration of the riots was due to their spontaneous character and to lack of organisation among the workers. Although quickly put down, the riots increased class consciousness in the Japanese people. Sen Katayama called them the first class battle offered by the Japanese proletariat, which had sown panic among the country’s exploiting classes.

The years that followed saw Japan become the arena of numerous strikes with the participation of hundreds of thousands of workers. Trade unions began to be organised in all

industries. The 1920 May Day demonstration in Tokyo was the first in the nation's history. These developments were evidence of a growing class consciousness of the Japanese proletariat. Meanwhile widespread organisational activity, directed towards forming a Japanese Communist Party, was being carried on simultaneously in Japan and by a rather numerous group of Japanese socialist émigrés in the United States. Sen Katayama, then in the United States, succeeded in bringing together a circle, which was later reorganised into a Japanese socialist group. This group established contact with progressive workers and members of the intelligentsia connected with the Japanese labour movement. Prominent among the revolutionaries active in Japan was Masanosuke Watanabe, whose efforts were directed towards achieving unity in the working class. On July 15, 1922, an illegal congress of various Marxist groups proclaimed the formation of the Communist Party. Right away it came under heavy assault by the forces of reaction, fearful of the spread of communist ideas.

October Revolution and the USA

Before long, revolutionary ideas crossed the Atlantic into the United States, citadel of world capitalism, whose ruling circles had made a fortune out of the war and were now bent on strengthening their influence in the post-war world. Right after the October Revolution in Russia and in the early 1920s, the reactionary domestic and foreign policies followed by the ruling classes provoked the American workers to diverse and powerful mass action, aimed, among other things, at stopping American intervention in the Soviet Union. Thus, dockers in the seaports refused to load arms and ammunition destined for the interventionist and whiteguard forces. The Society of Friends of Soviet Russia which was formed in the summer of 1919, launched a vigorous campaign to halt the American intervention in Soviet Russia and to normalise American-Russian relations.

With the world war over, the capitalists attempted to launch an offensive against the proletariat. The workers retaliated by increasing the scope of the strike movement and demanding an eight-hour working day, higher wages, and collective agreements. More than 4,000,000 were on strike in 1919. Never before, in the history of the United States, had the strike movement assumed such proportions. The strike in the steel industry, involving over 350,000 workers and lasting a hundred days, became the outstanding event of that period. It was led by W. Foster, one of the militant leaders of the American working class and later chairman of the Communist Party of the United States. Although



Striking steel workers in Pennsylvania (1919)

the strikers did get some of their demands accepted, the strike could have been much more successful if the American working class had had a consistently revolutionary leadership, instead of following the mercenary trade union leaders who rejected socialism and acted in collusion with the employers.

The class battles fought in 1919 in the United States contributed towards creating conditions essential for the formation of a Communist Party. However, the development of the Left-wing forces within the American workers' movement followed a line peculiarly its own, and this led to the simultaneous formation of two parties, each of which proclaimed itself a Communist Party. One had a membership of predominantly foreign extraction. It was headed by Charles É. Ruthenberg, and it was inclined to stress the theoretic element. The other drew its membership chiefly from among those associated with the workers' movement, and was headed by John Reed, the journalist, author of *Ten Days That Shook the World*.¹ There were no differences in the two parties in respect of their programme, their fusion followed in 1921; for the communist vanguard could not afford to scatter its forces when it had to face the unbridled assault upon the progressive movement, loosed by the American ruling classes in their fear of the mounting revolutionary movement the world over. Even the Democratic Party² seemed to the reactionary elements insufficiently reliable, and in 1920 it was forced to yield to the Republicans, who remained in power until 1932.

¹ A Diary of the October Revolution and the author's personal experiences therein.—*Ed.*

² One of the two leading political organisations of monopoly capital in the United States.

Creation of the Communist International

We have already seen that Communist Parties came into being in many countries as the class battles developed, as, for instance, in Austria, Hungary, Poland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Argentina, in the course of 1918. In other countries, such as Britain, France and the United States, the groundwork was being laid preparatory to organising Communist Parties.

Ideologically and organisationally, however, the Communist Parties of the Western countries, founded, as they had been, by Left-wing elements originating in the Social-Democratic parties and trade unions, were extremely weak and wanting a steadily functioning system of communication among themselves. Moreover, serious errors were no exception in the practical activities of their leaders; chiefly of a sectarian nature, such errors were adroitly used by the anti-revolutionaries in the interests of crushing the revolutionary movement.

Such were the circumstances that made the formation of an international Communist organisation, that is, the Third, Communist International, a matter of urgent necessity. Indeed, no socialist revolutions could hope to win without genuinely revolutionary parties like that of the Bolsheviks, ideologically and politically based solely on Marxist-Leninist theory. Nor could victory be won, in the circumstances prevailing at the time, unless these parties were welded into a single international communist organisation.

Driven by their fear of the widespread revolutionary movement in the West, the Right-wing leaders of the Social-Democratic parties hastened to revitalise, in February 1919, the Second International, which had shown itself to be a complete bankrupt and had disintegrated in 1914. This was an effort to obstruct the formation of the Communist International. It failed to accomplish its purpose, however. On Lenin's initiative, the representatives of the Communist Parties and Left-wing socialist groups of thirty countries of Europe, Asia and America assembled in Moscow on March 2, 1919. On March 4 the congress proclaimed the founding of the Communist International, which would serve as a centre of the international communist movement. The congress also elected an Executive Committee as the International's permanent steering body. The foundation of the Comintern (as the Communist International came to be known) was a historical event of world-wide significance, a significance which lay, above all, in the fact that this was an international revolutionary proletarian organisation of a new type.

Unlike the Second International, the Comintern acted from the very first as a genuinely international association of the proleta-



V. I. Lenin in presidium of First Comintern Congress

riat of all the races of mankind throughout the world. Even its first congress included not only the representatives of the advanced states of Europe and America, but also those of such countries as Iran, China, Korea, Turkey, etc. The Third International openly proclaimed, on behalf of the revolutionary forces the world over, victory of socialism and communism to be the ultimate aim of the world workers' movement and the dictatorship of the proletariat to be the means of achieving that victory.

Results of the Revolutionary Battles of 1917-1923

Never before had the world witnessed such bitter class battles as during the period of 1917-23. Nevertheless, toward the close of 1923 it had become evident that the revolutionary wave had begun to recede, that the determined struggle waged by the proletariat and its allies against the imperialist bourgeoisie and those who supported it, a struggle that had been shaking the world for the last five-six years, was now on the wane.

The revolutionary upsurge in the lands of the East and West had shown itself insufficiently strong to break the dominance of imperialism. In a number of European countries (such as Germany, Hungary, Finland, etc.) the working class had been able to seize the power, but unable to hold it: the balance of power had

been obviously with the European and American bourgeoisie in its united opposition to the revolutionary proletariat. Another important reason why the proletariat was defeated lay in the substantial aid received by the bourgeoisie, in its fight to save the capitalist system, from the Right-wing leaders of the various Social-Democratic parties and reformist trade unions, whose influence with the masses was still quite considerable. No less harmful to the cause of the working class was the fact that no Communist Parties were yet in existence when the revolutionary movement began in the West: they were founded and began to gather strength in some of the bigger countries only when the tide of the revolution was already obviously on the ebb.

The imperialist bourgeoisie had beaten back the attacks launched by the revolutionary forces, suppressed the Soviet Republics in Bavaria and Hungary, and retained its control over five-sixths of the world's surface. But that same imperialist bourgeoisie had shown itself insufficiently strong to win a victory over the world's first socialist state: neither the military crusade of fourteen states, nor the blockade, nor the plotting of foreign governments had been able to crush the Soviet Republic. Supported by the proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the capitalist world, the Soviet people had repelled all the attacks of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Thus, socialism had won control over one-sixth of the world's surface.

The world remained split between two opposite social systems. The struggle between them now approached its next phase.

PARTIAL STABILISATION OF CAPITALISM (1924-1929)

Capitalist States Overcome Economic and Political Crisis

A period of temporary partial stabilisation of capitalism had set in by 1924 and continued to 1929. During this period the capitalist countries overcame the post-war economic crisis and increased their overall production by 25-26 per cent. This stabilisation was only temporary, however, and lacking in stability. By no means all the industries of the West European countries were able to overcome the crisis and reach their pre-war production level. On the one hand, the United States, where the industrial upswing had begun as early as 1922, had surpassed in volume, by 1929, the combined production of Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Japan. On the other, the economies of some countries, such as Britain, for example, were practically at a standstill throughout the period in question. In Britain, industrial

production was barely back to the 1913 level by 1929, but her foreign trade never reached its pre-war level. In France the growth of industrial production proceeded at a very uneven rate. Some branches of her economy, such as the metallurgical, engineering and chemical industries, achieved a substantial increase of output, while her light industry (especially textile and leather) continued in a state of stagnation or decline.

A notable feature of the 1924-29 stabilisation period was the failure of practically all the capitalist states to overcome even then the crisis in agriculture. And as far as the economically relatively backward capitalist countries of Eastern Europe were concerned, stabilisation in these was achieved either considerably later than 1924 or not at all.

There was also some improvement in the domestic political situation in the capitalist states between the years 1924 and 1929. The violence and bloodshed resorted to earlier by the bourgeoisie in dealing with the working people's demonstrations were abandoned in most countries in favour of so-called normal bourgeois-democratic methods of maintaining their domination.

US Imperialism and Capitalist Europe. The Dawes Plan

The economic and political stabilisation of capitalism in Europe was to a great extent facilitated by the position of the United States. In December 1923, President Coolidge, in his message to Congress, declared the American Government prepared to aid Western Europe economically and financially. The reasons that prompted the war-enriched American bourgeoisie to offer this so-called aid had nothing to do with philanthropy. In the first place, there was the European debt, amounting (with interest) to \$7,200 million, which the United States was eager to collect. In the second place, American capital was seeking profitable opportunities for heavy investments elsewhere than in the Western hemisphere and eyeing Germany and other European countries with this in mind. Currency stability was essential for any such investments, and that could be found only in a country with a more or less stable economy. In the third place—and this was of the greatest importance to them—the United States ruling circles, in offering their financial and economic aid to European countries, were guided by considerations of class solidarity with the bourgeoisie of these countries, a desire to bolster its position, weakened as it had become during the years of revolutionary crises, and to help it cope with the workers' movement.

Such were the considerations that motivated the United States when it offered, late in 1923, a scheme for settling one of the crucial international issues of the time, namely, that of reparations. This was the problem that had served to seriously aggravate the relations between Germany and the countries of the Entente and had caused France to send her troops into the Ruhr.

Working under C. G. Dawes, an American financial expert, an international commission evolved a new reparation plan, which was duly approved at an allied conference held in London in July and August 1924. The Dawes Plan, as it came to be known, sought to provide tangible security for German reparation payments by reconstructing her economy. An international loan of 800 million marks was to be made available to Germany to that end. By far the greater part of the reparations was to be paid out of indirect taxes on consumer necessities and revenues from industry and railways. The Dawes Plan offered all sorts of opportunities for an influx of foreign capital (chiefly American) into Germany as well as for American supervision over its employment. The head of the reparations agency and many of its staff were Americans.

Primarily, the Dawes Plan was aimed at bolstering capitalism in Germany, reconstructing, with the aid of American and British loans, the country's war industry, and eventually using Germany as a striking force in the struggle waged by capitalism against the Soviet Union and the revolutionary movement in Europe. These aims served to reconcile, in a measure, the contradictions which existed between the American, British and French imperialists and the ruling circles of the Germany they had defeated. This reconciliation could not last, however, since the German imperialists wanted all further reparation claims canceled, even though they stood to profit from the Dawes Plan. The decisions made in London in 1924 meant a victory for the American ruling circles and their foreign policies, and dealt a damaging blow to the French imperialists, who were forced to withdraw their troops from the Ruhr and refrain henceforward from any unilateral methods of regulating the reparations problem. While the Dawes Plan was being worked out Britain had supported the United States. Yet it was precisely the United States that she recognised as her principal rival in the struggle for supremacy in the capitalist world. Between Britain and France, however, as between France and Germany, France and Italy, and Germany and the smaller countries of Eastern Europe allied with France—contradictions were becoming more and more exacerbated.

The Locarno Treaties

Bourgeois propaganda did its best to camouflage the true substance and anti-Soviet aims of the Dawes Plan, which it sought to present as a concrete achievement of the policy of peace and international co-operation and a first step towards general pacification in Europe. Much the same sort of publicity was given in the West to the Locarno treaties concluded in October 1925. These treaties, concluded at a conference of the heads of government and foreign ministers of a number of European capitalist countries at Locarno, Switzerland, comprised, among other things, a treaty of guarantee of Germany's western frontiers and several arbitration conventions. The conference, in which the leading role belonged to Britain and France, guaranteed the inviolability of the German-French and German-Belgian frontiers; the issue of guarantees in respect of the Polish-German and German-Czechoslovak frontiers was left open, however. The Western powers thereby left imperialist Germany freedom of action in Eastern Europe, in the hope that any aggression on its part would develop in that direction and lead to an armed clash with the Soviet Union. A flood of pacifist verbiage was loosed by the authors of the Locarno treaties (A. Chamberlain, A. Briand, G. Stresemann) in an effort to draw attention away from the anti-Soviet substance thereof. No amount of bourgeois propaganda, however, could conceal the fact that the collusion achieved by the Western powers and imperialist Germany at Locarno was profoundly injurious to the interests of the European nations and threatened further international complications and conflicts.

Rationalisation of Production; Class Battles of the Proletariat

Between 1924 and 1929 the bourgeoisie initiated a campaign for the rationalisation of production, with a view to consolidating its dominance. This involved the introduction of new equipment, plant modernisation, etc., but it was achieved, in the main, by such methods as all-out intensification of labour, speed-up of assembly-line and mass production operations, sweating system of work, etc.

A direct result of this rationalisation campaign undertaken in the capitalist countries was a substantial increase in the output and hence higher living standards for certain categories of workers. On the other hand, that same rationalisation meant physical exhaustion, death from accidents, and loss of their jobs for hundreds of thousands of workers in the capitalist countries.



Tram-car workers' demonstration during general strike, Manchester (1926)

This was in line with the imperialist monopolies' policy of nullifying the social and economic gains that the workers had won in the preceding years. And the workers rose in vigorous defence of their interests.

The fact is that throughout this period the working class never for a moment ceased to resist exploitation and to fight for better working conditions and higher living standards. A miners' strike, brought on mainly by the anti-labour policy pursued by the Conservative government in Britain between 1924 and 1926, developed, in May 1926, into a general strike that involved something like 6,000,000 workers. This was the greatest organised workers' action Britain had ever known. It lasted from May 4 to May 12, and its repercussions were felt all over the world. The miners continued their strike for another seven months after the general strike was over. Though the workers were defeated, chiefly through betrayal by the British trade union leaders, the events of 1926 showed that the British proletariat was stronger and more militant than before and fully determined to stand up for its rights and resist the monopolies and the Conservative government that backed them.

In Austria, early in 1927, the workers began a struggle against the anti-labour policies of the reactionary Seipel government

whose aims included abolition of the eight-hour working day and social insurance for the unemployed, raising taxes, and other similar measures. Armed clashes between police and workers occurred in Vienna during July, the workers putting up a valiant fight despite a shortage of arms.

The Soviet Union and the Capitalist World: 1924-1929

This period, which was marked by partial and erratic stabilisation in the capitalist world, witnessed steady development of the entire economy of the Soviet Union. It was this growth of the country's economic, political and military might that made the world bourgeoisie abandon their policy of boycotting the Soviet Union. By 1924 the leading statesmen of many European countries had come to realise the complete futility of that policy. Businessmen in capitalist countries were interested in economic contacts with the Soviet Union, in developing, more specifically, mutually profitable trade. And this trend helped tip the scale in favour of granting recognition to the Soviet state. The principle of peaceful co-existence, as between capitalism and socialism, which the Soviet Government had been propounding, was slowly but surely making headway and becoming the decisive factor in shaping the relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world.

The recognition period, so to speak, was started by Great Britain, which established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Government on February 1, 1924. She was followed a week later by the Italian Government, which announced its recognition of the USSR and the conclusion of a trade agreement between the two countries. Austria, Greece, Sweden, Norway, Mexico, China, France, Japan and several other countries followed suit and established diplomatic relations with the USSR. The United States of America, alone among the great powers, refused to regulate its relations with the USSR. Indeed, its ruling circles made no small effort to restrain other capitalist countries from normalising their relations with the USSR, though this effort proved largely a failure.

That did not mean that the bellicose imperialist reactionaries had discarded for good their lunatic scheme of sapping the strength of the Soviet Union and dealing it a death-blow. Far from it. The Locarno Conference, for example, had aimed primarily at uniting the leading imperialist powers in an anti-Soviet bloc, with Germany as the main striking force. In May

1927 following a police raid on the Arcos,¹ the Conservative Baldwin-Chamberlain government of Britain broke off diplomatic and trade relations with the USSR. This provocation was but one link in the chain of anti-Soviet acts committed by world reactionaries in 1926-27. Others were the British-inspired raids of Chinese militarists on the premises of Soviet representations in Peking, Shanghai and Canton; the murder of P. L. Voikov, Soviet ambassador to Poland; the initiation of an anti-Soviet campaign in France in 1927, etc.

The British Government had hoped that the disruption of diplomatic relations with the USSR would spark similar action on the part of other capitalist countries and add momentum to the building up of an anti-Soviet front. But none of these hopes and plans of the British reactionaries materialised: they fell through in the face of the Soviet Union's consistent peace policy and refusal to be provoked into conflicts, and in the face of such factors as the growing contradictions among the capitalist countries and the active struggle of the masses everywhere in support of the world's first socialist state. In the end the rulers of Britain themselves were compelled to admit defeat, and in October 1929, diplomatic relations between Britain and the Soviet Union were re-established.

PARTIAL STABILISATION OF CAPITALISM ENDS. GROWING THREAT OF NEW WORLD WAR (1929-1939)

World-Wide Economic Crisis 1929-1933

The partial stabilisation of 1924-29 proved to be but a brief interlude in the evolution of the capitalist system. In the autumn of 1929 an economic crisis of unprecedented magnitude overtook the capitalist countries. It lasted to 1933, longer, that is to say, than any of the preceding crises. Though universal in the capitalist world, its impact was strongest in the United States, the leading capitalist country.

An industrial overproduction crisis was accompanied by a grave agricultural crisis and a financial collapse. Numerous banks, enterprises and firms of all kinds became bankrupt. Millions of small-business enterprises failed. 30,000,000 persons found themselves out of work. Industrial production in the capitalist world diminished by 35-40 per cent, and even more in particular countries where the production level dropped to that at the break of the century. Millions of bags of coffee were

¹ *Arcos*—Soviet trading organisation in Britain.—*Ed.*

dumped into the sea, and hundreds of thousands of tons of wheat were burned in the furnaces of factories and locomotives in an effort to raise prices and stop further loss of profits by the monopolies. And in the meantime over 100,000,000 workers, with their families, deprived of their livelihood, faced poverty and starvation.

After the crisis of 1929-33 a long period of depression set in, to be broken, in 1937, by a new economic crisis. Some of the capitalist countries were spared this time, nor was the crisis as grave as that which broke out in 1929. Germany, Japan and Italy remained unaffected, charged to capacity as they were with government war orders. Preparations for war, it must be said, strongly influenced economic development in the capitalist world. As to the latest crisis, this was cushioned, in 1939, by the outbreak of the Second World War.

During the crisis of 1929-33 the contradictions between the victors and the vanquished of the First World War became particularly accentuated, as did those between the imperialist states and their colonies, and also those between workers and capitalists.

Attempts to End Crisis at the Expense of the USSR

The crisis also aggravated the basic contradiction of our time, that between capitalism and socialism. All the while the edifice of world capitalism was being rocked by that economic crisis, unprecedented in point of magnitude and scale, the Soviet Union steadily pursued the task of building a new way of life. The socialist system gave proof after proof of its superiority over capitalism in ordering the social and economic activities of its peoples as well as its foreign relations; and all this served to give a powerful impetus to developing offensive of the oppressed masses against capitalism.

Confronted with this situation, the leading reactionary and aggressive elements of the world bourgeoisie strove to find a way out of the economic crisis through a war on the Soviet Union. Joint armed intervention was actually under discussion among the ruling circles of a number of imperialist states in 1929-32. There came, one after another, various noisy campaigns of protest against "Soviet dumping", "forced labour", etc., and anti-Soviet provocations and terrorist assaults, as in Finland, France and elsewhere. In their efforts to create an anti-Soviet bloc the European capitalist countries designated a special role to the France-sponsored scheme of "Pan-Europe". In May 1930, A. Briand, the French foreign minister, invited twenty-seven states (excluding

the Soviet Union) to join in forming a so-called European Federal Union. The authors of the scheme expected that such a union would strengthen the influence of France in European affairs and at the same time confront the Soviet Union with a "united" capitalist Europe.

Profound contradictions within the imperialist camp, however, prevented the scheme hatched by the French statesmen from being executed. Britain, Germany and Italy, for instance, were obviously disinclined to support a scheme that would strengthen the position of France. And after protracted and fruitless debates the "Pan-European" plan was finally relegated to the archives of the League of Nations.

As the international situation became more and more aggravated and the imperialist forces showed themselves increasingly bellicose, there was one problem, the solution of which would have been important: this was the problem of disarmament. The solution of this problem would have saved mankind from the approaching disaster. The Preparatory Commission of the Disarmament Conference had been set up by the League of Nations in 1925, but neither the Commission nor the Conference itself, which worked in Geneva until 1934, did anything to solve this most crucial international issue.

While verbally proclaiming themselves ready to disarm and swamping the Conference with all sorts of projects allegedly designed to solve the problem under consideration, the imperialist states had begun to arm feverishly in preparation for war. Therein lay the reason for the vehemence with which they countered the proposals of the Soviet Union, the only concrete and workable proposals submitted to the Conference. As a result of this attitude of the imperialist powers the Disarmament Conference ended in a blind alley.

Japan Attacks China

While disarmament was being heatedly argued at Geneva, an unexpected though carefully prepared attack was launched against the Northeastern provinces of China (Manchuria) by Japan, a member of the League of Nations. Thus, in September 1931, the first hotbed of war emerged in the Far East.

The reason why Japan was first to seek forcible repudiation of the system established by the Treaty of Versailles and the Washington Conference is not difficult to understand. Hard stricken by the economic crisis and menaced by brewing domestic upheavals, Japan saw a possible way out in war. The Japanese ruling clique had been drumming into the ears of the masses the

idea that only a major war and the conquest of wide areas in China would assure Japan opportunities for further development.

Despite the fact that Japan's invasion of China was a flagrant act of aggression and a clear violation of the Covenant of the League of Nations, that body dodged the application of sanctions against Japan. Debate on the Sino-Japanese conflict in the Council and other League of Nations bodies developed into endless prattle which clearly showed that neither Britain nor France intended to intervene in order to halt Japanese expansion even though they had condemned it as overt aggression.

Such a stand on the part of the ruling circles of the Western powers resulted from their hopes that the Japanese, once they were in occupation of Manchuria, would move on northward and make war on the USSR. Those in power in Britain, France and the United States expected that Japan, exhausted as she would be by her far-flung campaigns in Manchuria and seriously weakened by an armed conflict with the Soviet Union, would be forced to accept such conditions as would be dictated by her more powerful imperialist rivals.

Contrary to these expectations the Japanese military, now well into China and overrunning one Chinese province after another, were in no hurry to comply with the wishes of Washington, London and Paris. Completely ignoring American and British interests in China, the Japanese military seized American and British-owned property, while nationals of both countries were frequently arrested and beaten. In March 1933, Japan walked out of the League of Nations, thereby demonstrating her utter contempt for the "peace-makers" of Geneva.

Reactionaries Gain in Japan. Sino-Japanese War Begins

Taking advantage of the conniving attitude of the Western powers and the anti-democratic policies practised by the Kuomintang leadership which offered virtually no resistance to the Japanese invaders, imperialist Japan continued her conquest of China. The Japanese considered that the Soviet Union alone could actually interfere with their plans in regard to China. Therefore schemes for a war against the Soviet Union were accordingly in preparation, and the Kwantung army, which was a formidable military force, was stationed along the Soviet frontier.

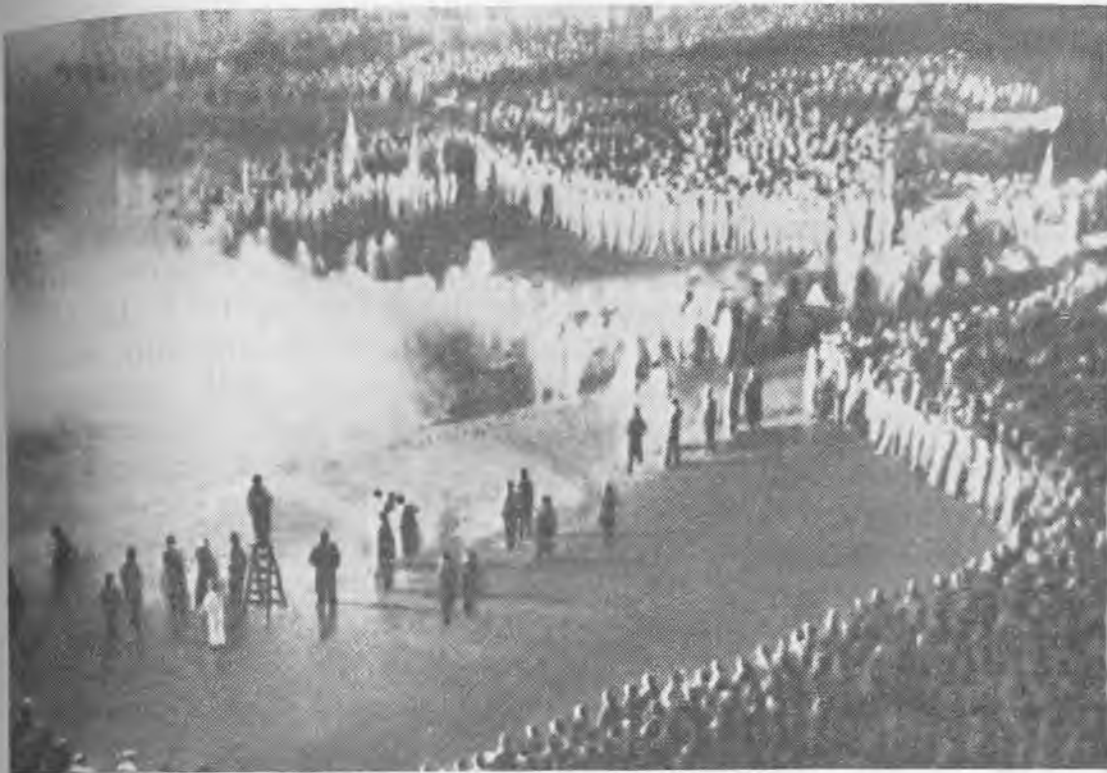
In Japan proper, fascist-type military groups were becoming increasingly active. Their object was to establish a dictatorship,

dismiss the parliament, and crush once and for all the labour organisations, which were regarded as the chief hotbed of "dangerous ideas" (an expression coined by General Araki, a fiery militarist and one-time minister of education). In February 1936, a group of young officers belonging to the Kodoha organisation staged a *coup d'état* in which the head of the government and a number of high officials were killed. Nevertheless, the *coup d'état* ended in failure: its success would have meant the victory of the landowners group, something that could not be tolerated by the leading industrial monopolists group, both groups constituting the country's ruling class. Still, the February *coup d'état* helped strengthen the reactionary elements, especially the military clique. As cabinet succeeded cabinet in the months that followed, the influence of the military clique grew; and the army was in a position to topple any cabinet by recalling the minister of war, inasmuch as a new law required that the post be held only by a general on active duty.

The military clique continued urging the country's ruling circles to new ventures in the sphere of foreign policy, tending to regard these as a means of dealing away with the growing social contradictions. Industrial conflicts were increasingly frequent in 1937; and more active forms were being employed by the workers in their struggle. Dissatisfaction was rife in the rural areas as well. In the parliamentary elections held in April the Socialist Party, acting as a legal organisation, secured 37 seats (as against 19 in the previous parliament). Moreover, symptoms of a gathering economic crisis appeared once again. In the face of all these developments the Japanese imperialists found it expedient to widen decisively the scope of their efforts to subjugate China. On July 7, 1937, a Japanese military force provoked an incident at Luk'ouch'iao bridge near Peking, and the Japanese army proceeded to occupy the country's central provinces. This was the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war, which was to last more than eight years.

Fascists Seize Power in Germany

The impunity with which Japan pursued her aggression in Asia lent wings to the German militarists in Europe. The world economic crisis of 1929-33 had hit Germany particularly hard. Practically all branches of the country's economy had suffered. In their anxiety to shift the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the workers and peasants the German ruling circles passed extraordinary decrees enforcing such measures as wage cuts, new taxes, cuts in unemployment and disability allowances, etc. Polit-



Book-burning by nazis, Berlin (1933)

ical rights and freedoms were increasingly restricted; the German Reichstag (supreme legislature) was being shorn of its functions, which were being illegally appropriated by President Hindenburg, of monarchist leanings.

The reactionary policies pursued by the German bourgeoisie met with the growing resistance of the workers and peasants. The Communist Party of Germany led by E. Thaelmann and W. Pieck was their vanguard. Although a considerable part of the workers still followed the Right-wing Social-Democrats who urged support of the bourgeois government, the Communists wielded greater and greater influence among the workers. Back in 1928, 3,200,000 had voted the communist ticket in the Reichstag elections, whereas in the elections of November 1932, the Communists received approximately 6,000,000 votes. Meantime, however, the fascist party under Hitler, working a good deal faster than the Communists, strengthened and expanded their own hold upon the masses. The country's capitalist monopolies were building up the fascist party as a force which was intended to replace the bourgeois and Social-Democratic parties at the helm of the state, for the policies of these parties were becoming increasingly unpopular among the masses. Making wide use of mob-oratory tactics, the fascists made magnanimous promises

right and left, unleashing, meanwhile, a campaign of terror against their political opponents.

In the prevailing situation the German ruling classes realised that, if their main aim was to be achieved, a strong government had to be established, all bourgeois-democratic freedoms abolished, and the Communist Party crushed. That main aim was to put the country on a war footing, start a war for a repartitioning of the world and take a revenge for the defeat of 1918. In 1932 a final decision was made to establish a fascist dictatorship, which meant a take-over by the most reactionary and aggressive elements among the German capitalists. The task was made all the easier by the policy followed by the Social-Democratic Party and trade union leaders, which consisted in splitting the working class and keeping the workers from trying to stop the fascists. The national-socialist (nazi) take-over was accomplished on January 30, 1933. A bloodthirsty nazi dictatorship was set up, which was to last over twelve years.

Nazi Foreign and Domestic Policies

The nazi political programme, both foreign and domestic, was one of extreme reaction, bestial chauvinism, aggression and war. At home, the nazis did away with all democratic freedoms, broke up the Communist Party and all other political parties except their own, and went about the physical extermination of all progressive elements. Whoever or whatever interfered with the propaganda of fascist ideas was banished or destroyed. Such outstanding members of the German intelligentsia and exponents of German culture as A. Einstein, L. Feuchtwanger, T. Mann and A. Zweig, and many others were compelled to leave Germany. Bonfires burned throughout the country and the twentieth-century inquisitors committed the best of German literature and that of other nations to their flames.

The nazis declared the Germans to be the "master race" and exhorted them to plunder and destroy other nations. They proclaimed German domination of the world to be their aim. They wanted to enlist the support of the reactionaries in Britain, the United States and other Western countries in their preparations for a war of revenge, and to that end they proclaimed that they were Europe's bulwark against the "communist menace" and that their military programme was directed solely against the Soviet Union.

Tools of the monopolies that they were, the German fascists posed as the "friends of the working people", promised them

untold wealth in the event of foreign conquests, and "bestowed largess" on some categories of workers and peasants. Unfortunately, fascist propaganda found quite a few willing listeners among the petty bourgeoisie, peasants, youth, as well as among the less politically conscious workers.

Ruling Circles of Western Powers Aid Nazi Regime

The American and British imperialists did much to help establish and strengthen the fascist dictatorship in Germany. We have already seen that as soon as the Treaty of Versailles was signed the ruling circles of Britain, the United States and certain other Western powers undertook to rebuild Germany's industrial and military potential. Between 1924 and 1930, for instance, credits and loans to Germany totalled the round sum of 21,000 million German marks.

In parallel with the economic aid made available to the German militarists certain concessions were made in the political sphere. In June 1933, that is within a few months after Hitler's accession to power, four countries, namely, Britain, France, Germany and Italy, signed a pact of accord and co-operation. Although this four-power pact was never ratified and thus never acquired legal force, the very fact of its conclusion encouraged the German nazis and Italian fascists in their policy of provoking dangerous international conflicts. In October 1933, Germany walked out of the League of Nations and began to go about her preparations for a war of revenge. Thus a second hotbed of war came into existence, this time in the heart of Europe. The nazi rulers of Germany, anxious that their true aims should remain a secret, continued to assert that they were out to combat communism; but people everywhere were beginning to realise that what the nazis really aimed at was German domination of Europe and, indeed, of the world.

Implementation of the nazi programme of conquest called for a war not only against the Soviet Union but also against France, Britain, the United States and other Western countries. Aware of the trend of events and solicitous of the interests of their country, L. Barthou, the French foreign minister, and a number of prominent French statesmen proposed creating a united front of peace-loving states to meet the threat of nazi aggression. Barthou quite rightly argued that this threat could not be effectively met without the participation of the Soviet Union. In September 1934, therefore, thirty member-states of the League of Nations invited the Soviet Union to join the League. Hoping thereby to buttress the



Anti-fascist demonstration in Paris, February 12, 1934

peace the Soviet Union accepted the invitation and on September 18 was officially admitted as a member of the League of Nations. Seconding the Soviet Government, Barthou worked for the conclusion of an East European pact of mutual assistance, considering that such a pact would be a step towards the creation of a system of collective security. The pact was to include all the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and also France; but owing to the equivocal attitude of Britain and as a result of German pressure it was never concluded.

Anti-Fascist Popular Front in France and Elsewhere

The nazi victory in Germany, in 1933, and the unprecedented reign of terror that followed stirred the hitherto slumbering forces of reaction, darkness, chauvinism and war nearly everywhere in the capitalist countries, in some of which these forces were already fighting to seize the power.



Georgi Dimitrov addressing the Seventh Comintern Congress (1935)

The terrible threat of fascism to the peoples of the world lay in the fact that it meant the destruction of all democratic freedoms, all the political and social gains that the working class had won in long years of struggle, and that it meant nothing but slavery, spiritual degradation and cruel suffering under the yoke of tyranny. Fascism stood for terror and unbridled reaction at home and wars of conquest and plunder abroad, all for the sake of enriching a handful of imperialists. A deadly danger hung over our civilisation and, indeed, all of mankind.

True democrats, all those who valued the freedom and independence of their country, saw very clearly the necessity of joining forces and standing shoulder to shoulder in order to stop the advance of fascism. And the working class, especially the Communist Parties, which constituted its vanguard, became the main force of the anti-fascist movement.

The main battle-field where the forces of anti-fascism came to grips with the fascists was France. The successes registered by the nazi thugs stirred the French fascists to action, and on February 6, 1934, armed fascist bands poured into the streets of Paris. While the Daladier (Radical) cabinet vacillated, the French proletariat—Communists and Socialists—took up the challenge and forced the fascists to beat a retreat. February 9 and 12 were marked by powerful anti-fascist strikes and demonstrations all over France. In those days, at first spontaneously and then with full awareness of what they faced, the workers strove to achieve a unity of action in their struggle against fascism. The French Communists did much then to consolidate the gains of the day.

The fascist victory in Germany had been facilitated in a great measure by the split in the ranks of the working class, which served, moreover, to weaken the links between the proletariat and other democratic forces. In France, the necessary inferences had been drawn from the German events. The French Communist Party, headed by Maurice Thorez, succeeded in overcoming the split within the working class; and on June 27, 1934, a pact was signed, providing for a unity of action by the Communist and Socialist parties. That was the beginning of a united anti-fascist front.

The united front of the working class now became the nucleus, the corner-stone, of the Popular Front against fascism and war. On the initiative of the French Communist Party the political parties of France—Radical, Socialist and Communist; the trade unions; the various democratic and anti-fascist organisations; the masses of workers, intelligentsia and petty bourgeoisie that followed their leadership—all these united in the anti-fascist Popular Front in the name of freedom, democratic rights, and peace.

In July 1934, an agreement on the unity of action was concluded between the Communist and Socialist parties of Italy.

On July 14, 1935, a great demonstration was organised by the Popular Front in Paris. Communists, Socialists and Radical Socialists, marching arm in arm in the front ranks, were followed by countless numbers of democratically-minded Parisians. The anti-fascist Popular Front in France proved that when united the working class, the people are in a position to block the forces of extreme reaction.

Between July 25 and August 25, 1935, there was held the Seventh Congress of the Comintern whose decisions were of major significance for the development of the people's struggle against fascism. Georgi Dimitrov¹ submitted to the Congress the basic report, in which the Communist International outlined the broad and largely revised tasks to be accomplished in the struggle against the threat of fascism and war. With the lessons of the fascist victory in Germany and the results of the anti-fascist struggle in France in mind, the Seventh Congress set before all Communist Parties the task of creating everywhere a united proletarian front which would be the keystone of a broad anti-fascist Popular Front uniting millions of workers and members of the middle classes.

Succeeding events soon confirmed the wisdom of the Congress's programme. In France, the Popular Front won a resounding victory in the parliamentary elections held in the spring of 1936, when the parties aligned with the Front won 54 per cent of the seats. Also, early in 1936, the Communist Party of Spain achieved the conclusion of the Popular Front Pact, uniting the Left-wing democratic parties and the workers' organisations. In the February 1936 parliamentary elections in Spain a decisive victory was won by the Popular Front, causing rabid hate among the reactionaries in Spain and elsewhere.

In China, the efforts of the Communist Party during 1936-37 brought about the creation of a united anti-Japanese national front. A Popular Front movement was started in Chile, and soon achieved substantial success. Movements in favour of uniting all progressive elements gathered momentum in other Latin American countries as well, though in some they were unable to overcome the forces of reaction.

Anti-fascist feeling ran high, too, in other countries, as in Great Britain, for instance, where no organised Popular Front movement similar to that in France or Spain existed. A peace ballot

¹ Georgi Dimitrov (1882-1949)—Bulgarian Communist leader, fearless fighter against fascism.—*Ed.*



Anti-fascist demonstration in New York (1934)

was carried out towards the end of 1934, and its results showed that British public opinion had markedly veered: of the over 11,500,000 who were polled by far the greater majority voted for peace, for a policy of collective security, and for unity of action against the aggressors.

Fascist aggression in Europe could have been seriously hampered if the mutual assistance agreements between the USSR and France and between the USSR and Czechoslovakia, signed in May 1935, had been implemented. That they were not was due to the fact that they had been sabotaged by the French and Czechoslovak policy-makers to the great detriment of the cause of peace.

The New Deal in the USA

In the United States, in 1933, after many years' interval, the Democratic Party was back in power once again. This development was due to the complete failure of the Republicans, who had loudly boasted about American prosperity before the years of depression turned that prosperity into untold poverty for the masses, brought unemployment to 16,000,000, and ruined hundreds of thousands of farm households. Franklin Roosevelt, the Democratic candidate, was elected president because he saw and argued the necessity of changing the government's policy. American capitalism found itself in a tight corner, and the bourgeoisie had every reason to fear that misery would drive the masses to action that would imperil its dominant position. A far-sighted statesman, Roosevelt saw such a possibility before anyone else. Upon his inauguration he worked out and subsequently began to put through a series of measures which came to be known as the New Deal. They provided for certain concessions to the workers, for the creation of a wide range of public works designed to absorb part of the unemployed, for cushioning the crisis in agriculture, and so on.

Roosevelt's policies encountered strong opposition on the part of certain important quarters identified with American monopoly capital. Thus, the United States Supreme Court, which became the nucleus of this opposition, rescinded a number of laws passed by Congress.

Promises alone, however, were not enough for the working class; and in the late 1930s a wave of strikes swept the country. The American trade union movement was rapidly veering to the Left. Representative of this trend was the creation (and subsequent sustained growth) of a federation of trade unions known initially as the Committee for Industrial Organisations and later

as the Congress of Industrial Organisations (CIO), which united the particularly exploited elements of the working class. Mass action on a growing scale forced the ruling circles to meet the demands of the workers, that is, to raise wages, introduce social insurance, etc. Roosevelt's popularity grew accordingly: he was re-elected in 1936; and he won the elections of 1940 and 1944, which was something unprecedented in United States history. He enjoyed the support of the country's progressive elements, even though they criticised some of his measures as being only half-measures reflecting his desire to avoid irking the reactionary monopolists.

Roosevelt's foreign policies came in for particularly bitter criticism on the part of the progressive elements. However, he did, indeed, show himself capable of a realistic approach in this sphere as well, as, for example, by re-establishing, in 1933, diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, the suspension of which had become obviously detrimental to the United States while the country was in the grip of a vicious economic crisis. In regard to the fascist aggression, however, which was the crucial international issue in the 1930s, the United States Government steered a course basically similar to that of Britain and France, who looked upon the fascist encroachments with indulgence. This attitude of the United States ruling circles was a direct challenge to those millions of Americans who were determined that the aggressions should be stopped and who had joined the movement for creating a Popular Front in the United States. The American Communist Party, whose membership had then increased to 100,000, was in the vanguard of that movement.

War Threat Grows. The Policy of Appeasement

In October 1934, the French Foreign Minister Barthou was brutally killed by fascist agents. This assassination made it much easier for the reactionary forces of the Western powers to make a deal with the fascist aggressors at the expense of other nations.

Neither Britain, nor France, nor the United States which stood behind them, took any steps to counter such unilateral acts on the part of Germany as the introduction of compulsory military service, in March 1935; the military occupation, in March 1936, of the demilitarised zone on the left bank of the Rhine, which had served in some measure as a guarantee against any sudden German attack against France; and other similar acts in defiance of the restrictions imposed by the Treaty of Versailles. Notes of



Volunteers arm at Addis Ababa (1935)

protest were dispatched to Berlin, at best, and these were completely disregarded by the nazi leaders. In June 1935, the British Government concluded a naval agreement with Germany, giving an official sanction to the revival of German sea power. With Britain and France thus conniving at the infringement of international treaties and even giving the fascist aggressors encouragement, Italy saw the way open for an invasion of Ethiopia, which was duly launched in October 1935. This was a war of conquest, begun by a member-state of the League of Nations against a fellow-member, and public indignation compelled that organisation to declare Italy an aggressor. No effective collective action was taken, however, such as was proposed by the Soviet Union. And in 1936, with nothing to counter Italian planes, tanks and other weapons, Ethiopia was conquered.

Civil War in Spain

The ambition of the fascist powers grew by leaps and bounds. During the summer of 1936 the Spanish reactionaries under General Franco staged an armed revolt against the lawful Popular Front government. The revolt developed into a civil war in which the German and Italian fascists lost no time in intervening on the side of the rebels, whom they supplied with tanks,

planes and warships, in addition to sending sizable expeditionary forces. While the joint German and Italian intervention grew in scope with every passing day, the governments of the Western powers, and the League of Nations which was to all intents and purposes under their control, did not lift a finger to aid the Spanish people in the desperate battle they were waging against their foes, domestic and external. A Non-Intervention Committee was set up under Anglo-French sponsorship; but this Committee soon became virtually a screen behind which Germany and Italy continued, unimpeded, their intervention against the Spanish Republic.

The revolutionary war of the Spanish people is one of the most glorious episodes in its history and in the annals of proletarian internationalism. Progressive elements all over the world rose to the aid of the Spanish republicans. Volunteers from dozens of countries were organised in several international brigades, which joined the republican troops battling against the superior combined forces of the rebels and interventionists. They did much to repulse the first enemy attack in the autumn of 1936, and distinguished themselves in numerous later battles. Substantial aid, in the shape of arms and men, was given to the Spanish people by the Soviet Union. Thanks to this aid from the world's progressive forces, but above all thanks to the heroism of millions of



Detachment of people's militia leaving for front, Madrid (1936)



Soviet ship arriving at Barcelona (1936)

Spaniards, Republican Spain was able to accept the challenge and carry on the fight against great odds for over two and a half years. The inspirer and the driving force in this struggle against fascism was the Spanish Communist Party and its leaders, José Diaz and Dolores Ibárruri. Under the Republican government far-reaching social changes had been worked in Spain, where the working people now played an important role in governing the country. To cancel these gains became the aim of General Franco's followers and the fascist interventionists, who were winning more and more favour in the eyes of the ruling circles of Britain, France and the United States. Their joint effort finally crushed the Spanish Republic. In April 1939, aided from within the city by the traitors, the fascist forces entered Madrid.

Fascist Powers' Coalition. Western Powers Seek Understanding with Fascist Bloc

Having carried off their acts of aggression with impunity, Germany, Italy and Japan now proceeded to join forces. Over the years 1936 and 1937 a coalition of fascist powers took shape,

initially as a Berlin-Rome Axis and later as a Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Triangle. The leading role in this aggressors' bloc belonged to nazi Germany. Subsequent developments followed a pattern: the fascist powers, intent on speeding up their preparations for a major war, struck blow after blow at Britain, France and the United States in Europe, Asia and Africa, while the governments of these countries, blinded by their class hatred of the Soviet Union, continued to believe that Germany, having absorbed the minor states situated on the approaches to the Soviet Union, would make war only on that country and none other.

In May 1937, Neville Chamberlain became Prime Minister of Great Britain. A Conservative, just elected leader of his party, Chamberlain was a determined advocate of British-German cooperation. The advent of the Chamberlain cabinet meant that the British ruling circles would now seek an early and broad agreement with the fascist powers, so as to turn the nazi aggression eastward. This policy enjoyed the support of the men then at the helm in the United States, France and other Western states. In November 1937, Lord Halifax, one of Chamberlain's closest associates, went to Germany to negotiate with Hitler. In the course of their meeting Halifax told Hitler that Britain would place no obstacles in the way of fascist expansion in Eastern Europe and implied in no uncertain terms that German "acquisition" of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Danzig would meet with no objection on Britain's part.

Hitler Occupies Austria and Dismembers Czechoslovakia. The Munich Deal

Thus encouraged by the ruling circles of the Western states to further acts of aggression, the nazis occupied Austria in March 1938, and started preparations for the occupation of Czechoslovakia. To provoke a conflict, they claimed to be acting on behalf of the German minority in Czechoslovakia, whereas their true intention was to annex the highly important industrial and strategic Sudeten region, and to dismember and subjugate the country. From the very beginning of the conflict Britain and France may be said to have given their unreserved support to the nazi ambitions.

Exercising unrelenting pressure on Czechoslovakia and taking full advantage of the defeatist mood of its leaders, Chamberlain and Daladier extorted concession after concession from that country. That was not enough for the nazi rulers, however. On September 29 and 30, 1938, Chamberlain and Daladier held a conference with Hitler and Mussolini in Munich, which sealed



Meeting of protest against Munich pact, London (1938)

Czechoslovakia's fate. As a result of the Munich deal Czechoslovakia was partitioned, certain important areas being given to Germany, which meant that the country was shorn of its defences and foredoomed to complete occupation by the nazis, which is what happened six months later. But the Munich deal did more than surrender Czechoslovakia to Hitler. On September 30 an Anglo-German non-aggression declaration was signed at the conference. And in December of the same year a similar declaration was signed by France and Germany.

Post-Munich Policies of Imperialist Powers

The agreements signed at Munich were the high-water mark of the foreign policies of the Western powers over the entire period between the two world wars. What the Western powers hoped to bring about was a German attack against the Soviet Union. The ruling circles of Britain, the United States and France were not reticent about their hopes that nazi Germany, having launched its war against the Soviet Union, would find itself bogged in its vast expanses, would exhaust its military and economic resources and thus cease to be a menace for the Western powers.

While it was a most important milestone on the road of appease-

ment of nazi Germany and her Axis allies, the Munich deal did not signify the end of that disaster-laden policy. That policy was continued after September 30, 1938, and it was high-lighted by the following events: a deal with the German and Italian aggressors resulting in the crushing of Republican Spain (March 1939); connivance at the nazi occupation of all of Czechoslovakia (March 1939), and the Italian occupation of Albania (April 1939); and, finally, secret negotiations between the British and German governments, in the summer of 1939, regarding a broad political and economic settlement and a partitioning of spheres of influence.

The impetuous development and continuous success of fascist aggression during 1938 and 1939 led to a sharp change in the balance of power in favour of the fascist bloc, both in Europe and in the world at large. This caused growing concern among the peoples of the Western states. In Britain, France and the United States influential newspapers and many prominent soldiers and statesmen voiced sharp criticism in regard to the policy of appeasement and deals with the fascist aggressors. The British and French governments were compelled to reckon with their mood. They also could not avoid seeing that their positions all over the world were kept under continuous attack by the fascist powers, which were winning new markets, greedily eyeing many Western colonies, etc. The fascist bloc was pouring its secret agents into scores of countries to prepare the ground for subsequent invasion and occupation (such agents came to be referred to as the "fifth column" during the fascist intervention in Spain). The threat to the imperialist interests of Britain and France, to their very existence, indeed, and the acuteness of contradictions between them and the countries of the fascist camp were no secret to the ruling circles of the grouping that opposed the latter in the international arena. Britain and France were therefore constrained to resort to certain measures designed to warn Germany and her allies against presenting any fresh territorial demands in respect of areas where they—Britain and France—would not see fit to grant them.

In the nature of such warnings were the pledges of assistance in the event of nazi attack, which London and Paris gave to Poland, Greece, Rumania and Turkey in the spring of 1939. Another manoeuvre was the Anglo-French offer to open negotiations with the Soviet Union on the subject of repelling any aggression. These negotiations, however, which were pursued from March to August 1939, revealed that the Western powers had no intention of concluding an equitable and effective agreement with the Soviet Union, which alone could stop the fascist bandits. In fact, while they made a pretence of negotiating in Moscow, the British and French statesmen still secretly tried to come to terms

with Germany in exchange for giving her a free hand in the East.

The true aim of German imperialism, however, which consisted in achieving a radical repartitioning of the world at the expense of Britain, France and the United States, among others, precluded any union between the Western powers and the fascist states. The contradictions between the Western powers and the fascist bloc could not be overcome at the expense of other nations. These contradictions were inexorably driving the two rival imperialist groupings into an armed conflict, a new world war.

Chapter Five

THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF THE PEOPLES OF ASIA, AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

LIBERATION MOVEMENT GATHERS MOMENTUM IN ASIA AND AFRICA

October Revolution and the Awakening of the East

The victory of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia decisively influenced the course of history of the peoples of Asia and Africa. From then on the oppressed peoples continued their struggle for independence in an entirely new international situation. The colonial powers, such as Great Britain, the United States, France and Japan, and other imperialist states could no longer send their ships and troops wherever and whenever they pleased to crush revolts in their colonies, as they had done before the appearance of the world's first socialist state. The very fact of Soviet Russia's existence served to keep the colonial powers in check everywhere. For the first time in history the peoples of colonies and dependencies had a powerful ally. Prospects of winning independence had acquired reality.

The October Revolution also set an inspiring example. Its tremendous revolutionising influence in Asia and Africa was all the greater inasmuch as some of its features made it particularly clear and dear to the hundreds of millions still under a colonial or semi-colonial yoke.

The first Socialist Revolution had been won in a country spread over a vast area, bordering on the greatest and most important countries of the East. As Lenin put it, "Geographically, economically and historically, Russia belongs not only to Europe, but also to Asia".¹ In passing, so to speak, the Russian revolution had radically solved the crucial problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the very problems that faced the oppressed peoples of the East.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 251.

First in the history of mankind, it has achieved a consistent and complete solution of the agrarian problem. Its solution of the national-colonial problem showed how that problem might be solved elsewhere. It had brought independence to the outlying colonial regions of the former Russian empire and set them on the way to social progress.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that to the peoples of Asia and Africa the October Revolution sounded like a call to arms in the struggle for freedom and independence. Revolutionaries in Asian and African countries began to study the revolutionary theory which had brought victory to the Russian Revolution. Addressing the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets in 1919 a Korean delegate spoke as follows: "In the East, including both the Middle East and the Far East, Mohammedan leaders have been saying that to them Soviet Russia and Soviet Moscow have become something like a new Mecca. For the proletariat and peasantry of Korea Soviet Russia is like an oasis, where the traveller can quench his thirst."

With the emergence of the first socialist state on the international arena oppressed peoples everywhere found themselves in a new situation, favourable to the achievement of freedom. More than that: once freedom had been won new prospects opened for the fight for social progress. Enjoying the political, economic and cultural aid of the Soviet Union, offered with no strings attached, the new independent nations could now take a non-capitalist path of development. Lenin urged that the Communists "should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage".¹

It was quite natural, therefore, that shortly after the October Revolution there was a tremendous upswing of the national liberation movement in many countries of Asia and Africa. The revolutionary events of the next few years bore evidence to the fact that the colonial system was seriously weakened.

People's Revolution Wins in Mongolia

Judged by the size of its population Mongolia is one of the smallest Asian countries, but the events that transpired there under the impact of the October Revolution were of profound importance for the development of backward countries.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 244.

The two hundred years of Chinese suzerainty, established towards the close of the 17th century, had disastrous consequences for Mongolia and caused a prolonged pause in her economic development. In December 1911, the Mongolian princes declared the country's independence; but its political status was determined by a tripartite agreement signed by Russia, China and Mongolia in 1915, which turned the country into a feudal theocracy, a monarchy, with the *Khutukhtu* (Living Buddha), head of the lamaist church, on the throne. Outer Mongolia, though formally remaining under Chinese suzerainty, became dependent upon tsarist Russia. At the end of the First World War Mongolia was one of the most backward countries of the colonial East. Serfdom still flourished, people suffered oppression at the hands of the feudal rulers, spiritual and temporal, and exploitation at the hands of Chinese merchants and money-lenders. Not a single industrial enterprise, nor a single railway existed in the country.

Right after the October Revolution the Soviet Government pronounced itself in favour of full sovereignty for Mongolia, and its independent development. In a message to the Mongolian people and the government of autonomous Mongolia the Soviet Government unequivocally stated that no foreigners had the right to interfere in Mongolia's domestic affairs and that Mongolia, being an independent state, was entitled to establish direct contacts with all other nations without any tutelage on the part of either Peking or Petrograd.

Mongolia's position was rendered difficult, however, as a result of foreign intervention. Early in 1919, Semyonov, a white Russian general in the pay of the Japanese, attempted to set up a puppet state to be known as Great Mongolia, but his plan fell through. The Chinese feudal landlords and compradors next tried to re-establish their rule over Mongolia, and in November 1919 Chinese troops entered the capital city of Urga (now Ulan-Bator). The Mongolian princes and higher lamaist clergy treacherously capitulated. On November 22, the president of China announced Mongolia no longer autonomous. From then on the country became a staging area for armed incursions into the Soviet Union. In the autumn of 1920, after the forces of Baron Ungern had been decisively defeated by the Red Army, they retreated to Mongolia and ravaged the country.

The events of 1919 and 1920 in Mongolia had created a revolutionary situation there. Several factors were responsible for this, such as the continued oppressive colonial regime, serfdom, and the heavy hand of the lamaist church, all of which doomed the country to economic backwardness and stagnation. After the country lost its autonomy, a regime of military dictatorship was imposed upon it by the Chinese war-lords. In an atmosphere of

general insecurity and suspicion people were indiscriminately seized and tortured, and many were executed. The forces under Baron Ungern engaged in depredations, heaping further sufferings on the people. While economic and cultural development was an urgent task and required an end of serfdom, a still more urgent task was that of national liberation, and that meant the ousting of the Chinese troops and the Ungern forces from the country.

Discontent was rife all over the country. The driving force behind the growing national liberation movement were the toiling arats (herdsmen), who were joined by the feudal gentry and lamas, as well as a segment of the official class; but the latter, though stimulated by patriotic sentiments, mainly intended to use the movement in the interests of their respective classes.

An extended common frontier with Russia and the economic and cultural relations that existed between the two nations were factors which contributed to the influence of the ideas born of the October Revolution upon the herdsmen and soldiers, as well as on the emerging Mongolian intelligentsia.

By 1919 two revolutionary groups were functioning in Urga; and in June 1920, these merged into a single revolutionary organisation whose declared purpose was to achieve the national liberation and social emancipation of the Mongolian people. A delegation of Mongolian revolutionaries was sent to Soviet Russia, which arrived in Moscow in September. The delegates were received by G. V. Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and S. S. Kamenev, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, whom they acquainted with their wishes. They were also received by Lenin, who pointed out to them that the Mongolian people had no choice but to fight for their political and economic independence.

The Mongolian revolutionaries made Lenin's counsels the basis of their policy line. Thus, partisan detachments began forming in the northern areas in the spring of 1921. On March 1 the above-mentioned revolutionary organisation met with the representatives of these partisan units for consultation, and the consultation developed into a Constituent Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). The Congress elected a Central Committee and passed a resolution to accept leadership of the popular revolution aimed at ridding the country of foreign intruders and setting up an independent people's state in which the state power would be vested in the toiling arats, who constituted far and away the bulk of the population.

On March 13, 1921, a conference of delegates from the revolutionary armed forces and the civilian population set up a Provisional People's Government, which was directed to clear the country of Chinese troops and Russian whiteguard military units.

The revolutionary Mongolian armed forces joined to form a People's Army under the command of Sukhe-Bator, and the Chinese troops were driven out of the country's northern regions.

On April 10, 1921, the Provisional People's Government asked the Soviet Government for military aid against Ungern. On the strength of that request and considering it expedient to deal with the whiteguard threat to Soviet Siberia, the Soviet Government dispatched an expeditionary force into Mongolia, which, in cooperation with the People's Army of Mongolia, routed the Ungern forces, and on July 6 entered Urga. The Khutukhtu government, which had collaborated with Ungern and thereby discredited itself, found itself in a position of isolation. Nevertheless, the Central Committee of the MPRP, aware of the power wielded by the lamaist church, preferred to allow the Khutukhtu to continue in the role of a monarch, though without the right to interfere in the activities of the central government. The official transfer of authority from the Khutukhtu to the permanent people's government took place on July 10, 1921.

The victory of the people's revolution in July 1921 had brought the country national independence. It remained to achieve its second important aim, that of throwing off the yoke of feudalism. This second aim, however, was to be achieved by the Mongolian people in a new political situation, as created by the October Revolution in Russia. The Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party worked in close contact with the Communist International and the Russian Communist Party, applying the principles of Marxist-Leninist theory. This was actually a case of class union between the Russian proletariat and the Mongolian arats, and the Mongolian revolution assumed the quality of a people's democratic revolution, which set the country on a non-capitalist path of development, with the building of socialism and communism as its long-range aim.

In November 1921, there was signed in Moscow a Soviet-Mongolian treaty, which became the corner-stone of real friendship between the two countries. On the day the treaty was signed Sukhe-Bator and the other Mongolian leaders were received by Lenin to discuss the problems that their country had to face, and in the course of the discussion Lenin stressed that it was possible and necessary for Mongolia to follow a non-capitalist path of development.¹

Following the revolution of 1921 the Mongolian arats and their party did, in fact, face a manifold task. The props had to be knocked from under the economic domination of the feudal gentry with a view to ending their existence as a class at a later date.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 361.

The development of capitalist elements had to be blocked and Chinese trading and usurious capital ousted from the country. And steps had to be taken to prevent American, Japanese and British capital from gaining a foothold in Mongolia. During the years 1921-24, as the class struggle grew increasingly acute, the government abolished the traditional privileges of the feudal gentry and the taxes levied on the population for their support; ended serfdom; and nationalised the land. With the establishment of democratic local government bodies, known as *khurals*, the political domination of the feudal lords was finally ended.

In those early years Soviet Russia made a very substantial contribution to the economic and cultural development of Mongolia. Trade grew—to the mutual benefit of both countries. Financial aid was made available to Mongolia; and in 1924 the Mongolian Commercial and Industrial Bank was established with Soviet participation, which was followed by the issue of a Mongolian national currency. Soviet experts supervised the construction of a telegraph network, organised hospitals (hitherto non-existent), and initiated a veterinary service which in a preponderantly cattle-raising country was of supreme importance.

These democratic reforms of 1921-24, coupled with the political, military and economic aid coming from the Soviet Union, made it possible for the country to adopt a non-capitalist programme of development. When the Khutukhtu died, in May 1924, the MPRP declared for a People's Republic. The Third Congress, which took place in August 1924, adopted a resolution which said, in part, that "Mongolia must not follow in the footsteps of other nations and go through the agonies of capitalist oppression. It must develop along the lines of a true people's democracy". On November 28, 1924, the First Great People's Khural proclaimed Mongolia a People's Republic and adopted its Constitution.

Thus embarked on a non-capitalist course of development, the Mongolian People's Republic has been able to effect the general democratic reforms envisaged by the revolutionary programme, to abolish the feudal system, and to achieve significant progress in the economic and cultural spheres. Modern industry got a start, with help from the Soviet Union, and a working class began to develop; so that when the Second World War ended the country was able to undertake a broad programme of socialist construction.

Afghanistan Achieves Independence

One striking instance of the reverberation started by the Russian October Revolution in the countries of the East was the achievement of political independence by Afghanistan.

Its population comprising many different nationalities and ways of life, Afghanistan used to be an economically backward country. Feudal relations prevailed in the country, and most of the arable land belonged to the big landed proprietors, khans and tribal chiefs. Peasants who owned little or no land—and this was true of the Afghans proper and the national minorities (such as the Tajiks, Turkmens, etc.) alike—rented land as share-croppers on exorbitant terms and performed various services to the feudal lords.

One-third of the population, mainly of Afghan nationality, were nomads or semi-nomads, and the bulk of these were exploited by the feudal lords who used the vestiges of the patriarchal tribal system to their own advantage. The Afghan tribes, and above all their chiefs, enjoyed a number of privileges, and were reckoned with even by the emirs, the absolute masters of the land.

Industry was non-existent and there was, as yet, no working class in the country, though a sizable portion of the population—peasants who lost their holdings, as well as impoverished handicraftsmen—was deprived of the means of production, and partly either took to share-cropping or moved to the towns or else migrated to neighbouring countries in search of work.

Unequal treaties foisted on Afghanistan as a result of wars waged against it in the 19th century by Great Britain had given the latter full control of the country's foreign relations. Emir Habibullah did Britain's bidding, in return for an annual subsidy.

Afghanistan's economic difficulties, backwardness and isolated situation called for reforms. There developed in the country a Young Afghans movement, which drew its membership from the numerically insignificant group of feudal and civil service intelligentsia and which declared for progress but were unable to formulate any definite bourgeois programme. Their aspiration to political and economic independence, however, inevitably impelled the Young Afghans to oppose Great Britain and they drew further encouragement from the example set by the Soviet Union in checkmating the British interventionists in Central Asia.

In February 1919, Emir Habibullah was assassinated, and his son Amanullah, of Young Afghans leanings, was proclaimed his successor, with the backing of the capital's garrison. A manifesto was issued, in which the new monarch declared that "Afghanistan must achieve freedom and independence, and enjoy all the rights that are the attribute of sovereign states".

From the outset, the Afghan patriots placed their hopes in Soviet Russia. In April 1919, Amanullah sent a special embassy to Moscow, bearing a letter to Lenin. And in May of the same year the Soviet Government became the first government to recognise Afghanistan's independence. The situation favoured the coun-

try's efforts to win independence, for the liberation movement in India had begun to gain momentum, and the tribes dwelling in the frontier area between the two countries, which had been forcibly detached from Afghanistan by the British, were ready to support that country. This situation notwithstanding, the Anglo-Indian government refused to negotiate, confident of its ability to maintain its privileges in Afghanistan and its protectorate over it. In the war of independence which began on May 3, 1919, their modern artillery and air force assured the British decisive superiority.

Suffering repeated defeats, the Afghan forces were compelled to retreat. The British, however, could not risk an incursion into Afghanistan. With the border tribesmen in a state of revolt and threatening her communications, many Indian officers and men deserting to the Afghans, and the general situation in India what it was, Britain was forced to agree to a compromise.

On August 8, 1919, a preliminary treaty was signed at Rawalpindi, by which Britain recognised Afghanistan to be a free state, independent in its internal and external relations.

Strengthening its independence Afghanistan enjoyed the support of the Soviet Union. An interchange of embassies took place towards the close of 1919. In February 1921, a treaty of friendship was signed, which provided for financial assistance to Afghanistan and accorded that country the right to ship goods in transit across Soviet territory, besides serving to strengthen its political independence. Britain was also constrained to sign, in November 1921, a treaty confirming Afghan independence and establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Amanullah's government next proceeded to introduce certain reforms calculated to strengthen the state and promote its economic development. These reforms deprived the khans of the various Afghan tribes of their political and military privileges and tax exemptions. The machinery of central administration was reorganised as well. The administration of justice was gradually taken out of the hands of the clergy, and the Mohammedan religious law, or *Sheriat*, was replaced by a civil code and a criminal code modelled on bourgeois principles.

Much attention was given to the development of national industry and trade. National private capital received government aid and a number of commercial firms were organised. Domestic duties were abolished, while high import duties on foreign goods were introduced. The law of unrestricted right to land ownership and the sale and purchase of land was passed, which abolished all remaining vestiges of the feudal system and substituted a land tax for the obligations hitherto borne to the feudal landowners. Taxes in kind and services were also made payable in money.

Lay schools were organised, including secondary schools for girls, and this served to break the monopoly of the Moslem clergy in the educational field. Facilities were made available for young men from among the nobility to receive training abroad for official careers.

Curtailement of the power of the feudal lords and the church inflamed the forces of reaction against the new regime; and the imperialist powers hastened to take advantage of the situation. They knew that the reforms had failed to raise the living standard of the people at large. The peasants had gained nothing by the new land law, and the landless peasants continued to be exploited essentially as under the feudal system.

The old feudal nobility, both lay and church, shorn of its former privileges, strove to profit by the discontent rife among the bulk of the population. In 1924 a tribal armed revolt began at Khost. The feudal reactionaries in an attempt to conceal their true aims provided the revolt with slogans ranging from rallying the people to the defence of Islam against the alleged heresies of the Amanullah government to demanding tax reductions and abolition of compulsory military service.

The revolt was mastered by the government only in the beginning of 1925, and then only at the expense of certain concessions to the reactionaries. Thus schools for girls were closed, and the clergy were again granted the right to dispense justice in some cases subject to civil law.

With the situation in control, however, Amanullah resumed his programme of reforms. The development of friendly relations with the Soviet Union, and particularly the non-aggression pact signed by the two countries in 1926, did much to strengthen Afghanistan's position in the international arena. Economic relations between both countries also expanded.

Towards the end of 1927 Amanullah, with his queen and a number of prominent statesmen, left on a foreign tour. The emir's purpose was to establish closer relations with other countries in order to improve Afghanistan's position *vis-à-vis* Great Britain. His trip through India and his visit to Egypt provoked anti-imperialist demonstrations. His sojourn in the Soviet Union, where he saw for himself what the Soviet people had been able to achieve, strengthened still more the emir's conviction in the vital necessity of reform.

Soon after his return to Afghanistan, in August 1928, Amanullah assembled representatives from all over the country and announced the adoption of a new constitution introducing important democratic elements into the country's socio-political system. Thus, a parliament, or People's Council, was created, with elections by direct secret ballot. The right to vote was granted to all

Afghans of 20 or over, able to read and write. All feudal privileges and titles of nobility were abolished; and several new laws were passed, including a law on universal compulsory military service.

These reforms produced a new uprising, considerably greater in scope and force than the revolt of 1924. The emir was accused of betraying the faith, photographs of the queen in European attire and with unveiled face were passed around. The high Moslem priesthood issued a *fatwa* (decision given usually in writing by a Mufti) on the deposition of Amanullah as an "instigator of depravity and rebellion". The movement made the greatest gains in Kohistan, where it was led by Bacha-i-Saqao, non-commissioned officer and deserter, of Tajik nationality.

Unrest among the Tajik peasants had begun before Amanullah's return. It was a product of their continuing struggle both against the oppression they suffered at the hands of the feudal lords and against their oppression as a nation. To them Bacha-i-Saqao was a leader who fought for the rights of the masses, and they knew nothing of his relations with the reactionaries, internal or external. Meantime Bacha-i-Saqao headed for Kabul, and his forces were continually joined by entire units deserting the government army.

Amanullah removed his court to Kandahar, but after unsuccessful manoeuvres calculated to bring him back into power fled the country. This was in March 1929. Bacha-i-Saqao entered Kabul and proclaimed himself padishah under the name of Habibullah. By promising to lower taxes and cancel arrears he succeeded, for some time, in passing himself off as the people's champion, and the feudal lords and the priesthood were willing to recognise him as emir for having rescinded Amanullah's laws and reinstated their privileges.

As a matter of fact, however, though nominally his rule extended, by the spring of 1929, over most of the country, it was the tribal leaders, khans, who ruled the country locally and subjected the population to merciless plunder. The government in its turn increased taxation and demanded that taxes be paid for several years in advance, so that the merchants and well-to-do townspeople were hard hit, along with the masses.

Once more unrest was on the increase. To the British, who had used Bacha-i-Saqao to overthrow the anti-imperialist regime, his position seemed insecure and they were interested in backing a stronger claimant to the throne.

There lived in Paris, at the time, one General Nadir Shah, a member of the former dynasty, who had fought successfully in the war of independence of 1919, but who, in 1924, had refused to take part in crushing the rebellion at Khost and sought refuge in France. He seemed to be the right man.

Accompanied by his brothers, Nadir Shah arrived in India. In the spring of 1929, armed by the British and supported by the Afghan tribes, he made war on Habibullah. He promised the Afghan nobility to maintain their privileges. The merchants would be guaranteed immunity in respect of life and property. The priesthood were promised loyalty to the Islamic faith and abrogation of the godless laws. And the people at large were promised peace and justice on the basis of the Islamic faith.

As the war dragged into the autumn of 1929 Habibullah's forces became depleted and a lack of arms developed. Nationalist agitators were hard at work, and those Afghans who had supported the "Tajik emir" were now deserting him in growing numbers. Early in October Nadir Shah's forces occupied Kabul, and on October 15, 1929, he was proclaimed padishah. Habibullah and his closest followers were killed.

While the feudal lords, aided by the British, had been able to overthrow Amanullah's regime, neither they nor the reactionaries outside the country were able to restore the country in its old condition of backwardness and feudal reaction and turn it once more into Britain's obedient satellite. Changes were overtaking Afghanistan: the bourgeoisie was growing stronger; the feudal nobility was evolving into a new pattern of social stratification; the propertied classes were becoming increasingly aware of the need for reforms. And Nadir Shah's government turned all these developments to its advantage in order to strengthen Afghanistan as an independent, sovereign state. Zakhir Shah, his son and successor, continued to develop the country, strengthen its independence, promote democracy, follow a policy of peace, and develop friendly relations with the Soviet Union. And in so doing he was able to achieve even more tangible results.

Bourgeois-Nationalist Revolution in Turkey

It did not take the impact of the October Revolution long to reach Turkey. The Decree on Peace and the Soviet Government's appeal to the Moslem masses in Russia and the lands of the East found a sympathetic audience in a people weary of the war into which the country had been pushed by the Young Turks clique. Soldiers refused to fight and deserted from the front, taking their rifles with them. Crushed by the double burden of taxation and feudal exploitation, the peasants rose against their oppressors. As early as 1918-19 Marxist groups began to appear, organised by progressive elements.

The armistice of Mudros concluded by Turkey with the victorious Allies put the latter in control of the country, and it

seemed as if the door was now wide open for a partitioning of the Ottoman empire in line with the plans of the imperialist powers. In addition to Britain and France, Italy and Greece claimed their share on the strength of promises made earlier by the Entente powers in order to bring the two countries into the war on their side. The American imperialists, who had not been a party to the secret agreements, nevertheless cherished their own plans of establishing their dominance over Turkey through the instrumentality of mandates over important sections of the country, including Constantinople and the Straits zone.

As soon as the armistice was signed the Entente powers sent their warships into the Straits and appointed their High Commissioners to control the activities of the sultan's government. The leaders of the Young Turks party, well hated by the population, fled from the capital. Allied forces occupied certain regions in Western Anatolia, Cilicia, Izmir and other important ports.

The forces of occupation ran into armed resistance, however, offered by peasant detachments which had been formed during the war and by new partisan detachments. The resentment of the population was now acquiring a pronounced anti-imperialist colouring. The peasants were the motive force of this national liberation movement, which explains why it was spontaneous rather than organised. The working class, still numerically feeble and as yet ignorant of the role it would be called upon to play, was in no position to lead the peasant movement. Moreover, the bulk of the working class was to be found in the towns under Allied occupation and so cut off from the growing movement. It was thus that leadership in the national liberation struggle finally passed into the hands of the Turkish national bourgeoisie.

The national, chiefly commercial bourgeoisie of Anatolia had grown somewhat stronger during the war. Minor and medium-sized manufacturing and food-processing industries had been set up in the interior. This national bourgeoisie eyed the possibilities of further expansion at the expense of the alien comprador bourgeoisie and big foreign firms, who dominated the field of foreign trade. It was also interested in political reforms. With the threat of partitioning and complete subjugation hanging over the country, the national bourgeoisie was ready to take the leadership in the war of independence in its hands. Thus, Societies for the Defence of Rights, set up by the national bourgeoisie, began to sprout throughout Anatolia, headed by members of the civil and military intelligentsia. An energetic and talented general named Mustafa Kemal was one of the leaders.

All during 1919 congresses of the Societies for the Defence of Rights met in various Anatolian towns. At the congress in Sivas

members of these Societies joined to form a Representative Committee under the chairmanship of Mustafa Kemal, whose prestige and influence grew so rapidly that the adherents of the movement presently began to be called Kemalists.

The attitude of the Representative Committee towards the sultan's government reflected the weakness and vacillation characteristic of the national bourgeoisie, its affiliation with the landed proprietors, and also the fact that certain elements within this patriotic movement were associated with feudal, clerical and comprador circles. As a matter of fact the Kemalists continued to use the sultan as a symbol of their struggle for independence (the sultan was referred to as a "prisoner of the foreigners") even after his government made an attempt to break up the Sivas congress. There were many among the national bourgeoisie who were confident that they could not only come to terms with the old government but also obtain, by peaceful means, certain concessions from the victors. There were also those who hoped to realise their ambitions with the aid of the United States if it were awarded the desired mandates; the aggressive character of the American imperialists was not sufficiently obvious in those days, since they refrained from acting in as overt a manner as did the European powers.

At elections to the parliament, late in 1919, the Kemalists won by a great majority. On January 23, 1920, the parliament, sitting at Istanbul, unanimously adopted the National Pact, which proclaimed the territorial integrity within the boundaries established by the armistice of Mudros. The adoption of the National Pact was an act of great political significance, even though it gave no expression to the social needs and aspirations of the working people. In retaliation, Allied troops, chiefly British, occupied Istanbul, in March 1920, dissolved parliament and arrested and deported many of the deputies. This was a case, again, of the sultan's government being used as an instrument to combat the national liberation movement.

Thus it was that the logic of events set the national forces against the sultan's government, a tool in the hands of the imperialists. At Ankara, where the Representative Committee had moved, a new parliament met, in April 1920, which became known as the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. A cabinet was elected, headed by Mustafa Kemal and responsible to parliament. The deputies solemnly confirmed the National Pact and declared null and void any laws or orders issued by the sultan or his government subsequent to the occupation of Istanbul. Ankara became, to all intents and purposes, the country's new capital.

In their war of independence the Turkish patriots gathered inspiration from the successful fight the Soviet people had been

waging against the forces of intervention and counter-revolution. They discovered that they could count on the Soviet Union as a friend and ally. Three days after the initial session of the Grand National Assembly Kemal telegraphed Lenin an offer to establish diplomatic relations and a request for aid in Turkey's revolutionary struggle. A Turkish delegation left for Moscow. And in the autumn the first Soviet embassy arrived at Ankara.

Meantime, in April 1920, the Entente powers had reached an agreement on the partitioning of Turkey and adopted a draft peace treaty with the sultan's government, which provided for the annexation of the greater part of Turkey and the preservation of her colonial dependence. This programme, however, could be implemented only after the suppression of the national movement. Counter-revolutionary revolts instigated to that end having failed, military intervention was decided upon and the job was entrusted to Greece. In June 1920, a Greek army supplied with arms by Britain launched an offensive from Izmir into Anatolia. Another Greek army occupied Edirne (Adrianople). On August 10, 1920, the sultan's government signed the Peace Treaty of Sèvres with the Entente powers. Besides dooming Turkey to subjugation, the treaty was in line with the imperialist powers' anti-Soviet aims, inasmuch as bases created on Turkish territory could now be used against the Soviet Union.

The national bourgeoisie, which headed the anti-imperialist movement, was objectively playing a revolutionary role. However, the Kemalists displayed a rather narrow approach and could not or would not put through any democratic reforms in the interests of the masses. They were intent on strengthening their dominance as a class, and they openly put down all attempts of the peasantry and the fledgling working class to act independently. The Turkish Communist Party, formed in 1920, was wiped out. Mustafa Subhi, the staunch proletarian leader who headed the Party, was murdered in cold blood, together with several other Party leaders, early in 1921. About the same time the bourgeois government dispersed the peasant partisan detachments, some of them being incorporated in the regular army. Occasional peasant anti-feudal outbreaks were put down.

Among the Turkish bourgeois nationalists there were quite a few adherents of pan-Turkism¹ and pan-Islamism² who coveted

¹ *Pan-Turkism*—a chauvinist doctrine current among the Turkish reactionary bourgeoisie and landowners intent on extending Turkish rule over all Turkic-speaking peoples. Especially popular during the First World War.

² *Pan-Islamism*—a reactionary religious and political trend which developed in the second half of the 19th century and aimed at uniting all Moslem peoples in one state. Used in early 20th century to further territorial claims of Ottoman Turkey.

certain territories in Georgia and Armenia. Towards the close of 1920 and in the beginning of 1921 the Kemalists attempted to acquire these territories by force of arms, taking advantage of the traitorous stand taken by the Armenian *Dashnaks*¹ and Georgian Mensheviks. The counter-revolutionary governments were crushed, however, and Soviet power was re-established in the Caucasus; and this action, together with the firm and consistent policies of the Soviet Government, removed the danger that threatened the Caucasian nations as well as the obstacles in the way of Soviet-Turkish friendship, a friendship that accorded with the basic interests of the Turkish people. A treaty of friendship and fraternity was signed by the RSFSR and Turkey on March 16, 1921, and similar treaties were concluded by Turkey in October of the same year with the Soviet Republics of the Transcaucasus. In view of the international situation at the time, this was of great political value for the national liberation struggle of the Turkish people. A special Soviet mission headed by M. V. Frunze was sent to Turkey. Soviet Russia supplied Turkey with arms; and credit was made available.

Improved relations between the two countries and direct Soviet aid to Turkey helped the latter to defeat the invaders. In the autumn of 1921 the Greek offensive was checked and a year later the invaders were completely routed and driven from Turkish soil. An armistice was concluded on October 11, 1922, and the Peace Treaty of Lausanne was signed on July 24, 1923, whereby Turkey retained the territories to be taken from her under the Treaty of Sèvres; the Allied troops were withdrawn from the Straits zone; and the regime of capitulations liquidated. Her determined struggle for national liberation had won Turkey her national independence.

The formation of a bourgeois national state on the ruins of the Ottoman empire was legalised by various administrative, social and cultural reforms and other legislation. Progressive reforms were put through despite feudal and clerical opposition. Following the conclusion of the peace treaty the Grand National Assembly announced the transfer of the capital to Ankara. This decision was motivated by the government's desire to reduce the influence of the feudal, clerical and comprador elements, which were particularly strong in Istanbul. Turkey was proclaimed a republic. In view of the fact that the former sultan, who had retained his title of caliph, the "Commander of the Faithful", remained a centre of attraction for reactionary elements, a law

¹ *Dashnaks*—members of an Armenian counter-revolutionary bourgeois-nationalist party.



Turkish peasant-woman taking munitons to the front (1921)

was passed in March 1924, abolishing the ministry of religious affairs and *waqf*¹ and the caliphate as an institute. The members of the deposed house of Osman were exiled. *Madrasahs*, Moslem religious schools, were abolished, and all other schools transferred to the ministry of education. The right to interpret and apply the law was transferred from the clergy to the government bodies. The series of 1923-24 reforms was capped, in April 1924, by the promulgation of a bourgeois constitution, establishing the bourgeoisie and the landed proprietors associated with it as the dominant class.

Kemal's programme of reforms ran into active opposition on the part of the reactionary elements. Early in 1925 a serious rebellion broke out under Sheikh Said, a prominent Kurd leader closely associated with the British. The Kurds, cattlemen and farmers, lived in circumstances of poverty and oppression, and this made them susceptible to the specious religious slogans with which Sheikh Said was able to rally thousands of them to the struggle. Only by deploying considerable forces, and even then not until June, was the government able to put down the rebellion. But the reactionary elements did not give up the struggle.

¹ *Waqf*—real estate endowment, usually in favour of mosques.—*Ed.*

Proceedings were instituted by the Kemalist government against the adherents of the old regime, and these were summarily dealt with. The reforms continued. In 1928 the church was disestablished from the state. New legal codes were issued. However, all attempts of the masses to fight for their interests, to improve their condition, were ruthlessly suppressed, as were the efforts of the working people to set up an independent political organisation of their own.

Reforms bearing on the political regime and in the field of administration, the campaign against the vestiges of feudalism in the social and cultural fields, and the abolition of the regime of capitulations—all these events facilitated the development of capitalist relations within the country, though this process was seriously hindered by the fact that the agrarian problem was still to be solved, land was still the property of the landowners, rents were still exorbitant, and share-cropping continued to be practised. Widespread poverty among the peasants, who made up the bulk of the population, was another drawback to the functioning of the national industry, which was being built primarily on the basis of state ownership, and financed chiefly through taxation, that is to say, at the expense of the masses.

As class (and also national) contradictions became more and more aggravated, the Kemalists were impelled towards a rapprochement with their erstwhile adversaries, the comprador element, whose political influence they had been able to undermine. This necessarily impelled them towards a rapprochement with the imperialist powers as well, which meant subservience to foreign capital. The consequence was that reactionary tendencies manifested themselves more and more obviously in the policies of the Turkish government, both foreign and domestic, until they gained complete dominance with the death of Kemal Atatürk (Father of the Turks) in 1938. His successors repudiated the policy of promoting relations with the Soviet Union. The bourgeois-nationalist revolution had not been consummated, the interests of the broad masses continued to be ignored, and this left Turkey's hard-won independence in a precarious state.

Upswing of Revolutionary Movement in Iran

During the First World War Iran was virtually brought to ruin, exhausted, and on the brink of collapse. The country was under foreign occupation, and the central government was to all intents and purposes powerless. The process of feudal disintegration was gaining momentum, and the tribal khans and high



Jengeli fighters (1920)

government officials, who looted the population, were growing increasingly powerful. The Russian tsarist government and Great Britain were negotiating a deal for the final partitioning of Iran.

When the October Revolution won in Russia and a workers' and peasants' state emerged on Iran's northern frontiers, the Iranian people could at long last prosecute their struggle for independence with a real chance of success. Hard upon the Revolution, in December 1917, the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR proclaimed the "agreement on the partitioning of Persia" null and void. The Soviet Government decided to withdraw its troops from Persia, leaving the Persian people free to determine their country's future. The evacuation of Russian troops was begun before the year was out. The Soviet Government's initial decrees and Lenin's foreign policy, which was

designed to support oppressed nations in their fight for freedom, made a favourable impression throughout Iran.

The impact of the October Revolution was felt particularly strongly in the north, in the province of Gilan, where the revolutionary traditions of 1905-11 had survived better than elsewhere and where general resentment had found expression in armed uprisings even during the war years. The rebel groups known as the *jengeli* people, or "forest brothers", were composed mainly of peasants and farm labourers, but their leadership was provided by the commercial bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, headed by Kuchek Khan. While fighting for national independence, neither the bourgeoisie nor the intelligentsia aimed at a radical solution of the agrarian problem.

Following the withdrawal of Russian troops, which was completed during the summer of 1918, Great Britain set out to extend her domination to cover all of Iran with the intention of making it entirely dependent upon her and then using it as a stepping stone to seize territories in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia. Overcoming the resistance of the population and the People's Councils that had been set up in the northern towns, British troops took Resht and Anzali. The working people's organisations were suppressed.

A counter-revolutionary coup at Baku and the temporary successes of the British invaders cut Iran off from direct communication with Soviet Russia. This worked to Britain's advantage, for she could now force Iran to sign the onerous treaty of 1919, which turned Iran into a British protectorate, provided for the appointment of British advisers to all civilian and military bodies, facilitated a wide penetration of British capital, etc.

The Iranian rulers that capitulated to Britain did their best to conceal from the people the Soviet Government's sincere wish to establish equitable friendly relations with Iran and to offer it aid. The first Soviet mission, headed by Kolomiytsev, sent to negotiate with the Iranian Government, was arrested by the British and deported to Bagdad. Kolomiytsev had to overcome many difficulties before he got back to Moscow. On June 26, 1919, the Soviet Government issued a special note, formally repudiating all rights and privileges extorted by the tsarist government from Iran and announced the gratuitous transfer to Iran of all the property of the Russian concessions in that country, the value of which was assessed at 600,000,000 gold rubles. Kolomiytsev once again travelled to Teheran as an accredited diplomatic representative but was seized on his way to the capital and assassinated on British orders.

Nevertheless, the British imperialists and their agents were finding it harder and harder to conceal from the Iranian people

the sincerity and integrity of the Soviet Government's attitude towards Iran.

Foreign interference in Iran produced a powerful patriotic movement throughout the land. All classes of the Iranian society, including the landowners and the big bourgeoisie, who had had dealings with the Russian market, wanted an end to be put to British overlordship and the onerous treaty of 1919 abrogated. The sole exception were a handful of feudal reactionaries and other direct agents of the British imperialists. Anti-British demonstrations were organised the length and breadth of the land, and armed uprisings occurred here and there.

A serious uprising broke out early in 1920 at Tabriz and spread over most of Iranian Azerbaijan. It was led by Mohammed Khiyabani, son of a merchant, who had taken part in the revolution of 1905-11. The rebels set up a government, and the people rallied to its support. The province was renamed Azadistan, or "Free Land". The struggle was directed both against imperialist domination and against the oppression of the Azerbaijanian people at the hands of the Kajar monarchy.

Unfortunately, the nationalist bourgeois leaders of the rebellion proved incapable of winning the support of the people-in-arms and making common cause with the revolutionary movement in the neighbouring Gilan. They even failed to organise the proper defence of Tabriz against the shah's troops and admitted their commander into the city in the capacity of a private citizen. Once in the city, the commander succeeded in winning over the local garrison and the people's government was overthrown. Khiyabani and his followers were murdered in cold blood.

That did not mean the end of the struggle against the British and the rule of the shah. The patriots took courage from the successful fight waged by the Soviet people against British intervention in Central Asia and in the Caucasus. April 1920 saw the re-establishment of Soviet power in Baku. When the whiteguards fled in ships of the Caspian merchant fleet, with valuable state property, to put themselves under British protection, Soviet warships followed them to Anzali. A landing party was put ashore and entered the town. The British troops beat a hasty retreat, taking the whiteguards with them.

The Anzali operation was successful not only in that the Soviet Government regained its property but also because it dealt the prestige of the British a telling blow. It added momentum to the Iranian people's struggle, for the latter could now rely on Soviet Russia's aid. The cabinet that had signed the onerous agreement of 1919 with Great Britain was compelled to resign, and the new cabinet at once took steps to preclude the implementation of that agreement. Diplomatic relations with the RSFSR were estab-

lished, and in September 1920, an Iranian embassy arrived in Moscow, despite all British efforts to prevent the establishment of friendly relations between Iran and the Soviet state.

Meanwhile the struggle against imperialism and feudal reaction grew in scope. During the summer of 1920 the province of Gilan became the centre of the national revolutionary movement. A revolutionary government headed by Kuchek Khan was set up, in June, at Resht. This government, however, was representative only of the local, unorganised national front. It lacked unity. Kuchek Khan, though waging a determined struggle against the rule of the shah, was incapable of putting through a consistent programme of democratic reforms. Echsanullah, who enjoyed the support of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, adhered to an ultra-Left trend, prone to risky political ventures. The Communist Party, which was formed in July, lacked battle experience and its errors bore all the earmarks of leftist thinking. Its leadership declared for an immediate socialist revolution, which, of course, was premature, since the basic aims of the struggle against feudalism and imperialism had not as yet been achieved.

This situation led to misunderstandings and weakened national unity. Neither was there a single military command. Echsanullah's forces recognised no other command; Kurban, a former farm hand, led his own Kurdish detachments; and Kuchek Khan relied on his *jengeli* units.

At the most crucial moment, when the rebels had succeeded in driving the shah's authorities out of Gilan and establishing their own rule over the whole province, sharp dissension broke out. On July 19, 1920, Kuchek Khan and his followers left Resht and took to the forest. Next, Echsanullah set up an Iranian Provisional Revolutionary Committee at Resht, with the participation of representatives of the Communist Party.

Great harm resulted from the implementation of the leftist programme, which included such measures as confiscation of land and other property, prohibition of private trade, closure of home-industry establishments, and persecution of the priesthood and religion. Initial successes in the struggle against the shah's forces were followed by defeats. The Gilan government was losing popular support.

In an effort to speed events the British resorted to a military *coup d'état*, which was to be spear-headed by a division of Persian Cossacks under Colonel Reza Khan, an all but illiterate former non-commissioned officer, though a man of ability and resolution, who enjoyed prestige among the rank and file. On February 21, 1921, his division entered the capital and arrested all the members of the old cabinet as well as other prominent statesmen, some 200 persons all told. A new cabinet was formed, with

Sayyid Zia ud-Din as Prime Minister and Reza Khan as Minister of War. A government declaration was published, promising the people a better life. A few days later, on February 26, to be precise, a Soviet-Iranian treaty was signed, which was to change Iran's destinies.

No longer able to keep its troops in the country after that, Great Britain was compelled to consent to the abrogation of the treaty of 1919, which meant that the British plan of maintaining her position in Iran by means of a *coup d'état* had fallen through. As to Sayyid Zia ud-Din he did not stay at the helm of the state much longer. And Reza Khan, too, let the British down, for he had no intention of being used by them as a tool.

Reza Khan had set his sights on gaining unrestricted power. He was aware of the necessity of building up the national army and strengthening the central government, checking the separatist tendencies of the feudal khans, ending the regime of capitulations, and bolstering the country's economy. Even as the ruthless suppression of the revolutionary hotbeds went on, he began to discharge the British advisers from the army, disbanded the South-Persian Rifles Corps, and initiated the reorganisation of the armed forces. Meantime, Kuchek Khan, in Gilan province, was acting in a manner which aided the schemes of the reactionary elements. Thus, in September 1921, Ali Hyder, chairman of the Central Committee of the Iranian Communist Party, and many other revolutionaries, were assassinated on his orders when they arrived to participate in a conference, as invited. The communist organisations at Resht and Anzali were destroyed and many of their leaders murdered. This seriously crippled the revolutionary movement in Gilan, and towards the end of 1921 that province was occupied by government forces, Kuchek Khan was killed, and his head sent to Teheran.

All those who had taken part in the struggle of liberation were put to death. After putting down the movement in Gilan the government forces were able to deal with the rebellion in Khurasan led by an army officer named Mamed Taghi. In that province the struggle had been waged by the soldiers and peasants against the feudal lords and landowners, with the use of such methods as seizure of property, tax repeal, etc. In the beginning, the rebel forces had been joined by some of the local tribal khans. But dissensions had developed in the rebel camp, and these contributed to the final defeat of the movement.

Other popular movements were put down by the government troops with equal ruthlessness. These had been spontaneous, lacked centralised direction, and the absence, at the time, of a class that could provide such a direction had foredoomed them to failure.

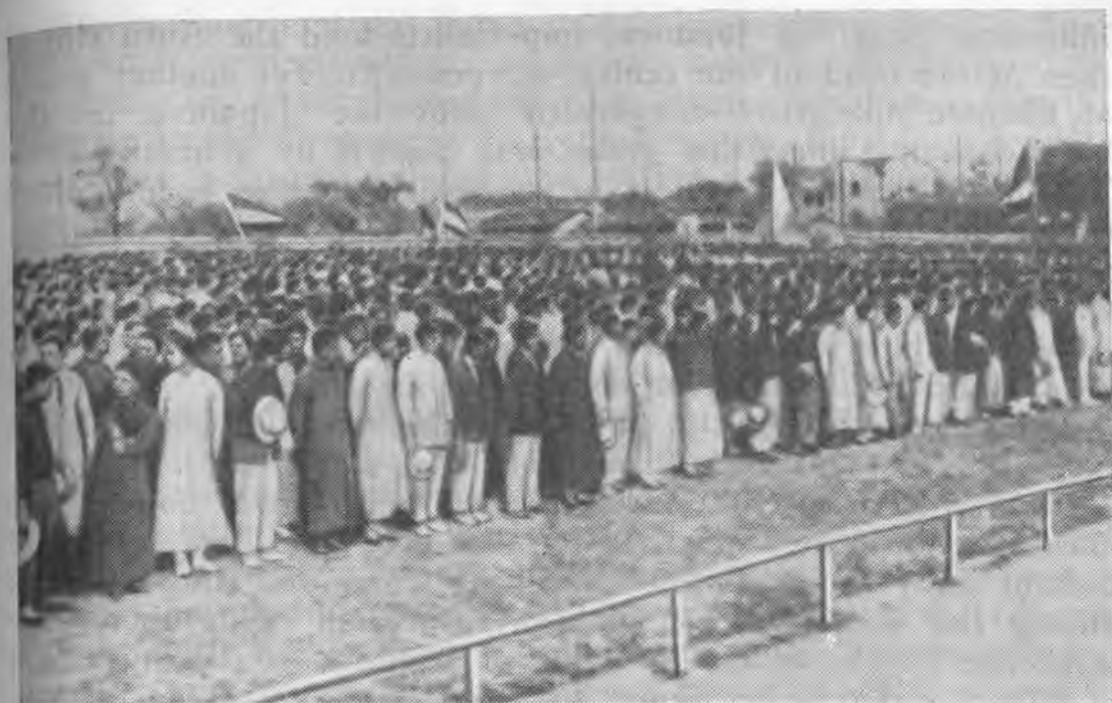
Reza Khan's prestige and influence grew in the meantime. The cabinet merry-go-round, which reflected both the clique struggle within the ruling classes and the inter-imperialist contradictions, went on and on, but Reza Khan invariably retained the post of Minister of War. He was aided, in his drive for absolute power, by popular resentment against the corrupt and parasitic Kajar dynasty, which was linked with the ultra-reactionary elements and had sold the country out to the imperialist powers. In December 1925, the Constituent Assembly in which his followers were predominant, proclaimed Reza Khan shah. The new dynasty took the title of Pahlavi. In line with the interests of the bourgeoisie and the landowners Reza Shah introduced measures designed to promote the development of industry and transport and to reduce the unrestricted powers of the foreign monopolies. These measures, however, had to be paid for by the masses, who were still living in dire circumstances and whose attempts to promote their own political and economic interests had invariably failed.

The revolutionary movement in Iran, which had gained momentum in the years that followed the October Revolution in Russia, was crushed by the reactionary forces. But the impact produced by the revolutionary action and revolts of the Iranian patriots continued to be felt, for they had achieved a concrete effect by having driven the British out of the country and upheld the sovereignty of Iran as an independent state.

China After the October Revolution in Russia

It was on the destinies of China, largest of the countries under imperialist domination, that the October Revolution in Russia had the greatest impact. The ideas released by the October Revolution, and, later, the varied aid provided by Soviet Russia contributed to an unprecedented upswing of the Chinese people's liberation struggle and hastened the political education of China's working class, and it was this latter factor that was to set the liberation struggles developing along new lines and to secure final victory.

China's working class began increasingly to resort to strikes and overt political actions designed to counter the dominance of the imperialists; for the class oppression of the capital coincided in the majority of cases with the national, colonial-style exploitation of the Chinese proletariat by foreign monopolies. The ideas of scientific socialism were gaining ground, largely through the efforts of a group of intellectuals headed by Professor Li Ta-chao



Meeting at Shanghai (May 1919)

of the Peking University, who was later to become one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party. Li Ta-chao and his group acquainted progressive workers with the teaching of Marxism-Leninism and the experience of the working people of Soviet Russia in their victorious struggle for a better life.

One immediate result of their propaganda efforts in 1919 was the anti-imperialist "May 4th Movement". On that day over 3,000 Peking university students organised a mass demonstration, demanding the rejection of the Treaty of Versailles which made the rich province of Shantung Japan's sphere of influence. This started a wave of anti-imperialist demonstrations, political strikes, boycotts of Japanese goods, etc., led by the workers of Shanghai and other industrial towns, with students and members of the petty and national bourgeoisie taking part.

These events were a turning-point in the fight to end the semi-colonial and semi-feudal regime in China. Hereafter the Chinese working class began to play a leading role in the anti-feudal struggle. The scope of the "May 4th Movement" alarmed the imperialist powers. Anxious to safeguard their interests in China and to continue the exploitation of the Chinese people, they took steps to bolster the military cliques, on which primarily they relied for support in China and which were at the same time instrumental in weakening the country. Each imperialist power relied on a particular clique through which it exercised its

influence. Thus, the Japanese imperialists used the Anfu clique, then at the head of the central government. Yet another group of Chinese militarists co-operated with the Japanese in the Northeastern China; this group was headed by general Chang Tso-lin, in the past a bandit, at present engaged in openly plundering the multi-million population of several provinces in China and in endless warfare with rival war-lords. And Central China was the domain of the Chihli clique supported by the British and American imperialists, who were engaged in bitter rivalry with the Japanese militarists for domination in China.

The seizure of the state power in Peking by the Chihli clique in the middle of 1920 was an episode in that rivalry.

Meantime, despite repressions, resentment grew among the masses against the foreign imperialist grip on China and the lack of unity in the country resulting from the endless wars among the war-lords. Demands were voiced with increasing insistence for the return to China of territories ceded by virtue of the unequal treaties signed by the country's mercenary government with Japan, Britain, France, and other imperialist powers. The republican government of Sun Yat-sen, set up in Kwangchow (Canton), in the south of China, in the autumn of 1917, was gaining in popularity. It had become the focal point of the anti-imperialist struggles, and it held out, in spite of all the efforts of the imperialist powers and their Chinese agents to topple it by military pressure, counter-revolutionary revolts, etc., and in spite of the fact that Sun Yat-sen was twice forced to leave Kwangchow. Early in 1923 Sun Yat-sen came back to Kwangchow to stay, and the government he headed became the real stronghold of the Chinese people's struggle of liberation, largely through the efforts of the Chinese Communists.

The Communist Party of China was founded in July 1921. The CPC constituent congress met in Shanghai in deepest secrecy. Chinese historians describe the founding of the CPC as the concentrated expression of the influence of the Russian October Revolution on the Chinese people's liberation movement. The Second Congress met a year later to adopt a decision on the Party joining the Communist International. If the activity of the working class increased over 1922 and 1923, it was due to communist influence. Notable developments took place in these years and among them, the seamen's strike at Hong Kong and the strike of the Peking-Hankow Railway workers.

Sun Yat-sen was a convinced democrat. When he returned to Kwangchow he turned more resolutely than ever to the masses for support. He realised what power was latent in the fledgling Communist Party and adopted a policy of closer co-operation with it. There were no legal restrictions on the Party's activities

in Kwangchow; and the Third Party Congress met here in June 1923, to make decisions of great importance for the further development of the revolution. Most important among these was the decision on the Communist Party joining the Kuomintang while preserving its organisational, ideological and political independence.¹ This decision was based on Lenin's appraisal of the role of the national bourgeoisie in colonial and semi-colonial countries: that bourgeoisie, according to his view, could still be useful in the struggle against foreign imperialism as well as against the most pernicious vestiges of feudalism in the economy of a given country and in its political organisation.

Sun Yat-sen saw the October Revolution as an event of prime historical magnitude. He attached paramount importance to close relations with the Soviet Republic and to the assistance which the latter was giving to the Chinese people's liberation movement. Soviet Russia was the only country to support the Chinese democracy. Correspondence between the Soviet Government and Sun Yat-sen had started back in the spring of 1918, when the latter had signed a message of greetings on behalf of the South China parliament and Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR, had replied, in part, as follows: "Our success is, by the same token, your own success. . . . Let us close our ranks in the struggle for the common good of the proletariat the world over." Repeated meetings between Sun Yat-sen and Ioffe, the Soviet diplomatic representative in the Far East, took place in the beginning of 1923. A joint communique on these talks stressed the fact that China's top-priority task was to achieve national unification and independence. "In this great task," said the communique, in part, "China has the warmest sympathies of the Russian people and may rely on Russia's support."

As early as 1920, in a letter to the Soviet Government, Sun Yat-sen wrote that he was "tremendously interested in your work, especially in the organisation of your Soviets, your army and your education system". In the autumn of 1923 he sent a delegation to study the Party work and the administrative system developed in the USSR, as well as the system of military organisation. Soviet experts sent to China at the request of the Canton Government rendered valuable help in organising the work of party and administrative bodies, and also the armed forces.

¹ Kuomintang—a political party established in 1912. In 1924-27 it led, together with the Communist Party of China, the anti-imperialist national liberation struggle of the Chinese people. In April 1927 the reactionaries in Kuomintang headed by Chiang Kai-shek accomplished a counter-revolutionary *coup d'état* and established a dictatorship of big bourgeoisie and landowners.
—Ed.

Most of the country, however, was still controlled by the warlords, at feud with one another. A puppet government functioned in Peking, claiming to be the central government, which in fact it was not. The imperialist powers were openly defiant and took advantage of various incidents, so called, to force new humiliating treaties on China. Resentment grew as a consequence, and the liberation movement gathered strength.

Rising Tide of Revolution in India After October 1917

During the First World War there had been a heavy drain on Indian manpower and the country's raw material and food resources to meet the needs of the British army, and this had brought fresh misery for the people of India. Fields were poorly tended, and crop yields diminished. 1918 and 1919 were the years of a great famine and an influenza epidemic, both of which took over 12,000,000 human lives. For the workers, as for other categories of the urban population, living conditions had sharply deteriorated.

The war years had worked still other changes in the pattern of India's social and economic development. Thus, Great Britain found herself constrained to assist, in some measure, in the development of India's industry, especially metallurgy, due to the fact that she had sharply curtailed the import of manufactured goods into the country. There was some growth of her light industry as well, mainly textile, which has been her leading industry. In 1915 a five per cent customs duty was introduced by Great Britain in order to counter the import of Japanese and US manufactured goods into India, these two countries being all too eager to benefit by the curtailment of British imports. In 1917 the duty on cotton textiles was raised to 7.5 per cent. The Indian big bourgeoisie had grown somewhat stronger during the war and had come to expect considerable political concessions on the part of Britain. While the war lasted Britain had been compelled to make vague promises concerning reforms. Other imperialist powers had been making similar promises.

The working class had grown in numbers and had come to be rather concentrated in a few industrial centres. By the end of the war the labour force in all enterprises employing over twenty workers (plantations included) totalled over 2,500,000, with the textile industry in the lead. Nevertheless, India was still a backward agrarian country, with a lop-sided industry typical of colonial countries and had no heavy industry. Moreover, the process of impoverishment among the craftsmen and peasants outstripped by far the pace of industrial development.

As living conditions deteriorated resentment grew in the masses, mobilising them for struggle against the colonial rule. In this situation the October Revolution in Russia provided a powerful impetus for the growing anti-imperialist movement among the people of India, aimed, above all, at national independence. The country's working class, acting at long last in an organised manner, took an active part in this movement. There was a flurry of strikes all over India. Late in 1918 and early in 1919, a general strike of the textile workers of Bombay broke out, and for the first time the strikers carried red flags through the streets of the city.

In 1917-19 unrest seethed in the rural districts as well. Demobilised soldiers of peasant stock came home with stories about the Socialist Revolution in Russia and the growing struggle for freedom in other countries. Among the urban petty bourgeoisie, too, revolutionary feeling was running high under the impact of the October Revolution. As early as January 1918, illegal newspapers carried a message of congratulation addressed to the leaders of the Russian Revolution on the occasion of "the great victory they have won for democracy the world over", which asserted that "the Revolution in Russia has made a tremendous impression on the thinking of the Indian people. The idea of national self-determination has reached India despite all British efforts to prevent this. . . . Britain can no longer remain in India".

The colonial government used their newspapers to give the revolutionary developments a false construction, but this failed to achieve their purpose. The Indian big bourgeoisie, fearing a revolution, tried to convince the British that a revolutionary outbreak might follow a refusal to introduce reforms now.

Britain, intent on maintaining her rule in these new and difficult conditions, bore down heavily on those who fought for India's freedom, and at the same time made insignificant concessions to the propertied classes in an endeavour to gain their support. The draft of reforms published in 1918, which embodied the so-called Montagu-Chelmsford¹ report on reforms, made no provisions for self-government. It was proposed to create a bicameral legislative assembly in the central government, though with restricted powers. Bicameral legislatures were to be created in the larger provinces, and unicameral legislatures in Punjab and the Central Provinces. Education, public health and agriculture were transferred to Indian ministers appointed by the British, while the really important subjects remained in the hands of the British administration.

¹ E. Montagu, Secretary of State for India; Lord Chelmsford, Viceroy of India.—*Ed.*

Various restrictions in respect of property ownership, education, etc., made the franchise available to but 1.5 per cent of the Indian population. The electoral system was based on religious sects, which reflected the desire of the British colonial government to sow conflict between Hindus and Moslems and so to weaken the all-India movement for national liberation. The Moslems were given 30 per cent of the seats in those provinces where they formed a minority and over 50 per cent in those where they were in the majority. Meanwhile new measures were introduced by the British administration in 1919, which made it easier for the authorities to cope with the revolutionary movement. These measures were based on the Rowlett Act of March 1919, which invested the authorities with the right to arrest and send to prison any Indian even in the absence of any charges, to suppress any organisations and newspapers, disperse assemblies, etc.

The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were not enough even for the big bourgeoisie. A special session of the National Congress, which met in August 1918 to discuss these reforms, found them unacceptable and demanded self-government for India, within the framework of the British empire.

In its effort to get more concessions out of Britain the National Congress sought the support of the masses. Its leadership began to use on a wide scale such methods as mass demonstrations, boycott of foreign-made goods, etc. It was then that M. Gandhi became the recognised leader of the liberation movement. His ideas and methods were adopted by the National Congress as its declared ideology and exercised a great influence over the masses.

Gandhi preached non-violent resistance (*Satyagraha*) as a means of combating imperialism, insisting that this, in conjunction with the force of moral persuasion, would enable India to attain self-government (*Swaraj*). A champion of India's downtrodden castes (the "untouchables"), workers and peasants, Gandhi advocated non-violence in opposition to revolutionary methods as a means of fighting for the interests of the masses. His artless nature, ascetic habits, and continuous close contact with the working people gained him great popularity with the masses. A valuable contribution was Gandhi's success in winning millions over to the struggle for independence. He exhorted the people of India to work together for the attainment of self-government and actively opposed British efforts to sow dissension between the Hindus and the Moslems.

However, while aiding the expansion of the all-India national liberation movement, Gandhi's doctrine, by preaching non-violence and peace among the classes, restrained the masses from revolutionary action, to the advantage of the propertied classes,

who were anxious to prevent independent action on the part of the working people and to maintain their ideological influence over the masses.

Gandhi's influence became especially strong when the National Congress entrusted him with the task of opening a campaign of non-violent resistance to the Rowlett Act, which had caused a wave of indignation among the people. This movement spread over many districts, particularly Punjab, which had been hit harder than the others by compulsory enlistment in the army as well as by the wring of food products from that province.

The all-India hartal (non-cooperation campaign) set by the National Congress was to include such measures as a cessation of all work in enterprises, government offices and schools, and the closing of all bazars. Gandhi had understood that the principle of non-violence would be strictly followed. But in many large towns the boycott took the form of strikes, demonstrations and clashes with the authorities and police. Incidents occurred in a Punjab town following the deportation of two Left-wing members of the National Congress. The British authorities resolved to teach the national liberation movement a lesson of unparalleled atrocity. On April 12, 1919, at Amritsar, troops under General Dyer opened fire on a crowd of townspeople and peasants several thousand strong participating in a peaceful demonstration. Among the unarmed participants many were killed, many were wounded and trampled underfoot in the ensuing panic. The shooting was followed by mass arrests and public whippings in Punjab.

If the colonial authorities thought these measures would intimidate the people of India, they were mistaken. News of the Amritsar massacre spread all over the country. In the capital of Punjab and in other cities the people rose in protest. In April and May 1919, uprisings were practically universal in the province. But the movement lacked centralised leadership and formulated no clear-cut aims. It was put down with bestial cruelty, neither young nor old being spared.

The bourgeois and landowner leadership of the National Congress was anxious to utilise the growing anti-imperialist movement to force, with the support of the masses, a number of tangible concessions from the British Government. On the other hand, the Congress leadership were no less anxious to avert a revolutionary outbreak. At the Nagpur session of the Congress amendments were adopted in respect of both its programme and its charter. *Swaraj* was declared to be the aim of the struggle, which was to be achieved through a mass non-violence non-cooperation movement. Indians were to give up their titles and offices, and refrain from working in government agencies, attending schools and paying taxes (including the land tax). Refusal to

pay taxes was to start only on specific orders of the Congress. Peasants, meanwhile, were urged to continue paying their rent to the landlords.

The National Congress thus developed into a modern political party with local branches in various towns and villages. A policy was adopted of inviting workers, artisans and peasants to join, and as a result its membership had grown, by 1921, to several million.

Now that the National Congress had turned into a party with a multi-million membership, it was easier to maintain the influence of the national bourgeoisie and to preach Gandhism, its official doctrine. The current broad non-co-operation campaign meanwhile kept drawing people in all walks of life into the political struggle. Non-violent demonstrations often led to acts of violence and uprisings, for propaganda of the idea of peace among the classes was powerless to stop the working people from struggling against their local exploiters. The Moslem League tried to do that and also failed; its reactionary leaders feared, even more than the National Congress, the independent movement of the masses and endeavoured to restrict it to the "defence of Islam" against the encroachment of the imperialist powers.

The consequences of the first post-war crisis in 1920-21 made the situation still more favourable to the growth of the mass movement in India. Britain, hard-hit by the crisis, sought a way out by making the peoples of her colonies foot the bill. British competition began to make itself felt by India's industry; and Indian entrepreneurs began in turn to squeeze the workers. Some of the weaker enterprises were forced out of business; production was curtailed; all of which meant increasing unemployment. Prices on farm products dropped, and the peasants found themselves worse off than before.

All these developments gave an impetus to the revolutionary struggle. There were strikes in the leading industries, in the cotton mills, to begin with. Collective action by the workers was undertaken chiefly to present economic demands, but it was also often of a purely political nature, such as the mass demonstrations in Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere against the arrival of the Prince of Wales, etc. Savage repressions did not check the workers' political activities or their increasingly efficient organisation. Communist study circles and groups began to appear in the larger cities. Strict as the censorship was, revolutionary Marxist ideas penetrated to the country and illegal literature increased its circulation. In 1922 a Marxist weekly called *The Socialist* began to be published in Bombay by Sh. A. Dange.

Although the working class was waging a struggle of great importance to the national liberation movement, the Indian pro-

letariat was not as yet aware of its historical role and had not yet formed a party of its own. The fusion of socialism and the labour movement had then only begun.

The working class was still insufficiently strong to take over leadership of the peasants' movement, which, in 1920-22, was already in full swing. In some localities peasant action grew over into uprisings, but they were out of contact with one another, which made it easier for the police and army to quell them. The big landowners, both Moslem and Hindu, co-operated with the British authorities in meting out punishment to those who took part in these revolts.

In respect of organisation the peasant movement was most advanced in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, where the Eka (i.e., Union), India's first peasant organisation, had been formed under the leadership of a peasant who belonged to the lowest caste of Mandari-pasi. The peasants refused to recognise the local authorities and formed *Panchayats*, or committees of their own. The Eka urged the peasants to pay neither taxes nor land rent and to resist dispossession. There were over 100,000 members in the Eka by the end of 1922, and the movement had spread over several districts in Oudh.

In 1922 the National Congress leadership openly challenged the Eka and condemned the methods of the peasant action. Such a stand on the part of the Congress aided the landowners and authorities in putting down the rebellion.

The unprecedented scope of the mass movement; its recourse to violence; and the fact that it was directed not only against the imperialists but also, notwithstanding the propaganda and exhortations of the National Congress, against the local exploiters of the people—all this served to frighten the bourgeois and landowner leadership of the Congress. Following the incident in the village of Chauri Chaura, where exasperated peasants resisted the police and set fire to the police barracks, burning 21 policemen alive, the National Congress, meeting at a conference in Bardoli, sharply condemned such actions and instructed its branch organisations to end all mass movements and to co-operate with the government in establishing order.

This capitulation of the National Congress at Bardoli helped the British authorities put down the first post-war upswing of the liberation struggle, maintain their rule, and increase the exploitation of the country and the people. However, the era of more or less stable British domination had now definitely come to an end. The people of India had fully awakened to the fight for their independence.

March 1919 Uprising in Korea

Korea's proximity to the Russian Far East facilitated the spread of the ideas of the October Revolution among the Korean people. Lenin's Decree on Peace and the appeals of the Soviet Government for an end to colonialism were in accord with the innermost aspirations of the Korean people anxious to throw off the colonialist yoke of Japan. Their determination to do so was openly backed by the Soviet Government, which stated its views in an address to the Korean people and Korean revolutionary organisations.

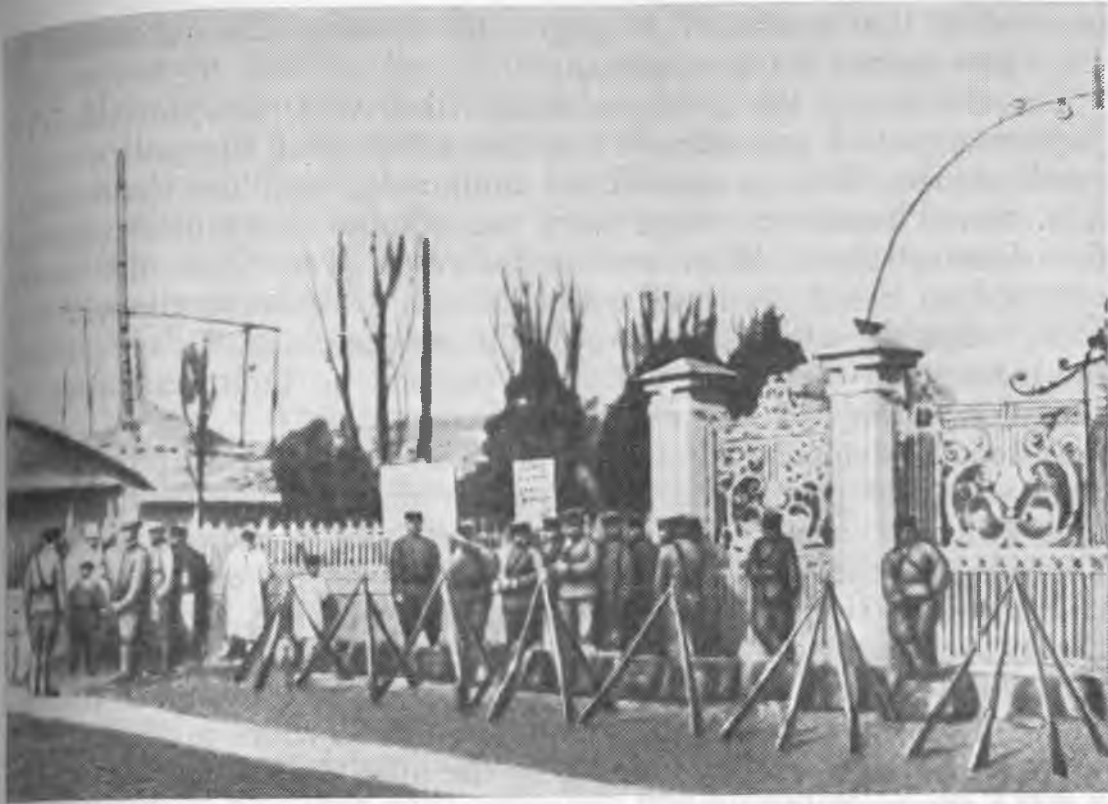
Koreans whom colonial oppression at home had forced to migrate to the Russian Primorye enthusiastically welcomed the October Revolution and joined in the fight against the forces of intervention and the whiteguards, feeling that they were thereby fighting for their own country as well. The commander of one Korean battalion wrote, in part, as follows: "We Koreans are only too well acquainted with the benefits of 'Japanese culture' . . . and we lost no time in joining the Russian revolutionaries. . . . Fighting for the cause of the Russian proletariat, we are, of course, fighting for our own cause, for we and the Russians had common interests and faced the same foe."

The events in Russia imparted a new momentum to the struggle of the Korean workers (the country's labour force numbered 40,000 in 1918). Revolutionary and patriotic feeling ran high among the broad sections of the Korean people. There was a resurgence of partisan warfare in 1918, after a period of practically complete inactivity coincident with the First World War.¹ This resurgence of national feeling reached out to include Koreans living abroad, as in Japan, China, Manchuria, to be more specific, and even across the Pacific, in the United States.

The mounting revolutionary feeling stirred even the bourgeois-nationalist Korean leaders to greater activity. These were interested in steering the national liberation movement along the course of compromise and reform; and toward the close of 1918 they set up an Independence Movement Initiatory Centre.

By the beginning of 1919 resentment against the colonial regime had become so intense that an explosion of public indignation could have been produced by the slightest incident. On January 22, the ex-emperor of Korea, who had been living under arrest in his palace, died; rumours spread that he had been poisoned by the "Japanese dogs"; and people flocked in from the provinces to pay homage to their late sovereign.

¹ An armed struggle had been carried on by the Korean people ever since the Russo-Japanese War.



Japanese soldiers at Pagoda Park, Seoul (1919)

The Independence Movement Initiatory Centre decided to draft a Declaration of Independence, organise demonstrations, and launch an appeal campaign. The text of the Declaration shows that its authors were seeking to make a deal with the colonial government, for it contained very moderate demands, while the appeal, addressed to the Paris Peace Conference and the United States, was regarded as a means of bringing pressure to bear on the Japanese Government and intended to deter the masses from using revolutionary methods in their fight for independence.

The text of the Declaration of Independence was read at a crowded meeting held on March 1, 1919, in the Park of the Pagoda, in Seoul. And it became plain right away that the masses took it as an announcement of a revolutionary struggle to drive out the Japanese invaders, rather than the launching of an appeal campaign. Some 300,000 people took part in an anti-Japanese demonstration in the streets of Seoul that day. A fighting spirit was abroad. Factory workers in Seoul stopped their work.

Then the Initiatory Centre began to back down. Its members did not show up at the meeting, but assembled at a banquet, where they toasted Korean independence and at once telephoned the Japanese police to tell them about it. As to the anti-Japanese

movement, that continued to gather momentum. Mass demonstrations now spread to other towns.

For a moment, the Japanese authorities were non-plussed. The Japanese papers ran remarks to the effect that the police and gendarmerie, hitherto considered invincible, had lost their prestige. Soon, however, troops were moved and arms used against the demonstrators. Mass arrests followed. Ten thousand were arrested in Seoul alone after the March 1 demonstration. At a time, when the official leaders of the movement had capitulated, the masses, on their own initiative, stepped up their resistance to the colonialists.

A second demonstration took place in Seoul on March 5, this time with the prominent participation of students. In the days that followed, armed clashes broke out here and there between Koreans and the Japanese police and soldiers. By mid-March the uprising had swept over 211 out of 218 districts, or practically the entire country. By the end of the month 173,000 had risen in revolt, while over 2,000,000 had joined the national liberation movement. Patriotic, revolutionary fervour produced instances of mass heroism. Judging by the official Japanese figures of 8,000 Koreans killed, 16,000 seriously wounded, and 53,000 arrested, the patriots had put up a determined fight.

The story is told of Mun En Ghi, a schoolboy of the town of Iri. Speaking at a meeting, he waved a Korean national flag. A group of Japanese soldiers fought their way through the crowd to get at Mun En Ghi, and one of them, striking out with his sword, cut off the hand in which the boy held the flag. Mun En Ghi quickly caught up the flag with his other hand and had just enough strength to shout "Let my blood serve the people of a new Korea!" before he was cut down by the soldiers.

Despite the great numbers who joined the revolt and despite the courageous fight they put up, by the end of April the revolt had been quelled. There was, as yet, no working class party; the workers were only just starting to fight as a class. Hundreds of thousands of the participants in the movement had no leadership and lost their bearings, and the Japanese were quick to take advantage of this situation.

Nevertheless, the March 1919 uprising was an important landmark in the history of the Korean people. Thereafter the working class was an active force in the movement of liberation. The revolt had been put down, but the workers continued to strike. There were 104 strikes in 1919. Workers' organisations began to appear. One such organisation was the Workers' Mutual Assistance Society, formed in 1920 in Seoul, which became the first workers' trade body to appear in Korea.

The events of March 1 speeded up the inflow of Marxist-

Leninist ideas into Korea. During 1920, Marxist study circles were organised in Tokyo (by Korean students attending Japanese schools), Seoul and other industrial towns in Korea. Many Koreans living in Soviet Russia joined the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Korean émigrés in Irkutsk and Shanghai formed communist groups which sent their representatives to carry on revolutionary activities in Korea. Revolutionary groups and study circles were springing up in Korea, too, and it was out of these that the Korean Communist Party was formed in 1925.

Anti-Imperialist Uprising in Egypt

Roughly about the time of the uprising in Korea an armed struggle began in far-away Egypt against the British, who had foisted a colonial regime on that country back in 1882.

Soon after the beginning of the First World War Egypt was officially proclaimed a British protectorate. The war brought great misery to the people of Egypt. In 1918 the annual death rate exceeded 500,000, thus surpassing the country's birth rate. It is hardly surprising therefore that news of the Revolution in Russia was received here with the liveliest interest. In 1918, in Cairo, Alexandria and Port Said socialist cells appeared. They joined to form a Socialist Party which, in 1921, renamed itself the Communist Party of Egypt. On the initiative of the Communists and under their leadership a General Confederation of Labour was founded in Egypt in that year uniting various trade unions.

Resentment against British colonial rule was rife in all strata of the population. Secret organisations emerged in different localities, and anti-British leaflets were distributed. The Egyptian bourgeoisie sought to establish their leadership over the popular movement. Late in 1918 the bourgeois leaders headed by Saad Zaghlul Pasha asked the British high commissioner to initiate talks concerning greater rights for the Egyptian people. Zaghlul's next step was to set up a group of public figures from among the bourgeoisie and landowners, which was designated as an Egyptian delegation authorised to demand independence for Egypt. A document was issued empowering Zaghlul and the other members of the delegation¹ to strive to obtain full independence for Egypt, using all legitimate, peaceful means to that end. The document was circulated in urban and rural districts in a successful campaign to collect signatures.

Early in March 1919, there followed the arrest of Zaghlul and the other delegation members, and their deportation to Malta.

¹ The Egyptian word for "delegation" is *wafd*. In 1923 a Wafd Party was formed.

This measure produced a wave of indignation. Abd-ar-Rahman ar-Rafi, Egyptian historian and member of the movement, noted that the political atmosphere in Egypt, in March 1919, signalled the approach of a storm. On March 9, students demonstrated in Cairo, and on the following day they all left their schools. Workers, artisans and traders joined the students. They were fired upon by British troops, but the demonstrations, instead of dispersing, developed into an armed uprising, which spread, by March 15, to most of the provinces. The insurgents cut Cairo off from the rest of the country. Armed *fellahs* (peasants) attacked British troop trains. Tramway and railway workers at Cairo, dockers at Alexandria, and civil service officials went on strike. Secret printeries were putting out patriotic leaflets.

In Cairo a patriotic police force was organised to maintain order during demonstrations and meetings. In several towns and villages revolutionary committees were set up and began to function as local authorities. The Russian word *Soviet* was occasionally applied to these bodies. The uprising was a clear indication of the impact of the October Revolution in Russia on the Egyptian people. The Egyptian historian ash-Shafii wrote that for the first time in the history of mankind a great power had appeared that had no intention to colonise, occupy, or exploit any land, and which had taken up the cause of all the national liberation forces in the world. This power, he added, had offered Zaghlul aid in arms, but he had taken fright and turned the offer down.

The Wafdists wavered and revealed inconsistency of action: the scope of the struggle had frightened and confused them. The patriotic elements, on the other hand, lacked any centralised leadership. And by the beginning of April the British had been able to suppress the revolt by force of arms. They were nevertheless compelled to set the Wafdists free and allow them to proceed to Paris to the peace conference. As was to be expected, Zaghlul achieved nothing there, and the Treaty of Versailles confirmed the British protectorate over Egypt, which was officially recognised by W. Wilson, President of the USA.

The defeat did not hold up the national liberation struggle of the Egyptian people. Another uprising occurred in 1921, though this, too, was quelled by the British troops.

Be that as it may, these revolutionary developments forced the British authorities to change tactics. Certain concessions were made. In February 1922, the British Government published a declaration terminating the protectorate and granting Egypt "independence". British troops, however, were to remain on Egyptian soil, as before. As far as the Egyptian people's national liberation struggle was concerned, its main objective had become to drive out the forces of occupation.

THE COUNTRIES OF ASIA AND AFRICA IN 1924-1939

The class warfare which flared anew in the colonial countries following the post-war upsurge of the revolutionary movement showed convincingly that the temporary stabilisation of capitalism in the mid-1920s lacked a firm foundation. The national liberation war waged by the peoples of Syria and Lebanon, the Riff war with France, and the 1926-27 uprising in Indonesia indicated that the crisis of the colonial system was growing ever sharper. In 1924 an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution began in China. In the 1930s, too, the national liberation struggle of oppressed peoples continued to gain force. India was more firmly resolved than ever to gain national independence. The liberation struggle pressed by the peoples of India and China was a most important factor in undermining the colonial system of imperialism.

Moroccans Fight Spanish and French Colonialists

By the time the First World War broke out Spain had firmly established herself on the Moroccan Mediterranean seaboard, even though the population of several mountainous regions of the Moroccan hinterland continued to offer resistance. The centre of that resistance was the Rif mountain country, inhabited by warlike nomad tribes who cherished their freedom.

After the First World War Spain endeavoured to expand her conquests. In due course, the Spanish invaded the region inhabited by one of the largest Riff tribes. The Riffs avoided clashes with the Spanish troops, and the Spanish militarists became all the more overbearing.

Early in 1921 a Spanish army 24,000 strong began to move into the Rif interior, occupying village after village as they advanced. Abd el-Krim, the Riff leader, who had spent over two years in a Spanish gaol, wished to avert a war. He did not think his forces sufficient to resist the invaders and repeatedly approached General Silvestre, in command of the Spanish forces, with peace offers to which the Spanish turned a deaf ear.

In the battle of Anval, however, fought between July 21 and 26, 1921, the Riffs routed the Spanish expeditionary corps and seized around 20,000 rifles, 100 pieces of artillery and 300 machine-guns, along with a large amount of equipment, food products and medical supplies. This victory made a tremendous impression on the peoples of North Africa and strengthened their confidence in the possibility of winning freedom. On September 19, 1921, a

newly formed National Assembly proclaimed an independent Rif Republic, with Abd el-Krim as its elected president.

Internally, the policies of the fledgling state centred on bolstering its defences. Externally, it announced its desire to establish cordial relations with all countries.

As it got ready to carry on its struggle against the Spaniards, the Rif Republic did what it could to turn to its own advantage the contradictions among the leading colonial states that were fighting to dominate Morocco, that is, Spain, France and Great Britain. Abd el-Krim looked to the French for support in his resistance to Spain. As a matter of fact early in the war French intelligence agents did supply arms to the Riffs in the hope of weakening the position of the Spaniards and driving them out of Tangier. British and German manufacturers also supplied the Riff forces with arms. These supplies did not play a decisive role, however, and the rebels' main source of supply were the arms seized on the battle-field.

In the summer of 1922 Abd el-Krim dispatched two delegations: one to the French authorities at Fez, the other to London. The delegation to Fez asked for French recognition of the Rif Republic and a trade agreement. The French turned down the offer. In his letter to the British Government the Riff leader solicited British aid in arranging negotiations with Spain. Abd el-Krim declared his readiness to admit into the Republic industrialists and merchants of all nations on equal terms.

The British Government also turned down the request, fearing lest the success of the Riff tribes should set an example for the population of Egypt and other British colonies and dependencies. Thus the fear of possible anti-imperialist movements proved stronger than her contradictions with Spain and France.

Having exhausted all possibilities of achieving independence by peaceful means, the Rif army launched, in June 1924, a general offensive. Revolts flared up immediately back of the Spanish lines, and the situation seemed favourable for driving the Spanish army into the sea and clearing the whole country of the invaders.

But the Rif high command failed to follow up its victory and left the staging area in the enemy hands. This was a serious blunder, for it left the Republic open to new assaults. Still, the victories won over the Spaniards considerably strengthened the Rif Republic politically and militarily. Abd el-Krim had succeeded in extending his government's control over the entire western half of Spanish Morocco, in addition to the territory inhabited by the Riff tribes. The Republic was now a centralised Moslem state, covering an area of 20,000 sq km, with a population of 500,000 and an army 50,000 strong.

The establishment of a French protectorate over the eastern part of Morocco in 1912 had failed to end resistance on the part of the local population, and the mountainous and desert regions remained outside the area of French control. The southern and southwestern regions of the country retained their independence.

The emergence of the Rif Republic and its successes encouraged the Moroccan tribes in their opposition to the French authorities. As for the French, they foresaw that the growing strength of the Rif Republic would add momentum to the national liberation struggle. And the Spanish reverses made them begin large-scale preparations for an attack on the Rif Republic.

In the spring of 1924 Marshal Lyautey, the French resident-general, moved his forces into the Auergha River valley, lying close to the boundary between Spanish and French Morocco. This was a region which France and Spain had been disputing over since 1912. The Rif Government agreed to withdraw its forces from the area which the French authorities considered theirs, but this amicable offer was turned down, and on May 27 the French troops crossed the Auergha and were soon in occupation of the region, despite the resistance offered by the Riffs.

Aware that the armed forces available to France were numerically greater than the entire population of the Rif Republic, Abd el-Krim was anxious to avoid a war with France. In the second half of March 1925, Riff representatives contacted the French and reiterated their wish to reach a peaceful solution of all controversial issues, pointing out, at the same time, that French occupation of part of the Republic's territory was illegal and suggesting that a commission be appointed to delineate the exact boundary between French Morocco and the Republic. The French again rejected the Riff suggestions, and began, in April 1925, large-scale military operations in the Auergha valley. In the ensuing battles the Riffs repeatedly beat the French, even though they had only light fire-arms with which to fight French planes, artillery and tanks.

These set-backs made the French turn for help to Spain. In June 1925, both these imperialist powers reached an understanding concerning military co-operation and the blockading of the Rif Republic, and at the same time drafted the terms of a peace treaty with the Riffs, which dictated an acceptance by the latter of their dependence on France and Spain.

The French high command had now concentrated substantial forces in Morocco, and the French air force began a campaign of barbaric bombing of the Riff civilian population. This did not stop Abd el-Krim's active operations against the French. He was scoring success after success. He called upon the peoples of Algeria and Tunisia to join him in the war against the French and



Rif cavalry (1925)

Spanish invaders and advanced the project of creating an independent Moslem republic which would unite the whole of North Africa. That, however, was something which the peoples of North Africa were not, at the moment, prepared for.

Early in September a Spanish invading force was landed at Alhucemas. Simultaneously the French launched a general offensive in the region of Fez by a force of some 200,000, under the command of Marshal Pétain. The Riffs were thus forced to fight on two fronts. On September 30 the Spaniards took the capital, with the result that the Riff population, all those able to bear arms, rushed to enlist in the army. Such was the vast superiority of the French and Spanish in arms and manpower, however, that they were able to split and surround the Riff forces. This was accomplished in May 1926.

Realising the uselessness of further resistance, the Riff leader decided to lay down arms. Even then French and Spanish planes bombed, on May 26, the village where Abd el-Krim was staying. "I am surprised," he told the French officers, "that your planes killed men this time; usually they kill women. Yours is a gun-power civilisation: you possess big bombs, therefore you are civilised; I have nothing but rifle bullets, therefore I am a barbarian." Fighting went on for some time after Abd el-Krim's surrender, for many tribes refused to lay down arms.

On July 10, 1926, Spain and France signed an agreement providing for Abd el-Krim's deportation to the island of Réunion. A mixed commission was to be set up to draw the line of demarcation between the French area and the Spanish.

Such was the end of one of the most heroic episodes of the Moroccan people's fight for freedom and independence. Some 60,000-70,000 fighters equipped with nothing but rifles had stood up to the armies of two European powers, France and Spain, something like 300,000 strong, equipped with the most modern arms. The peoples of the colonial East, above all the Arabs of Algeria and Tunisia, had been heart and soul with fighting Morocco. People had prayed for Abd el-Krim's victory even in the interior of India, even in far-away Indonesia, and donated money and valuables to aid the rebels. The French Communist Party, too, had been active in its opposition to that colonial war, and in this it had had the support of the mass of the working people.

Sentiment in the Soviet Union had been unreservedly for the Moroccans in their fight for freedom. Thousands of meetings had been held throughout the country, which wrathfully condemned the aggressors and called for an end to imperialist intervention and the reign of terror unloosed by the French and Spanish invaders.

National Liberation War in Syria and the Lebanon

One of the consequences of the First World War was the conversion of Syria, formerly a Turkish province, into a French colony. This incorporation of Syria into the framework of the French empire, which meant her separation from traditional markets, had produced an economic crisis in the country. Many minor businesses had closed down, throwing the workers out of employment and making their proprietors face financial ruin.

French rule caused discontent and there were sporadic uprisings. Six such uprisings occurred between 1920 and 1924, besides unimportant scattered manifestations of protest.

The French Government was compelled to manoeuvre. Blair, the French high commissioner, known as an ultra-reactionary and a clerical, was dismissed and replaced by Sarrail, a "radical" and "atheist", who introduced a number of liberal reforms, intended for effect, such as permitting the national bourgeoisie to form a People's Party.

This display of liberalism by the new French high commissioner did not last very long. At the first signs of a growing popular movement he promulgated draconic laws directed against the press, and launched a drive against the People's Party, whose leaders were either seized or forced to flee abroad.

These actions served to further aggravate the situation. One measure produced particular resentment: that was the lifting of

restrictions on land rent, already an intolerable burden for the peasantry. When colonial troops fired on a demonstrating crowd in Beirut, on orders from Sarrail, a general Syrian uprising became a foregone conclusion. The Syrian liberation movement took courage from the heroic fight put up by the Riff tribes, the Turkish and Chinese revolutions, and the achievements of the Soviet Union. Besides, the Riff war had compelled the French to shift important forces to Morocco, and the colonial forces in Syria had been accordingly reduced in numbers.

The uprising started in an almost inaccessible mountain area peopled by 50,000-70,000 Druse tribesmen, who lived under a patriarchal, feudal social system. The French authorities had conducted themselves here with arrogance. Several punitive expeditions had visited the district, and the parcelling of community lands had been begun. Moreover, the French had tricked the chiefs of the more important tribes into coming and then held them as hostages. This had been the last straw, and on July 18, 1925, the Druse tribes rose in armed revolt.

An All-Druse National League was formed at Es Suweida, the chief town of the Druse territory, and a national government was set up. The new government was headed by Sultan Pasha el-Atrash, sheikh of one of the mountain villages, who, having led the uprising of 1922, had had the experience of fighting the French. El-Atrash issued a manifesto in which he summoned the Syrian people to start a holy war for freedom and independence. The leaders of the uprising also made efforts to establish contact with the Riffs and the tribes inhabiting Saudi Arabia.

In early August the Druses inflicted a defeat on the French punitive force and captured a quantity of artillery pieces, machine-guns, 2,000 rifles, and convoys with munitions and food products. They were thus able to arm several new peasant detachments. The French retaliated with aerial bombings, but in the mountainous terrain these did not have the desired effect.

Meantime the uprising gathered force, as other population groups joined in the struggle. While the peasants formed the nucleus of the Druse movement, the workers also took an active part in armed clashes with the French colonialists and aided the rebels by strikes and walk-outs. The urban petty bourgeoisie, students and intellectuals also participated in the struggle. Support came in the initial stage from the Syrian national bourgeoisie and some of the feudal lords, inasmuch as they hoped to take over the leadership; but when the fortunes of war began to go against the Druses most of them dropped out of the struggle.

To frighten the people the French resorted to terror. Mass executions took place in the streets of Damascus, but these merely



Damascus, after suppression of revolt (1926)

incited the population to a general revolt against the French. On October 19, 1925, rebels in Damascus and partisan forces occupied several districts of the city. Sarrail ordered the city shelled by heavy artillery and bombed from the air, and within 48 hours the ancient city with its architectural monuments and art treasures was a mass of ruins and some 25,000 of its population, among them women and children, lay dead. This piece of atrocity did not break the spirit of the Syrians; on the contrary: by November 1925, the national liberation army had grown to 40,000. Only the large towns, such as Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and Hama, remained in the hands of the French.

Public opinion the world over reacted violently to the brutal bombing and shelling of Damascus. The imperialist powers, France's rivals for dominance in the Middle East, and above all Great Britain, did what they could to use the event to their advantage. Then, too, the Syrian uprising worried the British ruling circles more and more, for it was having repercussions in Iraq and Palestine. In Iraq, for instance, the Arab National Party at Mosul had issued a manifesto urging support of "our Syrian brothers".

In November 1925, the post of French high commissioner in Syria was given to H. de Jouvenel, an experienced diplomat. His first step, on taking over the post, was to go to London, where he concluded an agreement with the British Government. In exchange for a promise of French support of British claims to Mosul, Bri-

tain undertook to help the French put down the Syrian uprising. The United States, too, offered its aid. Two American destroyers arrived at Beirut, ostensibly to protect American citizens, but in actual fact to prevent the Syrians from reaching the Lebanese coast.

So far as French diplomacy was concerned, its efforts were directed towards planting dissension among the various Arab organisations. In mid-November, 1925, Jouvenel began negotiations with the Syrian nationalist leaders. The Syrian side was represented by the executive committee of the Syria-Palestine Congress, which united various bourgeois-nationalist parties of Syria, the Lebanon and Palestine. The Syrians demanded an independent Syrian state, a provisional national government, elections to a constituent assembly and the evacuation of French troops following the formation of a national government. Jouvenel kept putting off his reply to these demands.

Those were trying times for imperialist France, made still more difficult by her military reverses in Morocco and the widespread anti-war movement at home. By manoeuvring and making promises he had no intention of fulfilling Jouvenel sought to weaken the national liberation front. Early in 1926 he decreed an amnesty for partisan fighters who would lay down their arms and return to their homes. There would be no death sentences for the chiefs who surrendered. Another decree promised to convene a representative council with a membership elected in those areas where there was no state of siege. Elections in all the other areas were to be held after the re-establishment of "law and order". The representative council would approve a constitution based on the "rights" of the mandatory state, that is, France.

Jouvenel's decrees were rejected by the Arab leaders, and his negotiations with the national liberation army's leadership fared no better. As early as November 1925, Sultan Pasha el-Atrash had published a declaration which said: "We shall not stop fighting until we have won independence for Syria. It is rumoured that there are those who intend to negotiate peace with Jouvenel. I am authorised to state on behalf of the Druses that such persons have not been empowered to speak for us."

When in the spring of 1926 the French army finished its Moroccan campaign it became possible for the French high command to throw some 70,000-80,000 troops and equipment into the punitive operations in Syria. Jouvenel's utterances took on the tone of ultimatums. From now on, he declared, only unconditional surrender of the "rebels" would be acceptable. At this, the feudal lords and bourgeoisie definitely dissociated themselves from the national liberation movement, in awe of the French and in still greater awe of the scope of the struggle waged by the people.

Large-scale military operations against the insurgents were begun in May 1926. The main drive was directed at the Jabal Druse district, which was the centre of the uprising, with a population of around 70,000. Over 10,000 French troops were thrown into the drive. Employing "scorched earth" tactics, they destroyed crops, seized cattle, plundered and burned villages in order to leave the partisans neither food nor supplies. Three offensives were pressed simultaneously: in the Lebanon, northern Syria and the vicinity of Damascus. But the struggle against the invaders went on; and it was only in the autumn of 1926 that the French succeeded in defeating the most important partisan units. In May 1927, Sultan Pasha el-Atrash and a force of 600 were compelled to retreat into Transjordan, where they were interned by the British and handed over to the French.

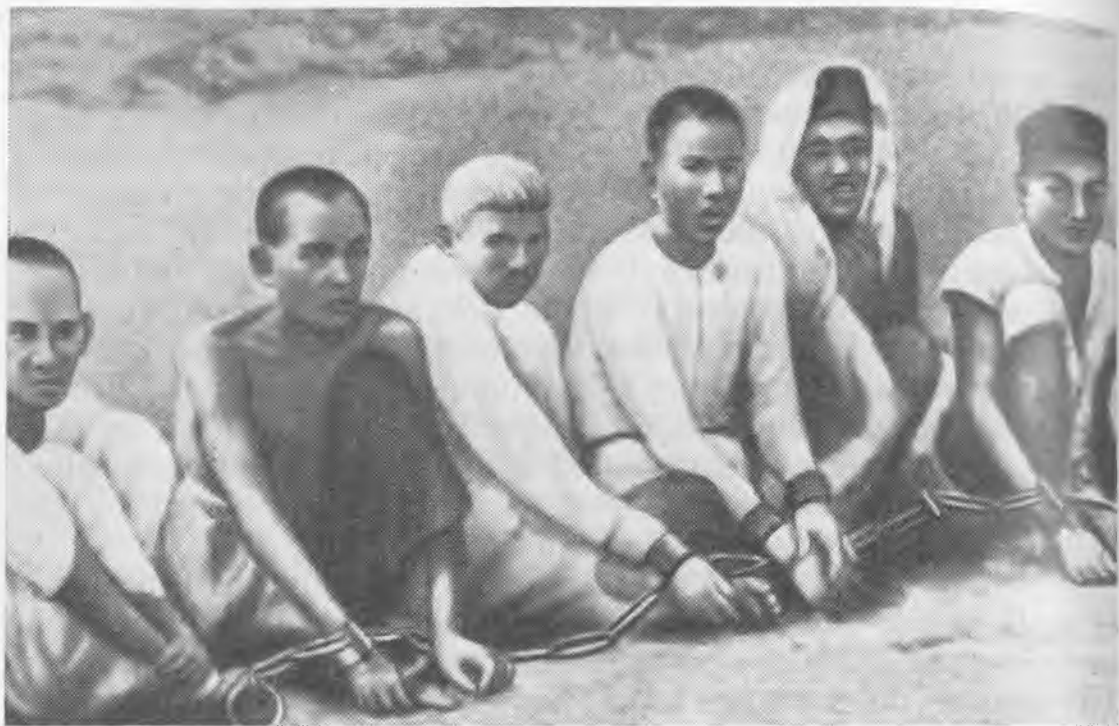
Enjoying indisputable military and technological superiority as well as the support of other imperialist powers, France had succeeded in crushing the national liberation uprising in Syria. The Druses, on the other hand, had lost because of the inconsistency of the national bourgeoisie and the lack of organisation of the proletariat which failed to rally the various classes and social forces to its cause.

The heroic fight waged by the Syrian people from 1925 to 1927 was of great international significance, and, besides, provided the Arabs with first-hand experience in waging a national liberation struggle.

National Liberation Movement in Indonesia

For most of the population of Indonesia the aftermath of the First World War and the loss of its traditional markets meant economic disaster. Stocks piled up of the plantation produce for which there were no buyers; and prices dropped sharply on crops of the local peasants who had been induced to grow for export. Industry was but feebly developed and could provide no jobs for destitute peasants. A limited expansion of small and medium semi-handicraft production was unable to absorb the growing supply of labour or satisfy the demand for consumer goods. There was no big bourgeoisie in the country, either industrial or commercial, while the dominant position in the comprador trade was held by Chinese capitalists. The Indonesian bourgeoisie, which had grown somewhat stronger during the war, besides carrying the burden of foreign domination, was largely at the mercy of the middlemen who supplied its industrial enterprises with raw materials and bought up their production.

Objective preconditions for a struggle against the dominance of the Dutch and those who worked with them multiplied rapidly.



Chained insurgents on Java (1926)

Peasant actions, though unorganised, became more frequent in Java and elsewhere in the archipelago, and increased activity was shown by a peasant movement motivated by religious and utopian ideas. This was the Sarekat Islam, or Islamic Union, a movement started in 1913 by members of the petty and middle bourgeoisie, which had become, during the First World War, a genuinely mass organisation, whose leadership was being largely taken over by the progressive intellectuals.

The Indonesian intelligentsia was a most consistent stratum of the population in expressing the growing national consciousness and anti-imperialist feeling. It was influenced by the Social-Democratic Union, a union established in 1914 by Dutch Left-wing Social-Democrats. These revolutionary Social-Democrats had a press of their own, through which they spread the ideas of the Marxist teaching, kept the people of Indonesia abreast of the liberation struggle in other countries, and maintained contact with the Sarekat Islam, where their followers were gaining ever greater influence.

In this situation the impact of the October Revolution in Russia was great indeed. Within the Social-Democratic Union the Left-wing forces defeated the Right-wingers, who were compelled to withdraw from that organisation and formed a party of their own, which was more than ready to make a deal with the imperialists. The strike movement increased in scope, and strikes were often won by the workers. Since there were no large national in-

dustrial enterprises in the country, the class warfare waged by the proletariat interflowed with the anti-imperialist struggle. Ships from Europe constantly touched at Indonesian ports, bringing news of Soviet Russia as well as word of the revolutionary events of 1918 in Holland itself. A revolutionary club known as Seaman's House was organised in Surabaya, Indonesia's leading seaport, and Soviets of Sailors' Deputies were formed, which tried to establish contact with soldiers and workmen.

The Dutch authorities took steps to divert the liberation movement into a law-abiding reformist channel. In 1918 they organised a Volksraad, or People's Council, a ludicrous travesty of a colonial "parliament". Half its members were appointed by the governor-general, the other half was elected primarily by Europeans and colonial officials, both Dutch and Javanese. Europeans formed a majority in the Volksraad, but among the appointed members there were also some leaders of Indonesian organisations (including the head of Sarekat Islam) whom the Dutch hoped to bribe and use as a tool. Still, most of the Indonesian deputies used the rostrum of this "parliament" devoid of all rights to voice sharp criticism of Dutch policy and colonial rule.

In May 1920, the Social-Democratic Union was transformed into the Indonesian Communist Party, which was admitted that same year into the Communist International. Semaoen, leader of the railway workers' union, was elected chairman of the Party. Closer contacts were established with the revolutionary movement elsewhere in the world. The Communist Party increased its influence in workers' organisations, as, for instance, in the Central Trade Union Association, formed in 1919. Many branches of the Sarekat Islam were headed by the Communists. However, the Leftist mistakes, inherited from the Dutch Left Socialists—Tribunists, prevented the young Communist Party from consolidating its successes and preserving the Sarekat Islam as a broad national front organisation. These mistakes helped the Islamist elements in the Sarekat Islam leadership in their fight against the Communists, whose growing influence panicked the moderate nationalist leaders.

The Communist Party called for an immediate socialist revolution. In their efforts to get the Sarekat Islam—fundamentally a petty-bourgeois organisation—to accept the socialist programme the Communists argued against nationalism as being "harmful" in the struggle with imperialism, and against religion.

The strife within the Sarekat Islam grew increasingly bitter and spread to the Central Trade Union Association where it led to a split. In 1923 the Communists had to leave the Sarekat Islam, but they were followed by several of that organisation's important branches, which took the name of the Red Sarekat Islam, subsequently changed to Sarekat Raiyat (People's Union).

In the beginning, their political experience prompted the Dutch authorities to allow the Communist Party of Indonesia (CPI) and the young people's and women's organisations associated with it to carry on their activities legally. They expected that internal dissension would weaken the national liberation movement and were content to resort to repression only in the case of especially active Communists. By and by, however, they saw that the CPI had a considerable following among the workers and that Communist influence was responsible for the growth of the strike movement as well as for the appearance of popular schools, peasants' organisations, and so on; and this made the Dutch authorities change their tactics in favour of mass persecution. The general railway workers' strike of 1923—the most important of that period—served as a pretext for promulgating a series of rigorous laws directed against the workers' movement. The People's Union leaders arrested on the eve of the strike (CPI chairman Semaoen among them) were deported from the country. These laws were followed by others, also directed against revolutionary organisations and democratic publications.

Increasingly grave Leftist errors on the part of the CPI leadership facilitated the Dutch authorities' task. Calling for the establishment of a Soviet-type government, the CPI leaders considered the peasantry incapable of joining the revolution as being petty bourgeois by its nature. Furthermore, they endeavoured to dissolve the Sarekat Raiyat, which lacked a programme of its own and was looked upon as a lower rung of the Communist Party. These efforts of the CPI leadership, however, were strongly resisted by the CPI and Sarekat Raiyat rank and file.

In November 1926, at a time when repressions were increasing and the mass movement was ebbing, an armed uprising broke out. In the western part of Java it was "drowned in blood" by the Dutch rulers after two months of fighting. A series of arrests prevented it from spreading to central and eastern Java. With the uprising put down in Java, armed popular rebellion broke out, in January 1927, in Western Sumatra; but this, too, was soon suppressed. The Communist Party and its associated organisations were smashed, the revolutionary trade unions dissolved and forbidden. Thousands of Communists were arrested and deported to a special concentration camp in Western Irian.

The Indonesian people's revolutionary struggle was hard hit by the campaign of terror unleashed by the Dutch. The CPI was reconstituted again only as late as 1935 in the greatest secrecy. However, it was not within the power of the Dutch to stop the liberation movement. In 1927 Sukarno formed a National Party, and those few Communists who had managed to survive joined it. The National Party, and its successor—the Indonesian Party,

formed in 1931—called, in their programme, for a struggle for independence and democratic reforms. The trend became more and more apparent towards a closer unity of all the national anti-imperialist forces in the country.

Revolutionary Struggle of the Chinese People, 1924-1927

From 1924 on the revolutionary movement in China began to gather considerable momentum as the result of the formation of a united national front, directed against the forces of imperialism and feudalism and deriving its support from the working class, the peasantry and the national bourgeoisie. The three classes were united in the task of bringing about a bourgeois-democratic revolution that was developing in the semi-colonial land that was China.

When the First Congress of the Kuomintang was convened in January 1924, the national revolutionary front was already in existence. It was this Congress that adopted a manifesto setting forth the programme which became a basis for the co-operation of the Communists and the followers of Sun Yat-sen. Communists joined the Kuomintang individually, retaining their membership in the Communist Party. The main political tenets of the Kuomintang, as formulated by Sun Yat-sen, were union with Soviet Russia, union with the Communist Party of China, and defence of the interests of workers and peasants. Serious ideological differences remained, of course, between the Kuomintang leadership and the Communist Party; as, for instance, in the evaluation of the motive power of the revolution, of the required extent of democratic reforms, etc. There existed within the Kuomintang, moreover, a Right-wing group which opposed co-operation with the Communist Party and closer links with Soviet Russia (a member of this group, incidentally, was Chiang Kai-shek, then head of the Whampoa Military Academy, which trained officers for the National Revolutionary Army). The bulk of the national bourgeoisie, it should be said, supported the revolution in those days, for the dominance of foreign capital and the survivals of the feudal system were harmful to their interests and created serious impediments to any expansion of their activities.

During 1924 and 1925 contacts between China and the USSR continued to expand in parallel with growing Soviet aid to the Chinese people in their national liberation struggle. The Soviet people took a firm stand against the continuing interference of foreign imperialists in the domestic affairs of China and constant threats that they would throttle the revolutionary struggle. A

“Hands Off China” Society was formed in the USSR in September 1924, which launched a vigorous campaign against the encroachments of the ruling circles of Britain, the United States, Japan and other imperialist powers. On May 31, 1924, China and the USSR established diplomatic relations, the Peking government taking this step only after the USSR had been accorded recognition by the leading capitalist powers. This act was of great importance for the cause of aid to the Chinese people. The Sino-Soviet agreement was the first equitable treaty to be concluded by China with a foreign power, the Soviet Union relinquishing all of the privileges which had been extorted from China by the tsarist government.

The Soviet Union gave its support to the revolutionary centre at Kwangchow in the south, which was growing increasingly strong despite all kinds of threats and acts of sabotage on the part of the imperialists. In line with Sun Yat-sen’s wishes, M. M. Borodin, a Soviet Communist, was appointed as his political adviser, while V. K. Blücher, a prominent Soviet military leader, assisted by a group of Soviet military advisers, went to work energetically to help build up the liberation army. Soviet arms shipments were an especially valuable form of aid to the revolutionary government in those days.

The death of Sun Yat-sen, in the spring of 1925, came as a heavy blow to the Chinese people’s liberation movement. Great democrat and tireless fighter for China’s independence and prosperity that he was, Sun Yat-sen remained faithful to the last to his programme and the policy of seeking the support of the masses and close union with the Soviet Union.

On the eve of his death he dictated a letter to the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, which ran as follows:

“Dear comrades! As I lie here, prostrated by a disease from which there is no known cure, my thoughts turn to you and to my own country’s future.

“You stand at the helm of a union of free republics—the legacy which the immortal Lenin left the oppressed peoples and which will inevitably help the victims of imperialism free themselves from an international system whose roots, since ancient times, have been imbedded in slavery, wars and injustice.

“I am leaving behind me a party which, I have always hoped, would work jointly with you in accomplishing the historical task of achieving the final liberation of China and the other exploited countries from that imperialist system. . . . I firmly believe in the enduring nature of the aid you have been giving my country.

“In bidding you farewell, my dear comrades, I wish to voice the hope that the day will soon come when the USSR will welcome a powerful, liberated China as a friend and ally and that



Detachment of revolutionary peasants, Kiangsi province (1926)

the two allies will stand shoulder to shoulder in the glorious struggle for the liberation of the oppressed nations of the world.”

Late that spring, on May 30, 1925, to be precise, the British-directed international settlement police in Shanghai opened fire on a patriotic demonstration. This produced a new explosion of anti-imperialist feeling among the Chinese people, and violent reaction, which came to be known as the “May 30th Movement”. The working class confidently headed the anti-imperialist struggle. On June 1, some 200,000 of Shanghai’s proletariat went on strike, demanding punishment of those guilty of the shooting, withdrawal of foreign troops, transfer of all rights and powers in the international settlement to the Chinese, etc. Tens of thousands of students and great numbers of the petty and middle bourgeoisie joined the workers. The anti-imperialist campaign reached its highest point when a strike began, in June 1925, in the Hong Kong-Kwangchow area in support of the workers of Shanghai. Lasting 16 months, this strike set a record in respect of both its length and the resolution with which it was carried out. The strikers received assistance from the authorities of Kwangchow; some 250,000 men moved from Hong Kong to Kwangchow, which considerably strengthened the consistently revolutionary forces on which the South China government mainly relied for support. Many Hong Kong workers joined the National Revolutionary Army.

These events were watched by the Kuomintang Right-wingers with growing concern. In March 1926, they made their first attempt at a counter-revolutionary coup in Kwangchow. For the moment, however, these Right-wing elements lacked sufficient opportunities to achieve a break with the Communist Party. But in the summer of 1926 Chiang Kai-shek succeeded in having himself appointed concurrently chairman of the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee and commander-in-chief of the National Revolutionary Army, which last post was all the more important since with the start of the northern liberation campaign the army became a political force of the first magnitude.

The National Revolutionary Army set out from Kwangchow in July 1926. The campaign was successful from the start. In September the revolutionary forces liberated Wuhan, one of the country's most important centres, routing the Chihli war-lord clique entrenched for years in Central China. The victories of the National Revolutionary Army were due above all to the support of the population in the provinces which it overran and the extreme hostility of the masses toward the war-lords. Another important factor was the superior ability of the revolutionary army's officer corps, largely contributed to by the Soviet military advisers. Also, there were many Communists in the army, who carried on political work not only among the rank and file, but among the civilian population as well.

The northern campaign imparted new vigour to the workers' movement, prompted the peasants to action against the land-owners, and generally stimulated class warfare. There was a rapid growth of trade union membership, and strikes increased. In the villages, people joined to form peasant unions, which in turn formed armed units of their own. The national bourgeoisie regarded the mounting revolutionary struggle with growing alarm. Their stand was influenced to a great extent by the actions of the foreign imperialists, who, beset by the fear of losing control over China, employed armed force to interfere in her internal affairs and endeavoured to use the war-lords more effectively against the revolutionary people.

Acute contradictions notwithstanding, the logic of struggle induced the imperialist powers to unify their efforts. In December 1926, Great Britain, Japan and the United States succeeded in welding the armies of the various war-lords into a single army, which was put under the command of Chang Tso-lin. The army was amply supplied with arms by the imperialist powers. Moreover, its operations were supported by their fleets: British and American warships patrolled the Yangtze, interfering with the movements of the National Revolutionary Army; and in December 1926 put a landing party ashore at Hankow. Early in 1927



Insurgent workers storm British concession, Hankow (1927)

most of the US Asiatic fleet was transferred into Chinese waters. Additional troops were landed at Shanghai by the United States, Japan, France, Italy, Holland, Spain, and Portugal, as well as a British volunteer corps.

In March 1927, the revolutionary forces approached Shanghai, China's leading industrial centre, and the city's workers declared a general strike and rose in revolt. Units of the National Revolutionary Army entered the city after it was taken over by the insurgents. On March 23, that is, two days later, the revolutionary forces captured Nanking, a politically important city of Central China. These two brilliant victories of the revolutionary forces threw the imperialists into a rage. On March 24, American and British warships anchored on the Yangtze off Nanking subjected the city to a merciless shelling. This was done with the dual purpose of scaring the population into submission and prompting the Right-wingers in the Kuomintang to openly side with the counter-revolution.

In the meantime a large sum of money had passed from Shanghai's industrialists into the pocket of Chiang Kai-shek, and the latter made a deal with the representatives of those very same imperialist powers whose brazen armed intervention in China had raised a storm of indignation all over the world. On April 12, 1927, Chiang Kai-shek staged an anti-revolutionary *coup* in

Shanghai. Similar outbreaks took place in other liberated districts, accompanied everywhere by violence against trade unions and the imprisonment and shooting of Communists. A government was set up at Nanking, headed by Chiang Kai-shek, to the great delight of the foreign imperialists, who accorded recognition to the new government, which they regarded as a firm guarantee of the security of their interests in China.

There was still a national government in Wuhan, it should be said, which controlled the central provinces and which could have had ample opportunity for developing the revolution if only it had used the peasants' and workers' movement to that end. As it turned out, however, the Kuomintang Left-wingers at the head of the government were incapable of that, while some, including Wang Chiang-wei, who took over the Kuomintang leadership after Chiang Kai-shek's defection, were nothing but disguised traitors. Serious mistakes were made by the leaders of the Communist Party and particularly by Chen Tu-hsiu, General Secretary, whose Right-wing opportunist tactics did a great deal of harm to the Party and the revolutionary cause.

Taking advantage of the situation, Wang Chiang-wei engineered in Wuhan, in July 1927, a *coup d'état* on the lines of Chiang Kai-shek's. The Communists were ejected from the Kuomintang and subjected to savage repressions. And that completed the defection of the national bourgeoisie to the counter-revolutionary camp.

Although the revolution had been defeated, it had played an important part in moulding China's future. In the course of its evolution valuable experience had been gained, which was to make an important contribution to the final victory of the Chinese people. The events of the 1920s showed beyond all doubt that in its struggle for independence and social progress its truest ally was the international proletariat and above all its revolutionary vanguard—the Soviet Union.

China in 1927-1939

In the course of 1927 the big bourgeoisie and landowner bloc, together with the national bourgeoisie, succeeded in imposing their reactionary political regime over all of China.

The interests of the national bourgeoisie, however, were given only minimal consideration. Nominally the Nanking government's rule extended over the entire country, but actually many provinces continued to be ruled by the war-lords. What was most important, however, the country continued to be further enslaved by the foreign imperialists, with the Chiang Kai-shek government particularly dependent on the United States. The Kuomin-

tang, after it had been purged of the revolutionary elements, had become a hotbed of anti-popular forces, though its leaders, who had totally betrayed the behests of Sun Yat-sen, continued to invoke his name to fool the people. The population at large fared worse and worse. Any peasant aspirations to land were ended when the Kuomintang government promulgated laws perpetuating the ownership of landed proprietors thereof.

There were armed worker and peasant uprisings by way of retaliation to the betrayal of the revolution by the Kuomintang leadership. The most important among these was the revolt of 30,000 Kwangchow workers in December 1927, known as the "Canton Commune". The insurgents proclaimed an end of landed proprietorship, of landed estates, confiscation of the property of foreign firms, abrogation of all unequal treaties, etc. This insurrection, as well as the others, were drowned in blood. The detachments which had managed to break through withdrew to inaccessible rural districts and there began to form units of China's Red Army. The Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of China, convened in 1928, laid down the principle that in the new situation top priority should be given to the promotion of an agrarian revolution, and condemned both the Leftist tendencies to disregard the lack of conditions favouring uprisings in the larger towns and the Right-wing opportunism of Chen Tu-hsiu (who was relieved of his office in August 1927). A number of revolutionary territories appeared during the period of 1928-30, in Central and South China, chiefly in mountainous regions, and Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies were set up, which performed the functions of government. A number of democratic reforms were implemented by the latter, the most important of these being the agrarian reform. Under this reform landed estates were expropriated and distributed among the peasants who owned little or no land. At the same time in the regions ruled by the Soviets the interests of well-to-do elements who did not infringe the decrees of the revolutionary authorities were equally protected, and it was this policy that fostered among the local population a determination to take up arms in defence of what they had won.

In the years that followed, the area of the liberated regions expanded considerably. Six large revolutionary bases were set up in various parts of the country, in South and Central China and in the northeastern provinces; and a number of minor bases. In November 1931, the First Congress of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies was convened at Juiching, Kiangsi Province, which was attended by delegates from all the Soviet regions of China. The Congress adopted a constitution and formed a Central Soviet Government, with Mao Tse-tung elected as chairman.



Chinese trenches at Chapei under Japanese shelling (1932)

The Kuomintang government made repeated attempts to liquidate the Soviet regions. Several punitive expeditions numbering each some tens of thousands of troops were sent against them by Chiang Kai-shek, but these were all routed by the Red Army, which, enjoying as it did the unstinting support of the population, was able to inflict considerable loss on the enemy.

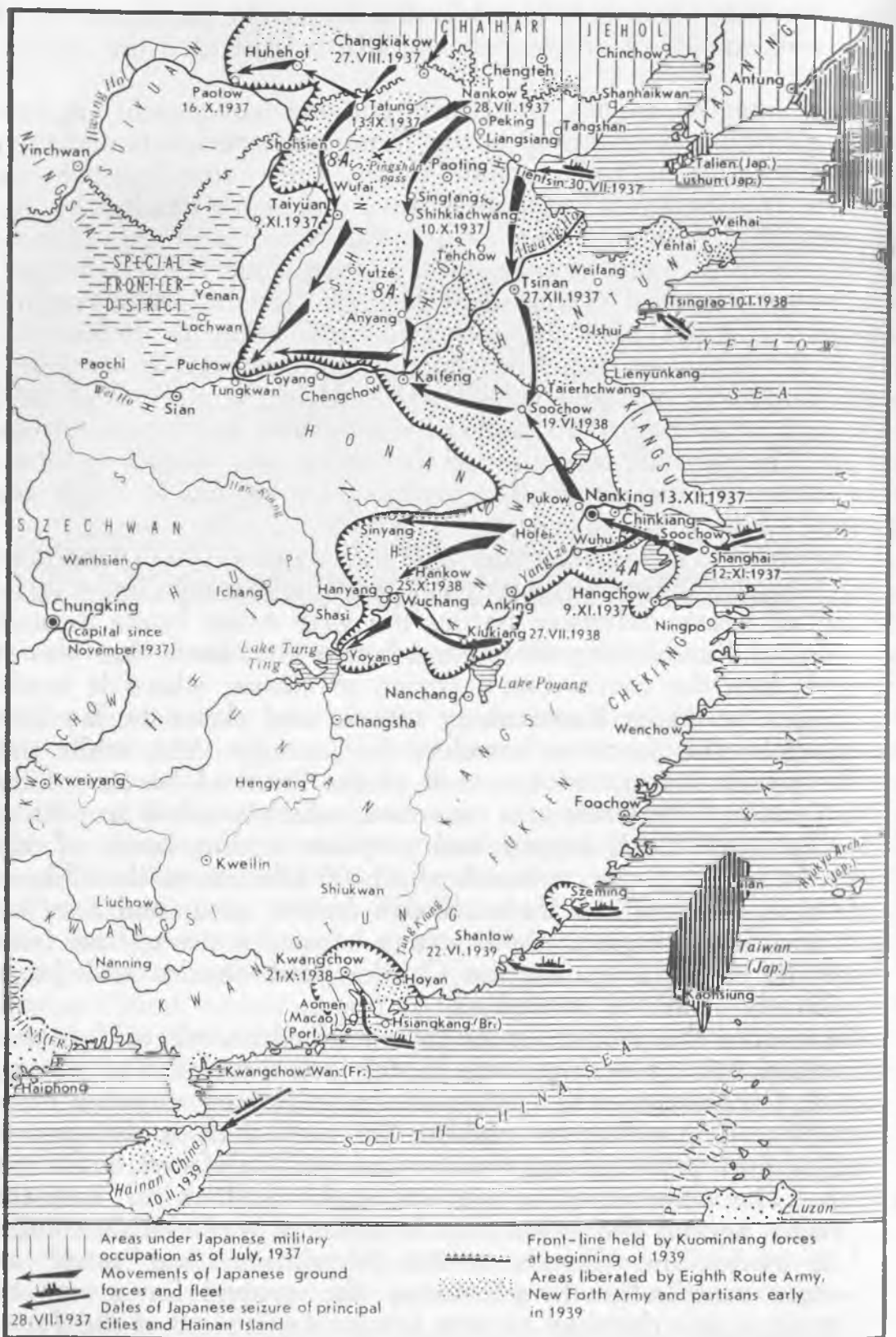
The Kuomintang leaders did not abandon their efforts to liquidate the Soviet regions even after the Japanese attack, in September 1931, and the gradual Japanese occupation of Northeastern China, which constituted a serious threat to the Chinese people. The Chiang Kai-shek government did everything to sabotage organised resistance, though the Japanese occupation of the northeastern provinces was a great loss to the national economy. Chiang Kai-shek did not lift a finger even when the Japanese attempted to seize Shanghai in the beginning of 1932. Using the classical "incident" pretext, the pre-arranged murder of a Japanese monk in the given case, the Japanese had landed a force in the Shanghai area in the expectation that they would be able to take the city unopposed. However, the Shanghai proletariat rose to a man to the defence of the city in answer to the call of the Communist Party. Soldiers of the 19th Army, dislocated in Shanghai, fought shoulder to shoulder with the workers in contravention of Chiang's orders. The heaviest fighting took place in the Chapei district of the city. If the city was not occupied by the

Japanese that time, it was solely thanks to the heroic stand of these rank-and-file Chinese patriots, which frustrated the aggressor's sally.

The Shanghai events increased popular resentment against Chiang's refusal to stand up to the Japanese imperialists and their designs on China. The patriotic forces, fully conscious of the menace created by the Japanese invasion, were headed by the Communist Party of China, which had summoned the Chinese people to resist aggression as early as September 1931. In April 1932, the Central Government of the revolutionary regions declared war on Japan and called for unification of all forces to resist the Japanese invaders. Chiang Kai-shek, on the contrary, endeavoured to expand the civil war, and in the autumn of 1933 launched a fifth punitive campaign with a force nearly one million strong. The patriotic forces found themselves in a dangerous situation: the very existence of the revolutionary regions in South and Central China was jeopardised.

Despite extensive American aid and despite the counsel of nazi generals, Chiang's campaign failed to achieve its ends. After a year of heavy defensive battles the Red Army broke through the ring of Kuomintang troops and began the march that was to bring it into the northwestern region of China, where it would no longer be under Kuomintang attack, and closer to the area menaced by the Japanese invaders. In January 1935, while still on the march, an extended session of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee was convened, which resulted in putting Mao Tse-tung to all intents and purposes at the head of the Party. In October, after a march of 12,000 kilometres, the Chinese Red Army reached the Kansu-Shansi border area, and here set up a new Soviet region, which was to become a strong base from which the struggle against the Chinese reactionaries and Japanese invaders could be carried on.

Meanwhile the movement in favour of resistance to Japanese aggression was gathering force in the areas under Kuomintang control. On December 9, 1935, students in Peking staged a demonstration, demanding an end to the civil war, a determined stand against Japanese aggression, and political freedom for the people. The demonstration was ruthlessly dealt with, but the movement against the government's policy of capitulation continued to grow. The "December 9th Movement" had made an important contribution by preparing the ground for a war of liberation, a war that had become inevitable in view of the Japanese threat to the vital interests of the Chinese people. People in all walks of life were increasingly demanding that all patriotic forces should join and end the civil war which gave the Japanese an opportunity to grab more and more Chinese territory. As a



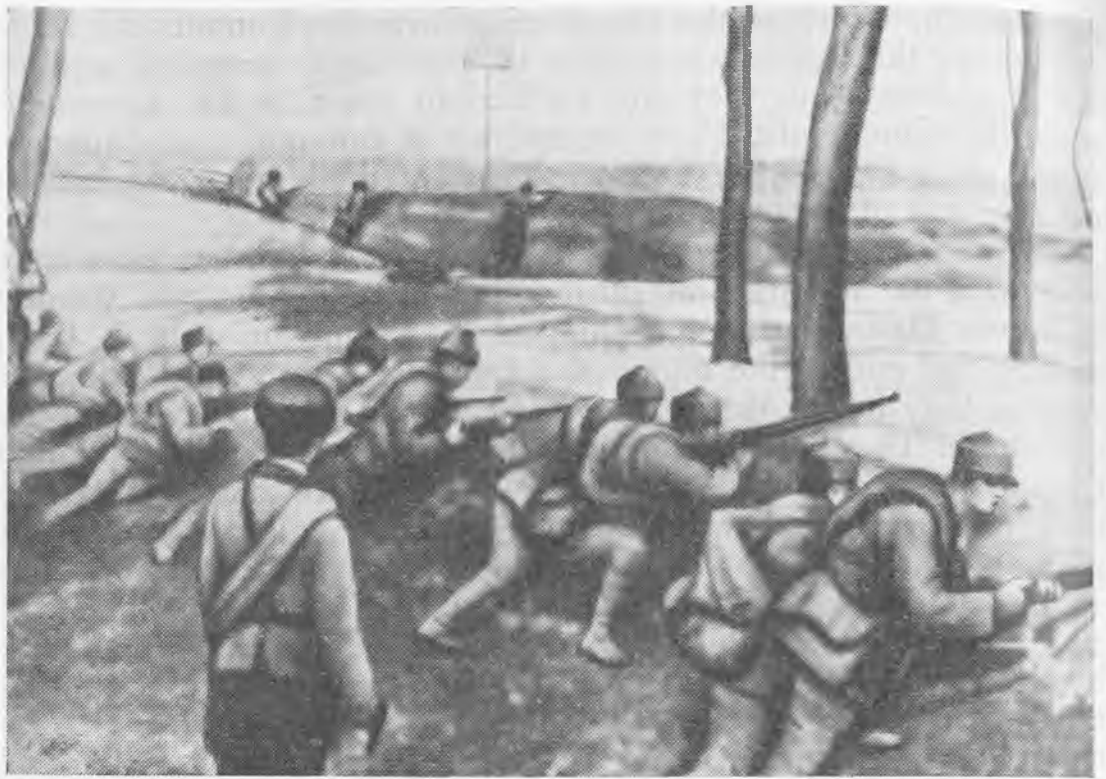
National Liberation War of the Chinese People Against Japanese Aggression 1937-39

result of the efforts of the Communist Party the Kuomintang leaders found themselves compelled to end their campaign against the Red Army; but they still refused to come to an agreement with the Communist Party regarding a common anti-Japanese front, even though the Communists offered to make concessions on a number of important issues.

The situation changed only when Japan began a large-scale war with the intention of subjugating all of China and turning it into a Japanese colony. This war broke out on July 7, 1937, and by the end of the month the Japanese had taken Peking; in August they began the battle for Shanghai and achieved success elsewhere. They had made a mistake, however, in reckoning that China's military weakness and the lack of unity among the country's patriotic forces would bring them immediate victory. The national peril forced the Kuomintang to accept the Communist Party's offer, and an agreement was reached in September between the two sides on the subject of resistance to the Japanese invaders. This was an important achievement, though even then the Chiang clique continued to sabotage the war effort, a circumstance that led, in 1937 and 1938, to extensive territorial losses. Still, the wave of patriotism that swept the country kept the reactionaries from capitulating to the enemy and resuming the civil war. The brunt of the war against the invaders was carried by the Eighth Army and the New Fourth Army, both under Communist command, and other partisan forces operating in the enemy rear.

Large-scale aid in combating the Japanese aggression was made available to the Chinese people by the Soviet Union. In 1937 the two countries signed a non-aggression pact, which served notice on the world where the sympathies of the Soviet people lay. In 1938-39 the Soviet Union advanced fighting China two loans to the tune of US \$250,000,000, which were used for the purchase of arms. A large number of Soviet volunteers fought on the Chinese side, including fliers who did their best to protect Chinese towns from Japanese aerial attacks. Very different was the attitude of the Western powers, who didn't do a thing to stop the Japanese aggression, even though that aggression was seriously damaging to their imperialist interests in China. The motive in this case was the same that had lain at the root of their appeasement policy towards nazi Germany, that is to say, their desire to deflect the spearhead of the attack to the Soviet Union and thus kill two birds with one stone: smash or seriously weaken the Soviet Union and safeguard their interests in China against the encroachment of the Japanese imperialists.

The twenty-year interim between the two world wars was a significant period in Chinese history. It witnessed the unprece-



Fighters of Eighth Army on firing-line (1938)

dented growth of a mass revolutionary movement directed against imperialism and feudalism. What is more important, it witnessed the appearance in the political arena of the Chinese working class in the capacity of a leader of the war of liberation, a working class that had taken in the lofty aims of the October Revolution and formed a Marxist-Leninist Party of its own. Although the perfidy of the national bourgeoisie had brought a defeat to the revolution, the invaluable experience acquired by the revolutionary forces and the existence of a Communist Party tempered in the crucible of class warfare gave promise of victories to come. The results began to tell already in the 1930s, when the Japanese started their aggression against China and the revolutionary bases established by the Communist Party became a bulwark not only against the reactionaries at home, but also against the grave menace of Japanese imperialism.

Fresh Upswing of Anti-Imperialist Struggle in India

After the ebb of the 1919-22 revolutionary tide, the contradictions which had started the anti-imperialist struggle of the people of India became still more aggravated. The British monopolies increased their economic pressure on India, and the

local capitalists were in turn anxious to increase their share of profits by all possible means. As a result, wages were dropping and working conditions growing worse for the workers, while among the peasants the process of impoverishment went on unabated. In addition, a period of political reaction set in. The colonial authorities did everything in their power to sow discord among the various religious communities. The Moslem League and the National Congress co-operated no longer, as they had done during the revolutionary upswing. And armed clashes between Hindus and Moslems occurred in certain regions.

The capitulation of the National Congress leaders, who had terminated the civil disobedience campaign, had produced a feeling of frustration among the masses. Membership in the National Congress Party fell off from close to 10,000,000 to a few hundred thousand.

This recess of the revolutionary movement could not last long, however. Though the reactionaries had the upper hand the Indian workers continued striking. Trade union membership had grown to 300,000 by the end of 1926. The Communist groups were extending the range of their activities, and in December 1925, the Communist Party of India was established.

In 1925 and the years that followed, workers' and peasants' parties were organised, at various times, in the provinces of Bengal, Bombay, Punjab and elsewhere. These served to unite workers, peasants, intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie. Revolutionary nationalists of the petty bourgeoisie, as a matter of fact, shared the leadership of these organisations with the Communists. These parties helped consolidate the democratic forces in the country.

That a new upswing of the national liberation movement was in the offing could be seen from the increasing activity of the Left-wing elements within the National Congress Party, comprising chiefly students, intellectuals, and members of the petty bourgeoisie. Leadership of these elements was assumed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, who represented that part of the national bourgeoisie, which stood for active opposition to British imperialism.

In 1928, in anticipation of the scheduled review of the Government of India Act of 1919, a British Government commission headed by J. A. Simon arrived in India. Incensed by the fact that India's future was to be decided by the seven English members of the commission, the Indians staged mass demonstrations under the slogan "Simon, Go Back!"

The strike movement, too, gathered force, and over half a million workers took part in strikes during 1928. Most important of these was the strike of the textile workers at Bombay, which

lasted six months. The struggle against the owners was marked by the increasing influence of the Communists, workers' and peasants' parties, and revolutionary trade unions.

In an effort to halt the mounting workers' movement the British authorities resorted to repression. In March 1929, 33 prominent leaders of the movement were arrested, including Dange and thirteen other Communists. They were removed to Meerut, a minor town, where a hearing was to be staged of an alleged "secret Communist plot". Active trade union workers were jailed in many industrial towns. And though the membership as well as the activity of the trade unions continued to grow, the power of the working class diminished as the result of a split in the trade union movement: there were now three trade union centres in the country.

The economic crisis which engulfed the capitalist world in 1929 brought fresh miseries to the people of India. Prices on farm produce dropped sharply, and most of the farmers' crops went to pay rent to the landowners and taxes to the colonial authorities. Tax arrears were collected with indescribable brutality. In some rural areas failure to pay taxes brought torture. From time immemorial it had been a custom in India to cherish gold ornaments, which were held sacred and handed down from generation to generation, even among the poorest families. Now these heirlooms passed into the hands of the ruthless tax-collectors. In the urban communities business failures among small entrepreneurs increased rapidly, while the big monopolists, such as Tata, Birla and others, expanded. The growing numbers of impoverished and starving peasants swelled the ranks of the unemployed.

British monopoly capital endeavoured to mitigate the impact of the crisis at home by increased exploitation of the colonies, India among them. This increased the rivalry between the British monopolies and Indian national capital.

As resentment against the colonial regime grew, so did the prestige of the National Congress and the scope of its activities. Under the pressure of numerous meetings whose key-note was independence for India, the National Congress, at a session held in December 1929, at Lahore, elected Jawaharlal Nehru, Left-wing leader, as its chairman, and proclaimed the achievement of complete independence as its basic aim. This was to be attained through a campaign of civil disobedience, the direction of which was entrusted to Gandhi.

January 26, 1930, was proclaimed Independence Day.¹ Mass

¹ Independence Day has since been celebrated yearly by Indian patriots, and the adoption of the constitution and the proclamation of the Republic of India in 1950 was specially timed to January 26.



Demonstration protesting against Simon Commission (1928)

meetings and assemblies were held all over the country on that day. A great demonstration of students, employees and petty bourgeois carrying the slogan "Long Live the Non-Violent Revolution!" began in Bombay early in the day. The Indian national flag flew over the National Congress building. At the end of the working day the Congress-sponsored demonstration was joined by a workers' demonstration 100,000 strong, directed by the revolutionary trade unions and carrying slogans of "Revolution and Independence!", "Long Live the Soviet Union!", and "India to the Indians!"

That day, January 26, marked the beginning of a mass anti-British movement, even though Gandhi made an attempt to reach

a peaceful agreement with the British Government. Towards the close of January he published his eleven demands and made it known that if these were accepted by the British viceroy the campaign of civil disobedience might be called off. The demands called, in part, for an adjustment of the exchange rate of the Indian rupee that would give Indian capitalists a better chance to compete with British-made goods; the introduction of protectionist customs tariffs; lower land taxes; abolition of the British salt monopoly; a fifty per cent reduction of military expenditure; and the release of political prisoners, except "those guilty of murder or incitement to murder".

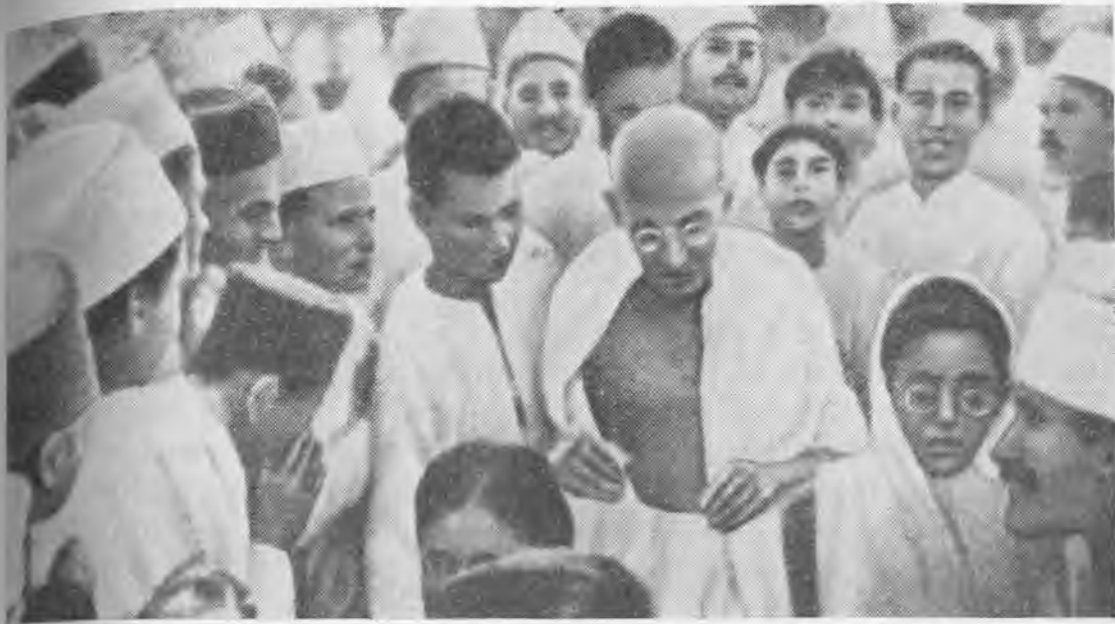
When the British Government turned down these demands Gandhi summoned the people of India to begin the civil disobedience campaign, which was to be initiated by an infringement of the salt monopoly. On March 12, 1930, Gandhi led 79 specially chosen followers from Ahmedabad, on foot, to the coastal village of Dandi. They were warmly greeted by the villagers on the way; and on April 5, a remembrance day for the 1919 massacre at Amritsar, Gandhi and his followers started to evaporate salt from sea-water.

On April 9 Gandhi addressed the people of India as follows:

"Our road is clear. Let every village obtain or produce contraband salt, let women picket the wine-shops, opium dens and shops selling foreign-made textiles. Let young and old in every home work diligently and daily spin a great deal of yarn. Foreign textiles should be burned. Hindus must abandon the concept of untouchability. Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, Parsees and Christians must all achieve cordial agreement.... Let the students leave their state schools and colleges, and let civil service employees resign and consecrate themselves to the service of the people; and we shall then soon see full independence (*purna swaraj*) coming of itself to knock on our door."

The "salt march" touched off a mass civil disobedience campaign. Infringement of the salt monopoly became universal. Multitudinous demonstrations took place in most towns, often accompanied by clashes with the police and troops. Specially formed volunteer detachments picketed shops selling British goods, and clothes made of British textiles were burned in the town squares. Millions were joining the movement.

In May 1930, the British colonial government declared the National Congress outlawed and arrested Gandhi, Nehru and other Party leaders. The number of participants in the civil disobedience campaign now in prison surpassed 60,000. The movement had now unavoidably overstepped the bounds set by Gandhi's "non-violence" injunction. Already towards the end of April there had been a popular uprising in Peshawar, and the British



Gandhi and members of "salt march" (1930)

authorities, in an effort to exploit religious differences, had sent Sikh troops to deal with the Moslem population. But the Sikhs refused to fire on the insurgents and turned over their own arms to them instead. The rebellion spread to Chittagong, Sholapur and other towns; and in some provinces peasants stopped paying taxes.

The scope of the movement strengthened the trend towards a compromise on the part of both the British colonial government and that part of the Indian bourgeoisie which feared the increasingly independent actions of the workers and peasants. On January 26, 1931, there came the release of Gandhi and the members of the National Congress Working Committee, and negotiations between them and the viceroy culminated in the signing at Delhi, on March 5, of the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. The Congress undertook to call off the civil disobedience campaign, and the British authorities promised to halt repressions, repeal martial law, and free political prisoners (this latter provision not to apply to the Meerut Communists in prison and to the Sikh soldiers who were held for court-martial). Gandhi agreed to take part in the round table conference, at which representatives of the British Government and the Indian political circles that co-operated with the British had been discussing since 1930 the problem of a new Indian constitution.

The Irwin-Gandhi Pact came as a disappointment for the Indian patriotic elements. Gandhi's talks in London proved fruitless, as might have been expected. Back in India again, he announced, in January 1932, a new campaign of civil disobedience,

to which the British authorities retaliated by once more sending the Congress leaders to prison.

The civil disobedience campaign of 1932 was on a more modest scale than the one before, but certain important shifts in the mass movement began to shape up during that year. Peasant activity spread to Bihar, Madras and some of the princely states, to regions, in other words, that had remained practically entirely outside the movement in 1930. The influence of the workers' and peasants' parties and the Communist Party began to gain ground among the peasants. The mass movement induced the maharajah of Kashmir to convene a legislative assembly in 1934. An insurrection in the principality of Alwar lasted over a year.

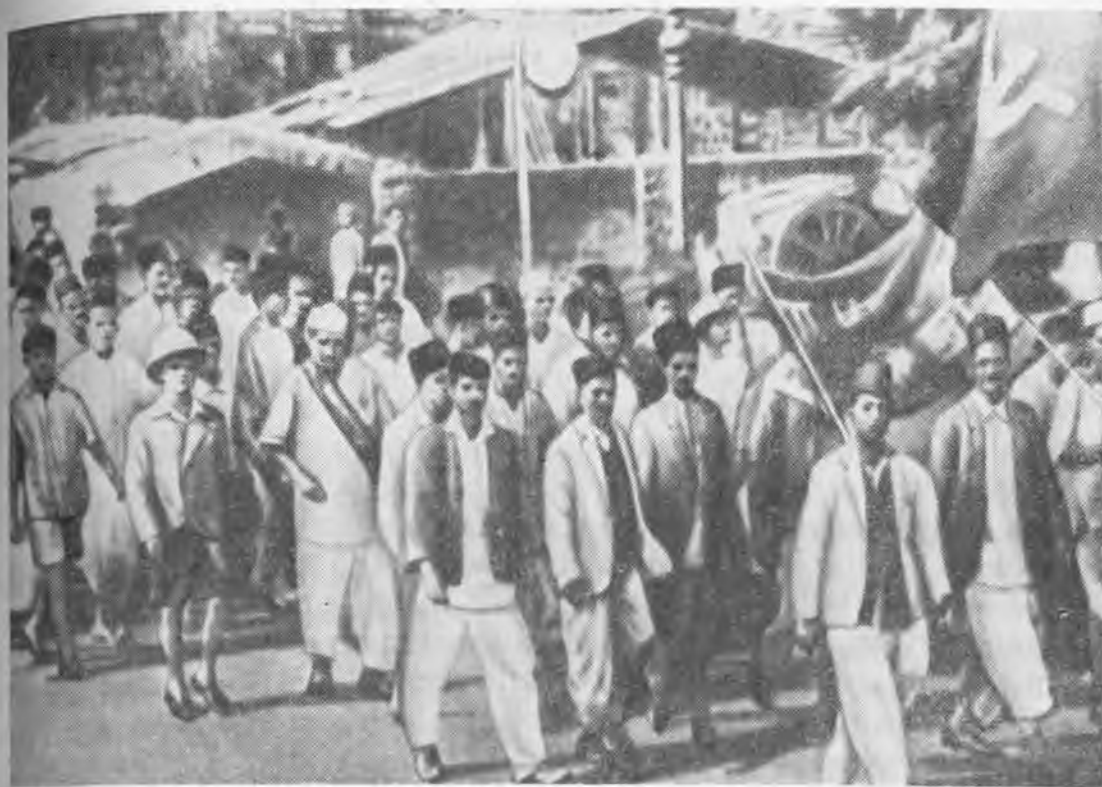
While the revolutionary movement of the early 1930s had failed to drive the British out of India, the national liberation struggle of the Indian people had been conducted on a higher plane than in the period 1919-22. It had increased in scope; it had been better organised; and the masses had been increasingly active.

The strikes of 1928-29 and later years and the active participation of Indian workers in the anti-imperialist movement spoke of the increasing role of the proletariat in politics and public affairs and the spreading of progressive ideas in the country. So did the trial of the leaders of the workers' movement, which continued at Meerut till 1933 and which was used by the accused to denounce the British authorities and expound the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. The obvious facts of the case to the contrary, the accused were found guilty; but the British authorities were constrained to release them before they had served their full sentences. This trial served to increase the prestige and influence of the Communist Party.

The recession of the revolutionary movement was of short duration, and the year 1935 witnessed a vigorous movement of protest against the new Indian constitution promulgated by the British Parliament.

Qualified popularly as strengthening Indian enslavement, the new constitution proclaimed India a federation of British India provinces and princely states, the latter receiving a disproportionately greater number of seats in the central legislative assembly. A further provision made it dependent upon the feudal princes whether they establish the method of appointment or election of deputies. It became clear that the British would be able, through the princes and landowners, to control the all-India legislative assembly. And, in addition, the viceroy's powers would be the same as hitherto.

The only concessions the constitution made were contained in the articles defining the system of government for the provinces



Striking spinners demonstrate in Bombay (1934)

of British India. Here legislative assemblies were to be established with an elected membership. The franchise would be extended to 35,000,000, including the well-to-do peasantry. The election system contributed to increasing the differences between Hindus and Moslems, however. In the provinces governments were set up answerable to the deputies of the legislative assemblies, but with limited powers. The real power in the provinces remained with the British governors-general, as before.

This fettering constitution was actively opposed by the National Congress, the Communist Party, and also workers', peasants', and youth organisations. This prepared the ground for the creation of a united anti-imperialist front. In consequence of this movement of protest the federation of the provinces and princely states failed to come into effect.

Elections to the provincial legislative assemblies were held in 1937. The National Congress participated, though protesting against the "enslaving constitution" and demanding independence for India. Its efforts were largely successful in that its candidates obtained majorities in seven of the eleven provinces where governments were formed by the Congress members.

The year 1937 initiated a new period in the anti-imperialist movement. 648,000 workers took part in that year's strikes. The

strike movement continued to gather force through 1938 and 1939. Magnificent fortitude was displayed by the workers of Bombay and Cawnpore, who called for Indian independence and the legalisation of the Communist Party, besides presenting demands of an economic character.

Thanks to the efforts of the Indian Communists the split within the trade union movement was ended in 1938, and a single trade union centre created. The peasant movement continued to gain in strength and organisation, its programme calling for the abolition of landownership, cancellation of debts, etc. The All-India Peasant Union, created in 1936, soon had a membership of 800,000. The democratic, anti-imperialist movement gained considerably in the princely states.

The three consecutive waves of the revolutionary movement that swept India in the interim between the First and Second World wars left the British rule over India considerably shaken. And each time the national liberation movement had achieved, quantitatively and qualitatively, a higher plane.

Several distinct features characterised this movement on the eve of the Second World War: the proletariat and the peasantry now played an increasingly important part in political affairs; the National Congress had become a mass organisation capable of rallying a majority of the country's population; the Communist Party of India was becoming an important political factor, fighting for a united anti-imperialist front in compliance with the resolutions of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International. The economic and political situation in the country in the late 1930s was propitious to a unification of all the forces that were fighting to end India's colonial yoke.

South Africa and Tropical Africa Between the Two World Wars

So far as the modern history of South and Tropical Africa is concerned, the man in the street, in all probability, knows only about the events of the past few years, those during which the national liberation revolution in Africa has been scoring one victory after another. It is not so long ago, incidentally, that a French bourgeois historian referred to Africa as a continent without a past. And, indeed, many books on Africa present the events of recent years as fortuitous, rather than as changes brought about by what had come to pass before. This approach should substantiate the version that independence, rather than won by the colonies, had been granted to them by the parent states.

Yet Africa's history of the 1920-30s has been that of a gradual

mobilisation of forces for the coming all-out fight for national independence. This process could be traced in the growth of national and political consciousness, in the appearance of new forms of resistance to the colonial system, and in the emergence of political organisations.

By the beginning of the 20th century colonial rule and exploitation have reached the remotest parts of the continent to establish harsh control over the life and customs of all African peoples. The African economy has been changing, more and more assuming the colonial pattern, that is to say, giving increasing prominence to the production of export crops and mining ores and minerals. The role of commodity-money relations was on the ascendant. And the traditional way of life was crumbling.

As a result of this process new social forces were coming into being. More and more peasants were leaving the land in search of work. Proletarian cadres, it must be admitted, had appeared only in the south, in the Union of South Africa, to be precise. In the other African countries hired workers were practically all seasonal; going home, they carried with them the elements of proletarian self-consciousness and thereby introduced changes in their countrymen's habitual thinking.

A bourgeoisie was coming into existence; and there was already a stratum—a very modest stratum—of intelligentsia, chiefly teachers graduated from mission schools or “colleges for natives”. Some Africans were fortunate enough to pursue their studies further in the schools of Europe. Concurrently, chiefs and elders were losing their grip on the populace.

As a result of changes in the way of life and social shifts the national liberation movement was assuming new forms. Tribal revolts, the traditional methods of resistance to colonialism, were being abandoned.

All these processes were extremely slow. The only exception was the Union of South Africa, economically the most advanced African state, which accounted for over 50 per cent of the capitalist world's output of gold and platinum and 90 per cent of that of diamonds. Its industry developed at a considerably faster pace than elsewhere in Africa. Urban development was also more rapid, and some towns had already turned into important industrial centres. Several hundred thousand miners worked in the mines of Transvaal, the deepest in the world.

Here, in the Union of South Africa, the workers' movement had started earlier than in the other African countries. African miners had attempted to strike as early as the 1880s. In the beginning of this century workers of European descent formed several Social-Democratic organisations here, and in 1909 the South-African Labour Party was established.

From this party there branched off, in 1915, the International Socialist League, which called for an end to the imperialist world war and stood for the unification of the world proletariat and working-class unity in the Union of South Africa regardless of colour. With racism running high in the Union, this was a very courageous move. Also, this was the first time that the slogans of internationalism were raised in Africa.

In 1920 the International Socialist League became a member of the Communist International, and in the following year, having joined with several other socialist organisations, it proclaimed itself the Communist Party of South Africa, the first to appear on the African continent. Created by white workers, it became the first organisation in the history of Africa to admit members regardless of colour. The Communist Party next proceeded to organise trade unions and evening schools for African workers. By 1930 Africans formed a majority in the Party membership.

The impact of the Russian October Revolution and the revolutionary upsurge of 1918-23 in Europe can be traced with particular clarity in the history of the Union of South Africa. The *International*, a daily published by the International Socialist League and then by the Communist Party, gave very full coverage of the events in Russia and ran articles written by Lenin. Even as early as November 1917, League leaders lectured on the meaning of the Russian Revolution.

An organisation called Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers was created in the Union of South Africa in 1919 and remained throughout the 1920s the African peoples' most important organisation in that country. Its membership comprised representatives of all strata of the population, such as workers, which made up the bulk of its body, intelligentsia, artisans, shopkeepers, traders, etc. Peasants made up the majority of its branch in the province of Natal. The fact that the Union stood at the top of the list of African national organisations shows that after the First World War leadership of the national liberation movement had passed from the tribal chiefs into the hands of the intelligentsia and bourgeoisie.

The Union's statute spoke of the opposition of interests of the working people and their exploiters, and at the outset the Union actively fought for the rights of the African working people against imperialism. In 1919 the Union directed a dockers' strike in all of the country's seaports and a railwaymen's strike in the diamond mining area. Equally important was its role in organising the first mass strike of African miners in February 1920, in which several tens of thousands took part.

Another political organisation, the African National Congress (ANC), which dates back to 1912, changed its policies. In 1912



Building a road in the Congo

the ANC announced that it would have nothing to do with the workers' movement, but after the First World War it joined in the organisation of strikes.

The workers' movement and the national liberation movement in the Union of South Africa reached a higher level than anywhere else in Africa and greatly influenced the development of national and political consciousness among the peoples of other African countries. Even in remote areas the more astute and active elements of the population showed keen interest in the events that transpired in the Union of South Africa, which, in the 1920s and 1930s, had already prominent writers and poets of its own among the Zulus, Basutos and Swazis, whose works are known in other lands.

Most important in spreading revolutionary ideas were the workers who came to the mines of Transvaal from Mozambique, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Swaziland, Nyasaland, and Northern and Southern Rhodesia. When they went home they carried back with them, besides tuberculosis, the experience they had gained in fighting for their rights.

In Basutoland, a small British protectorate, where half the able-bodied male population went in search of work to the Union of South Africa, there appeared in the 1920s the first anti-colonial political organisation, called Lekhotla la Bafo (People's Court). Around 1923, industrialists and farmers in Southern Rhodesia had begun to complain that workers returning from the Union of South Africa were stirring up trouble among the native population, organising meetings and making efforts to form an organisation along the lines of the African National Congress.

Subsequently such organisations were to be formed all over South and East Africa, in many countries only after the Second World War.

Thus we see that the Union of South Africa exerted a dual influence on the rest of the continent. For while its ruling circles were a bulwark of reaction and a symbol of the worst type of racism for the continent, the workers' movement and national liberation struggle stimulated revolutionary thinking.

The African working class made its presence known, in the 1930s, in Zambia (then still Northern Rhodesia). Here, in 1935, several thousand miners went on strike in the so-called copper belt. During the world-wide economic crisis of 1929-33 trade unions began to appear in Tanganyika.

In Uganda an African motor-car drivers' trade union was formed in 1939. Strikes as a means of fighting for their rights began to be used by workers in other African countries as well.

Strikes and political and trade union organisations as an expression of the protest against colonial rule, however, were far from universal. More widely used, in fact, were other, less advanced methods of protest.

Peasant movements, for instance, often took on a religious aspect. Thus in Belgian Congo, in 1921, there began a strong movement known as Kimbanguism, so called after Simon Kimbangu, a former protestant minister, who was proclaimed a "Messiah", come to save the people of the Congo. Similar movements developed in the Eastern Congo and in the Lower Congo, known respectively as the Kitawala and the Negro Mission movement. In Nyasaland powerful influence was wielded by the religious Watch Tower Movement, and in the Union of South Africa by the Ethiopian Sect.

"Native Associations" and "Prosperity Associations" existed in many African countries in the 1920s and 1930s. These united members of the nascent intelligentsia and people in various other walks of life in towns. Officially, they were charged with no more than problems of community welfare and public service. Through their representatives in municipal consultative bodies they made recommendations for improvements in that sphere. Dissociating themselves from the national liberation struggle, they used every opportunity to emphasise their loyalty and readiness to co-operate with the authorities. Nevertheless, they did make a positive contribution. In Nyasaland, for instance, the Nyasaland African National Congress was formed during the Second World War precisely on the basis of a Native Associations Committee.

In those countries where some part of the African population enjoyed the right to participate in elections (parliamentary, municipal or at least to local "native councils") the creation of asso-

ciations of African voters promoted closer contact among the latter.

In Uganda, the budding local intelligentsia formed, in 1918, a Young Baganda Association, which called for a democratisation of local administration. In 1921 a Bataka Association was formed here, whose programme included the return of expropriated lands to the peasants. Among the Kikuyu, Kenya's biggest national group, two political organisations were formed in the 1920s. The Young Kikuyu Association, which appeared in 1921 and was active till 1940, opposed the expropriation of land. The Central Kikuyu Association, formed in the late 1920s, called, in addition, for political rights for Africans, equal rights for European and African workmen and employees, and the election of chiefs and elders. A political party formed in Nigeria in 1922 was named the National Democratic Party. In the elections to the legislative assembly it won three seats for Lagos, the country's administration centre, out of the four reserved for Africans.

None of these or the many other political organisations that came into existence in Africa in the interim between the two world wars had either a sizable membership or a clear-cut programme. None lasted long, as a rule. Yet organisations of that kind appeared more and more frequently and became increasingly numerous. Little by little they prepared the ground for those mass political parties which were to appear later, to lead their peoples in their fight for independence and set up the governments of sovereign states.

There were efforts to unite on the part of some of the more active forces in various African countries. Thus, in March 1920, there was convened a conference of representatives of the African population of Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Gambia and Sierra Leone—all four of them British colonies. The conference created the West Africa National Congress, which continued to function for somewhat over ten years. This was not a mass organisation, nor did its demands go beyond broader rights for the African population under continuing British rule. Considering the conditions then prevailing, however, it must be recognised that the Congress helped to unify the budding African intelligentsia throughout British West Africa. The pan-African congresses of 1919-21, 1923 and 1927, too, as well as the pan-African movement as a whole, contributed to the growing national and political consciousness of the peoples of Africa.

An event of great significance for the development of the anti-imperialist movement on the African continent was the resistance to the aggression of the Italian imperialists put up in 1935-36 by the people of Ethiopia. Ethiopia's case was that of the sole country on the African continent that had been able to escape colonial

domination, and its fate was a matter of deep concern to all Africans. People all over Africa wanted to go to Ethiopia as volunteers. This war, more than any other event of the 1920s and 1930s, perhaps, showed the Africans the identity of their interests in the struggle against colonialism.

THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE
OF THE PEOPLES OF LATIN AMERICA, 1918-1939
Social and Economic
Situation in Latin American Countries

The First World War resulted in a sharp deterioration of the position of Germany and Japan in Latin America and some weakening of that of Great Britain and France. Objectively, the situation favoured the economic development of the Latin American countries.

In Argentina, for example, new meat-packing plants were being built and existing plants enlarged. Numerous new industrial enterprises appeared in Brazil. Industrial development was in progress in Mexico, Chile, Uruguay and Cuba, and to a lesser extent in other Latin American states. Only the countries of Central America (i.e., Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Panama) remained practically wholly agrarian, for this was the domain of the North American monopolies, the "banana empire" of the United Fruit Company.

The increasing rate of capitalist development in the Latin American countries strengthened the economic position of the national bourgeoisie in its bid for political dominance, in which, however, it was running up against the determined resistance of the ruling oligarchy, that is to say, the bloc of the landowners and the big bourgeoisie, which was linked with imperialist circles abroad.

It was in the interests of foreign capital that the countries of Latin America should forever remain backward, and to this end it took pains to block their industrial development and to maintain their pre-capitalist relations and their system of great rural estates, while being the owner of huge estates in its own right.

Economic changes produced by the First World War failed to shake the dominance of the imperialist monopolies. The only result was a shift in the balance of power: leadership in the semi-colonial exploitation of the countries of Central and South America had passed into the hands of the United States. The indus-

trial boom turned out to be only temporary, produced by the economic conjuncture. With the war over, production had to be curtailed because demand for Latin American raw materials dropped off sharply. The economic crisis of 1920-21 made things worse. Packing plants began to shut down in Argentina, oil wells in Mexico, nitrate and copper mines in Chile; and huge stocks of Brazilian coffee could find no market.

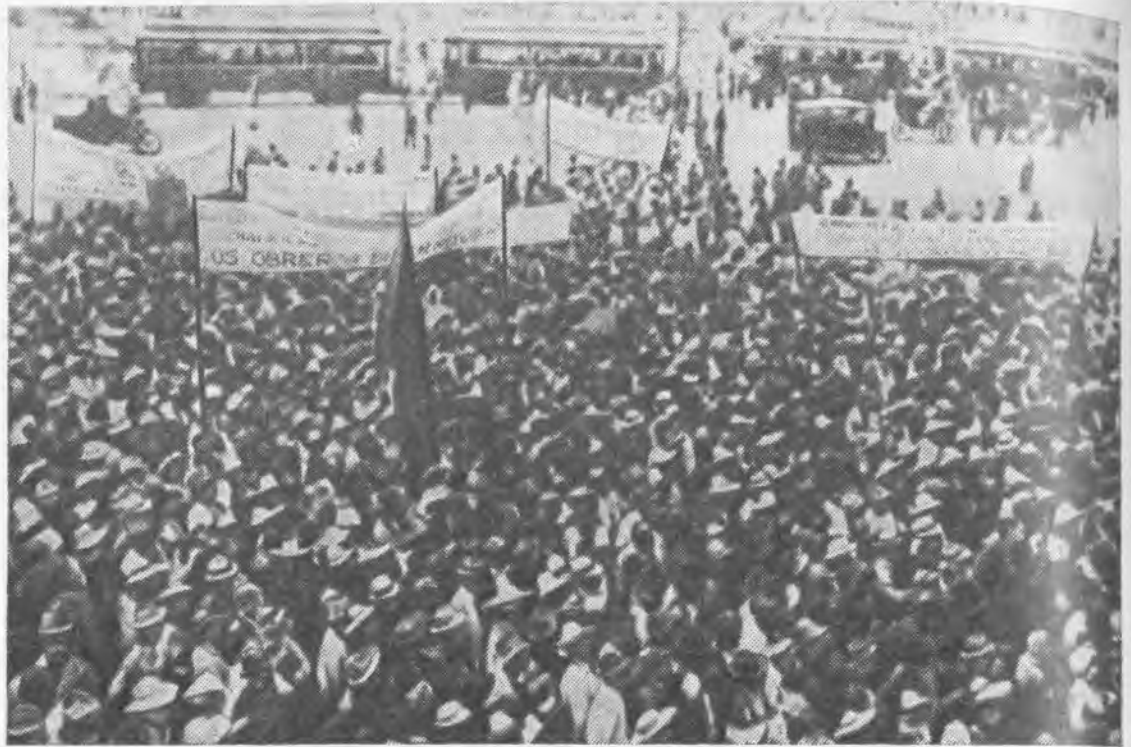
All this produced a sharp rise in prices on prime necessity goods and a new drop in living standards. In Brazil, for instance, prices on some products were 400 to 600 per cent higher in 1923 than in 1914. In Peru the cost of living was 250-300 per cent of the pre-war level. Elsewhere in Latin America the picture was the same. Resentment grew in the masses, and the revolutionary movement gathered force.

October Revolution and Upsurge of Class and Anti-Imperialist Struggle

News of the proletarian revolution and the establishment of Soviet power in Russia was received with great enthusiasm by the workers and progressive elements of Latin America. Numerous meetings passed resolutions proclaiming solidarity with the Russian proletariat; and when the Russian counter-revolutionaries and foreign imperialists unleashed the Civil War a mass movement in defence of Soviet Russia developed in Latin America.

In Argentina, news of the October Revolution in Russia evoked a warm response among the population. Class warfare flared up in Buenos Aires. In November 1918, workers went on strike in a British-owned (Vasena Company) metallurgical works, demanding an 8-hour working day and better working conditions. On January 7, 1919, police fired on strikers gathered to protest against the employment of strike-breakers, killing and wounding several. On January 9, a general strike broke out. Some 200,000 took part in the funeral procession, and this, too, became a target for machine-gunners. Provoked by the outrage, the workers procured fire-arms by raiding arms shops and the armoury and gave battle to the police and troops.

Fighting continued in Buenos Aires till January 15; and though the workers suffered a defeat, the struggle against the reactionaries at home and the dominance of the imperialists went on. Throughout 1919 there were strikes in foreign-owned enterprises at Mendoza, Chaco and Santa Fé. In 1921 there was serious unrest among the farm labourers of Patagonia, a section of the



Demonstration in Mexico City (1920)

Argentine proletariat subjected to worse exploitation than any other. The movement was suppressed by the troops, who seized and shot farm hands at random without trial.

This slaughter roused the country's entire working class. In protest, strikes began in Buenos Aires, Rosario and Tucuman.

The aims proclaimed by the Russian October Revolution won great popularity in Mexico. Learning of the decrees of the Soviet Government, whereby land was turned over to the peasants and industrial plants to the workers, the Mexican people made an attempt to follow the Russian example. Thus, in the state of Sonora miners took possession of the mines and endeavoured to keep them going. In the state of Puebla unemployed textile workers seized landed estates with the aim of organising a farming colony. Soviets cropped up in several states during 1920 and 1921, and workers in Yucatan called for the proclamation of a Soviet Republic in Mexico.

Needless to say, conditions were not propitious for a socialist revolution in Mexico in those days. That Mexicans set up revolutionary organisations known as Soviets, bears witness to the great popularity of Soviet Russia and to the common yearning of workers and peasants for a new life, a life free of exploitation and oppression. This growing political activity on the part of the people, especially the proletariat, was a matter of deep concern

to Mexico's ruling classes. And the Obregón government crushed the revolutionary organisations and suppressed the Soviets.

A stiff fight was put up by the proletariat in Brazil, led by the workers of Rio de Janeiro, then the capital of the country. A general strike was started here in November 1918, by the textile workers, supported by workers of the metallurgical, building and printing industries. When the strike was in full swing the anarchists rose in revolt. They were joined by some of the workers, and street fighting flared up, but the revolt had been ill-organised and ended in defeat.

In 1919 railwaymen, textile and construction workers presented demands for an 8-hour working day, higher pay and lower prices.

The government was compelled to grant an 8-hour day to the construction workers, raise the wages of some categories of workers, and introduce on-the-job accident insurance. Strikes continued through 1920. There was a stronger trend towards unity among the workers. A marked feature of the workers' movement during the period under review was the inability of the anarchists and reformists to provide adequate leadership for the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and the working masses.

Developments in Chile followed a similar pattern. An economic crisis forced thousands of Chilean workers out of their jobs. A mass movement against poverty and the high cost of living started as early as 1918. An Assembly for Workers' Basic Rights was set up through the efforts of the Chilean Workers' Federation, which organised a number of mass demonstrations and meetings. In January 1919, the workers of Puerto Natales took over the town but the government sent troops against them.

Later in the year, in August, a hunger demonstration took place in Santiago, in which some 100,000 took part. The workers demanded an 8-hour working day, a minimum wage, measures against unemployment and the high cost of living, and the introduction of social insurance. These fair demands drew savage reprisals on the part of the government, with whose connivance British- and American-owned enterprises resorted to lock-outs and shut down mines and factories. Antofagasta miners, Valparaíso dockers, and workers and farm hands at Punta Arenas were fired upon by troops and police.

In Peru the workers' movement began to gather momentum in 1918, the demands put forward by the Peruvian workers repeating those of the Chilean proletariat. The struggle reached its height in 1919. A mass demonstration was staged on May 1 in Lima; and workers were on strike in many towns and regions.

Communist Movement Begins in Latin America

Government troops and police were thrown against the strikers, and the movement was crushed with heavy loss of life. For the Peruvian workers lacked organisation and had neither a party nor a trade union centre. Their losses, however, had not been in vain: it was precisely during the period under review that nation-wide trade unions and communist organisations began to appear. As social contradictions sharpened, the working class began to play an increasingly important part in the political struggle. Yet the Latin American proletariat was still under the spell of petty-bourgeois ideology. It took the revolutionary upsurge of 1918-23 to convince the enlightened part of the working class that neither anarcho-syndicalism nor social-reformism would serve the ends of the workers' movement and that the anarchist inclination towards putschism, the anarcho-syndicalist abstention from politics, and the revisionism of the social-reformists were actually harmful for the movement.

The October Revolution gave rise to a division among the anarchists, part of them coming out even more strongly in support of putschism and the other part calling for a revision of such policies in favour of Marxism-Leninism. The socialist movement, too, was overtaken by a crisis. The revisionist leadership of the Socialist parties assailed the Russian proletarian revolution, while a substantial part of their membership acclaimed that event with great enthusiasm.

In Argentina, the Left wing of the Socialist Party made steady gains. At a congress convened by Left-wing leaders in January 1918, delegates condemned those Party leaders who had taken a chauvinistic, pro-imperialist stand and slandered the October Revolution. The congress addressed a message of greetings to the Soviet Government and adopted a resolution providing for the formation of an International-Socialist Party.

The founding of this party, which adopted the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, meant a radical shift in the development of the workers' movement in Argentina. In 1919 the Party became a member of the Comintern, and a year later took the name of the Communist Party of Argentina.

In Mexico, the prestige of the anarcho-syndicalist leadership diminished perceptibly under the impact of the October Revolution. Communist groups were organised in the leading industrial centres as early as 1918. A swing to Marxism-Leninism among the revolutionary intelligentsia and the progressive elements of the proletariat, as well as the appearance of Communist groups, prepared the ground for the founding of a Communist Party.

And, indeed, when a congress of Communist and Socialist groups and some workers' organisations met at Mexico City on September 14, 1919, a majority of the delegates called for the foundation of a Communist Party and its joining the Comintern.

Duly established, the Communist Party of Mexico adopted a policy of internationalism, proclaimed the solidarity of the Mexican proletariat with the Great October Socialist Revolution, and actively supported Soviet Russia. On November 7, 1920, it celebrated the anniversary of the October Revolution.

That Revolution, and the founding of the Communist International, as well as of the Communist Parties of Argentina and Mexico, hastened a swing to the Left of the working class and increased the popularity of the ideas of communism in other Latin American countries. By the beginning of 1920 the Left wing had gained a majority in the Socialist Party of Uruguay, and the advocates of adherence to the Comintern had established contact with the leadership of the International-Socialist Party of Argentina, which had already decided in favour of recognising the Comintern programme.

In September 1920, a congress of the Socialist Party of Uruguay resolved, by an overwhelming majority of votes, to join the Third International. And an extraordinary congress, convened in April 1921, resolved that the Party should hence be known as the Communist Party of Uruguay.

In Chile most of the Socialist Workers' Party members also belonged to the Left wing, which took an internationalist stand on the crucial issues of the international workers' movement. Influenced by the October Revolution, the Socialist Workers' Party had begun a gradual revision of its platform in favour of Marxism-Leninism, an important contribution to this process being made by Luis E. Recabarren, the Party leader.

A Party congress, meeting in December 1920, authorised the Party leadership to submit for discussion and approval of the local Party organisations a proposal to join the Communist International and to rename the Party the Communist Party of Chile. The following congress held in January 1922 met as a Communist Party Congress and resolved to adhere to the Comintern platform.

Brazil's first Communist group was organised in 1918 at Porto Alegre. It established contact with the International-Socialist Party of Argentina and the Communists of Uruguay. Similar groups and Marxist circles were later organised in Rio de Janeiro, Recife, São Paulo and Bahia. Their members discussed the proceedings of the Communist International, particularly the Twenty-One Admission Requirements. On November 7, 1921, the fourth anniversary of the October Revolution, representatives of certain

groups met in Rio de Janeiro to discuss the problem of convening a congress for the purpose of founding a Communist Party.

A constituent congress of the Communist Party of Brazil met in Rio de Janeiro on March 25, 1922. It adopted its statutes, an address to the people of Brazil, and messages of greetings to the Communist Parties of Russia, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, and to the Communist International.

In Cuba, with the strike movement on the increase between 1918 and 1923, the anarcho-syndicalists began to lose ground while the influence of the socialist and Marxist-Leninist ideas grew. Prominent in the propaganda of these ideas were Carlos Baliño, a veteran of the Cuban workers' movement, and Julio Antonio Meglia, a representative of Cuba's revolutionary youth.

The first Communist group appeared in Havana in May 1923; and other Cuban towns followed suit. These groups came to be the foundation on which the Communist Party of Cuba was built in 1925.

The Communist organisations which had appeared in the comparatively advanced countries of Latin America had modest memberships and were still weak in an ideological sense and in respect of organisation, but the very fact of their formation was an event of great importance and a definite milestone in the history of the workers' and the national liberation movement. The working class was hence to be an active force in the struggle against the local oligarchies and foreign imperialism.

Peoples of Latin America Fight Imperialism, 1924-1929

The North American monopolies meanwhile steadily gained ground in the countries of Latin America. Squeezing out their British competitors, they acquired meat-packing plants in Argentina, copper deposits in Chile, tin deposits in Bolivia, etc. United States capital became dominant in Latin America's foreign trade through the wide use of loans, a proven means of obtaining control. Over the period of 1914-28 Latin American countries received 191 United States loans totalling approximately \$2,000 million.

The dominance of foreign capital and especially the growing expansion of the United States retarded the national development of these countries. Their peoples were subjected to the monstrous double oppression of their own ruling classes and the foreign monopolies; which explains why in Latin America class warfare was so closely linked with the anti-imperialist struggle. Thus, plantation hands of the United Fruit Company in Guatemala

struck in demand for higher pay and better working conditions; in Mexico people called for the implementation of the anti-imperialist provisions of the Constitution of 1917; and in Colombia workers in British- and American-owned oilfields organised mass actions.

Between 1924 and 1929 this popular movement was particularly intense in Brazil and Nicaragua.

The domestic and foreign policies of President Bernardes of Brazil, reactionary and pro-imperialist, respectively, drew increasing protests from the democratic elements. In July 1924, came the insurrection of the garrison at São Paulo, a big industrial centre. That same autumn there was revolutionary unrest in the navy. A revolt followed in the south, led by Captain Luis Carlos Prestes, who went to the aid of the São Paulo insurgents, who found themselves in a tight place. Both the revolt and the unrest in the navy were suppressed by the government, however, and Prestes began a war of manoeuvre against the government forces. Fighting day and night, and facing great privations, his fighters made extensive raids over the country, marching nearly 26,000 kilometres, inflicting losses on the government troops, freeing political prisoners, and burning records of debts.

In February 1927, Prestes's detachments were forced to cross the frontier into Bolivia, where they were interned. Although defeated, Prestes's exploits imparted great momentum to the activities of the democratic forces and the growth of national consciousness among the people of Brazil. Prestes became a legendary figure, a symbol of resistance to tyranny of whatever kind, offering the oppressed the hope of overthrowing the Brazilian oligarchy and forcing out the foreign imperialists. More than that: Prestes's campaign gave valuable aid to the anti-imperialist struggle of all the peoples of Latin America.

In 1924, the US marines pulled out of Nicaragua, after being in that country since 1916, but only after the US imperialists had set up a puppet ruler in the person of Chiamorro. The country's liberal forces began a struggle against this puppet, and this brought armed intervention in Nicaragua by the United States, which was to strangle the liberation movement and protect its interests not only in Nicaragua, but in all of Central America as well.

This intervention sparked an international movement in support of the patriotic elements of Nicaragua. And in that country the people at large—peasants, farm hands and urban workers—rose in arms against the pro-American reactionary clique. Among the partisan commanders, one gained particular fame. This was Augusto César Sandino. A man of the people, he became enormously popular. In April 1927, the partisan forces threatened

Managua, the national capital and a reactionary stronghold. The government of the United States, wary of using its troops against the army of liberation, sought to strike at the latter through the capitulatory elements of the liberal clique. Arriving in Nicaragua, Stimson, the American president's emissary, suggested a cease-fire and the surrender of arms by both sides to the United States headquarters.

The growing revolutionary activity of the masses scared the liberals into capitulation. General Sandino, however, refused to lay down arms, and the American troops went into action against his forces. At the same time the Americans took steps to create a bloc of Nicaragua's ruling classes to combat the popular movement, and, as a result, Sandino was enticed into a trap and killed; after which the national liberation struggle of the Nicaraguan people was crushed by the joint efforts of the American imperialists and their allies, the Nicaraguan liberals.

The expansion of the United States in the countries of Latin America and its intervention in Nicaragua made the Latin American working class realise the importance of unified, coordinated action. Important in this respect was the first conference of the Latin American Communist Parties, held in Buenos Aires in June 1929, where priority was given to such problems as the role of the Communist Parties in the anti-imperialist struggle and the nature of the Latin American revolution. The consensus of opinion was that the system of landed estates and the dominance of foreign imperialists could be done away with only through an anti-feudal, anti-imperialist, bourgeois-democratic revolution headed by the proletariat. The conference failed, however, to work out any clear-cut tactical programme for the proletariat and its vanguard, the Communist Parties, in respect of the middle strata, the national bourgeoisie.

The decisions of the conference proved useful in strengthening the Latin American Communist Parties ideologically and organisationally. However, a great deal remained to be done to overcome the influence of reformism and the survivals of anarchism in the workers' movement. Great harm was being inflicted to the workers' cause by sectarianism and Trotskyism which tended to split the revolutionary, anti-imperialist forces.

Struggle to Establish a Popular Anti-Imperialist Front

The world economic crisis of 1929-33 dealt the Latin American countries a heavy blow. Demand for ores and farm produce, which were the traditional items of Latin American export, fell

off, which served to enhance financial instability, increase unemployment, and add to the misery of the masses. The crisis also hit the middle classes, the national bourgeoisie. The foreign imperialists wanted to be reimbursed for their loss of profits at the expense of this bourgeoisie as well. The countries' mineral resources were being plundered with shameless abandon. And the exploitation of the peoples of Latin America grew and grew. Democratic forces in many countries waged an increasingly stubborn struggle against the domestic oligarchy and foreign imperialists. And contradictions sharpened between the various cliques within the ruling classes, which were backed, as a rule, by rival imperialist countries.

Thus in Peru, in 1930, the pro-American dictatorship of Leguía was overthrown and replaced by Colonel Sánchez Cerro, who enjoyed the support of the British monopolies and whose ostensible purpose in removing the Leguía group from power was to combat "foreign imperialism". Instead, however, he began by suppressing the democratic elements. In 1932, to divert the attention of the masses from the calamities at home he began, with the blessings of Great Britain, a war against Colombia, which was backed by the United States. The war ended in 1934. So far as Peru was concerned, it was fruitless. It increased the misery of both peoples.

The summer of 1931 witnessed mass actions against the reactionary pro-American regime of Colonel Ibáñez in Chile. In July Ibáñez fled abroad. The downfall of his dictatorship was conducive to the growing movement to establish a constitutional regime, stop the plundering of Chile by foreign monopolies, and combat unemployment and the high cost of living. Strikes occurred in August in a number of industrial centres, such as Santiago, Valparaiso, etc. And in the beginning of September there was a revolt in the navy. The sailors demanded more pay, better rations, dismissal of reactionary officers, and measures to deal with the high cost of living.

Strikes in support of the sailors were declared in several towns on the initiative of the Communists, and soldiers of several army garrisons joined the revolt. However, there was no unity among the insurgents and the government was quick to turn that circumstance to its advantage: substantial government forces were moved against the insurgent soldiers and non-commissioned officers in Valparaiso, Quintero and Talcahuano; the insurgent warships were bombed by the air force; and the revolts in the navy and the army were soon crushed.

That did not end the country's political crisis, however. In late 1931 and the beginning of 1932 strikes and unrest continued among the workers, and there were revolutionary actions among the peasants. Certain circles of the bourgeoisie, headed by Carlos

Davila, former Chilean ambassador to the United States, joined forces with a petty-bourgeois group led by Marmaduke Grove, in command of the air force, for the purpose of taking charge of the popular movement and resolved to oust the government which had replaced Ibáñez and was thoroughly hated by the people. On June 4, 1932, army units loyal to Grove rose in revolt, and with the aid of the people a new government was formed under Grove. Chile was proclaimed a socialist republic, and this reflected not only the popular strivings towards a new and just social order, but also the growing prestige of the Soviet Union. Grove called for the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

The new government declared its intention to establish a monopoly on foreign trade, introduce a capital tax, and put an end to the dominance of foreign monopolies in the national economy. Political prisoners were amnestied, and the government promised to improve living conditions for the masses. The government's programme was received with enthusiasm. Quite a different view of the programme was taken by the reactionaries and the imperialist powers. Acting on their behalf Davila had Grove arrested and a state of siege declared.

Although this was a set-back for the Chilean people's revolutionary movement, the ruling circles were unable to re-establish the old dictatorship. Davila was ousted as the result of a new *coup d'état*, whose leaders declared for a constitutional regime. Elections were held in the autumn of 1932, which gave the presidency to Arturo Alessandri, leader of the Liberal Party.

The policies of the Alessandri government, however, provoked resentment not only among the working people, but also among the petty urban and middle bourgeoisie. This led to the formation, in 1936, of a bloc which united the democratic, anti-imperialist forces. This bloc, which came to be known as the Popular Front, included the Communist, Socialist, Radical and Democratic parties and the Chilean Workers' Confederation.

During 1938 the struggle between the progressive and reactionary forces became particularly acute. In the spring of the year the Popular Front made substantial gains in the municipal elections, to the great dismay of the reactionary elements. The presidential elections were scheduled for the autumn, moreover. The oligarchy's nominee was Gustavo Ross, an open backer of the Rome-Berlin axis. On the eve of the elections, in September 1938, the Chilean national-socialists attempted a putsch in the hope of provoking civil war and defeating the Popular Front. The putsch, however, was nipped in the bud.

When the presidential elections opened the Popular Front parties had but one candidate. This was Aguirre Cerda, leader

of the Radicals, who won the elections and formed a new government—the first Popular Front government in the Americas. The oligarchy and the imperialist monopolies remained hostile to the new regime and endeavoured to create economic and financial difficulties by cutting production of copper and nitre, curtailing exports and thereby diminishing the country's foreign exchange revenues, while the landed proprietors and merchants raised the prices on food supplies.

All this made for a difficult situation. Moreover, although president Aguirre, who was identified with the interests of the national bourgeoisie, came out against the imperialists and their allies among the big financial and commercial bourgeoisie and landed proprietors, he did not want to see the people victorious, and he hampered all efforts to introduce any basic social and economic reforms. In spite of all that, however, thanks to the victory of the Popular Front, the working masses of Chile succeeded in improving to some extent their political, social and economic conditions. Somewhat higher living standards were reached, civil liberties introduced, and steps taken to develop the country's national industry.

The installation of a Popular Front government in Chile meant a defeat for the reactionary extremists, the oligarchy and imperialists. It was, moreover, of great political significance for Latin America as a whole, especially in view of a rapidly approaching new world war.

In Cuba, the national economy was in a state of collapse and poverty was rampant among the working masses as a result of the country's dependence upon the United States and as the aftermath of the world economic crisis of 1929-33. Of the country's 4,000,000 some 600,000 were out of work. The people vented their wrath on Machado, dictator and puppet of the American monopolies. During 1932 petty-bourgeois elements and the national bourgeoisie joined the struggle against him, which turned into a national liberation movement inasmuch as it was now aimed at the dominance in Cuba of American imperialism as personified by Machado, its willing servant. During the spring and summer of 1933 the fight against the Machado dictatorship was stepped up. On August 1, a mass patriotic demonstration took place in Havana and was fired upon on Machado's orders. In protest against this bloodshed a strike was declared by the railwaymen, tobacco factory workers, employees and students. On August 4, the strike became general and took on a political aspect: its chief slogans were "Down with Machado!" and "Cuba Must Be Free!"

Aware that Machado could not last much longer, the American imperialists lined up a successor. On the night of August 11, Machado was arrested, not without the active aid of the American

ambassador. He left the country on the following day, and Céspedes, former Cuban ambassador to Washington, became head of the government. His government, however, was rather short-lived, for its pro-American leanings earned it the hatred of all strata of the Cuban people, including the nationalist elements of the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. The working class, the working people in towns, farm hands, peasants and students, formed the backbone of the movement, but revolutionary, patriotic feeling ran high in the army as well. Soldiers refused to obey the government. And early in September 1933, a new *coup d'état* staged by an army sergeant named Batista overthrew the Céspedes government and put Professor Grau San Martín, who enjoyed wide popularity, at the head of a new government.

Thus, as a result of the 1933 revolution, Cuba had a government headed by the national bourgeoisie and supported by the people at large—the first such government in the country's history—and the semi-colonial regime established by the United States had suffered a serious set-back. The government annulled the American-imposed constitution of 1901 and with it the infamous Platt Amendment, which gave the United States the right of armed intervention. Moreover, the government took steps to meet the workers' demands: an 8-hour working day was established, wages were raised, and limits set to the activities of certain American firms.

This policy of the Cuban Government provoked the wrath of the US imperialists and a number of warships were dispatched into Cuban waters, notwithstanding the "good neighbour" policy proclaimed by F. Roosevelt. Refraining from armed intervention, however, in view of the popularity of Grau San Martín's government in Cuba and the support of other Latin American countries which it enjoyed, the United States' ruling circles busied themselves with the organisation of a plot to bring about its downfall. They were aided in their efforts by Grau San Martín's hostility towards genuinely democratic organisations and anti-communist sentiments, which had had the effect of limiting the popular support he commanded. And thus, in January 1934, Batista, having received certain sums of money from United States agents, induced Grau to resign, and the counter-revolutionary forces were once more victorious in Cuba.

A mass movement directed against foreign imperialism and the reactionary elements at home was on the increase in Brazil, largest of the Latin American countries. The harmful economic agreements with foreign monopolies concluded by the Vargas government resulted in the gradual impoverishment of the urban petty and middle bourgeoisie. Unrests broke out among the

peasants here and there in 1934-35, and over 1,500,000 workers were on strike at various times. The army and navy, too, seethed with discontent.

In the summer of 1934 the Communist Party of Brazil called upon the people to form an anti-fascist and anti-imperialist front. In March 1935, the country's democratic forces joined to set up a National Liberation Alliance, a political form of the Popular Front, and elected Prestes honorary chairman thereof. Prestes, following the defeat of his forces in his cross-country campaign, had come to the conclusion that Marxism-Leninism alone could guide the country to success in its struggle for independence and democracy. He had accordingly joined the Communist Party, to become one of its distinguished leaders.

The National Liberation Alliance adopted a programme of struggle that called for democratic freedoms, provision for the people's daily needs and an end of imperialist oppression. This programme was actively supported by the people; and Communists, Socialists, anarchists, servicemen of democratic convictions, and members of women's and youth organisations and the liberal elements of the national bourgeoisie—all worked side by side in the Alliance's various organisations.

Some congressmen and senators also joined the Alliance; and its activities were such as to alarm the bourgeois-landowner oligarchy, the Catholic Church and the imperialist powers. The upshot was that the Vargas government outlawed the National Liberation Alliance in the middle of July 1935, conscious of the support of the above-mentioned reactionary forces. This was a signal for members of the bourgeoisie, intelligentsia and petty bourgeoisie to dissociate themselves from the movement. Any protests by democratic organisations against the outlawing of the Alliance were suppressed by force. And these repressions, in turn, brought demonstrations and strikes in protest. Late in November, armed revolts occurred at Natal and Recife, and a revolutionary government was set up in the former. There were revolts elsewhere, but these were all put down by the government troops. The Popular Front movement had suffered a defeat. On the other hand, it had been of lasting historical importance. For the revolutionary events of 1935 had been the first instance of an anti-imperialist movement being headed by the Brazilian proletariat in a gallant fight for genuine democracy and national independence.

In Argentina, too, there had been a movement in favour of a Popular Front. A dictatorship headed by General Agustín Justo had taken over here, in 1932, in a situation of aggravated political tension associated with the world economic crisis. There was nation-wide opposition to the dictatorial regime, however, in

which an active part was played by the Communist Party of Argentina, which, profiting from the experience of the Communist Party of Brazil and basing itself on the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, initiated a campaign for a united anti-imperialist, anti-fascist front.

In the autumn of 1935 the Communist Party invited the Socialist and Radical parties to co-operate. In consequence of this offer Popular Front committees were set up in several towns, and when construction workers went on strike in Buenos Aires, in January 1936, Communists, Socialists, Anarchists and Radicals acted in concert. In the March elections to the chamber of deputies a majority of votes was cast for the Left parties' candidates, which proved helpful for the development of the democratic movement. The victory of the Popular Front in France and in Spain was greeted with enthusiasm in Argentina; and when the fascist revolt was staged by Franco in Spain the working people of Argentina rallied to the defence of the Spanish Republic.

Thoroughly alarmed by the growing strength of the anti-imperialist forces, particularly the Communist Party, the Argentine Government launched a counter-attack. In June 1936, the members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party were arrested, and the police, aided by fascist elements, raided the premises of the unity committees. Socialist and Radical Party leaders began to back out of co-operation with the Communist Party and the Popular Front movement began to ebb.

Active struggle against foreign imperialist domination was carried on in Mexico during the period under review. A great deal was done by the Communist Party of Mexico to unite the country's democratic, revolutionary forces. An agreement on joint action with the progressive Mexican Confederation of Labour was reached in February 1936, and contact established with democratic peasant organisations. The working class, however, failed to take charge of this mass movement, the initiative in this respect being seized by the national bourgeoisie, which formed the Mexican Revolutionary Party, including therein the various workers' and peasants' organisations. As the mass movement gathered momentum and the contradictions between the Mexican nation and the foreign imperialists grew sharper, the Left wing of the national bourgeoisie, headed by President Lázaro Cárdenas, launched a programme of important anti-imperialist and democratic reforms.

Between 1934 and 1939 the Cárdenas government expropriated from the landed proprietors and turned over to the peasants 18,000,000 hectares of land. A law on the nationalisation of the foreign-owned main railway network, promulgated on June 23, 1937, dealt foreign imperialist interests in Mexico a telling blow.

And on March 18, 1938, President Cárdenas announced the nationalisation of the petroleum industry, including all property belonging to British and American petroleum concerns. The foreign monopolies refused to recognise this decision and appealed to their governments for help. The Government of the United States placed an embargo on the purchase of Mexican silver. The export of silver being a major source of revenue for the Mexican Government, the American embargo was intended to injure Mexico's economic interests and foment internal political trouble. As to Great Britain—that country took so hostile a stand that the Cárdenas government was constrained to suspend diplomatic relations between the two countries.

To sum up, the social and economic reforms initiated in Mexico between 1935 and 1939 seriously weakened the system of great landed estates and impaired the position of foreign capital in Mexico. What is more, they prepared the ground for an accelerated national development of the country.

Chapter Six

THE SECOND WORLD WAR. THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE

Second World War: Its Causes and Its Nature

On September 1, 1939, Hitler's army invaded Poland; two days later, on September 3, the French and British governments declared war on Germany, in implementation of their undertaking to come to Poland's aid. The Second World War was on, the most destructive war in the history of mankind. It lasted six years, and it involved nearly all the nations on the face of the earth. Its costs, in terms of human lives, were 50 million dead and 35 million wounded or maimed. In terms of military expenditure it cost the warring nations \$1,117,000 million—a truly astronomical figure.

Like the First World War, it was a product of the capitalist system, and its outbreak was caused by an abrupt sharpening of the contradictions among the imperialist states. The aggressive fascist bloc, that is, Germany, Italy and Japan, embarked on a programme of repartitioning the world by force of arms, claiming that they had been "cheated out of what was due them". This bloc had to face the coalition of Western powers, that is, Great Britain, France and the United States, which, victorious in the First World War, had partitioned the world to suit themselves and now intended not only to retain but also to expand their possessions and spheres of influence.

The Second World War was unleashed by the fascist aggressors, by militarist Germany, just as the first had been. This time Hitler Germany and its "axis" partners were able to do so because the imperialist circles in other countries, above all in Britain, France and the United States, had helped them with their preparations for war in the hope that the aggression would be directed eastward, against the USSR. Actually, however, the contradictions among the imperialist powers turned out to be

sharper than those between the imperialist powers and the world's first socialist state; so that when the war broke out both sides found themselves fighting an imperialist war.

Gradually, however, the war began to acquire another aspect. As the Germans conquered country after country, as they abolished all bourgeois-democratic freedoms in these countries to install regimes of bloody terror in their place, while the peoples of these countries rallied increasingly to resist their conquerors, the war—so far as Germany's opponents were concerned—gradually took on the aspect of an anti-fascist war of liberation.

This process came to its pinnacle when Germany attacked the Soviet Union, for the war which the latter began to fight pursued solely the aims of liberation. From then on (i.e., after June 1941) the war waged by the states forming the anti-Hitler coalition became entirely a just war of liberation. The nations forming this coalition were resolved to do away with the plague of fascism intent on dominating the world and setting up a sanguinary world-wide "new order".

Fall of Poland. "Sitzkrieg" in the West

Hitler's armies made rapid progress across Poland, whose reactionary government never did get the aid it had banked on from Great Britain and France. For neither Britain nor France, having declared war on Germany, intended to wage it in earnest, being still hopeful of coming to terms with Germany at the expense of the Soviet Union. The Western statesmen still believed that Hitler's armies, once in occupation of Poland, would move against the Soviet Union.

In conditions when the German forces were driving rapidly towards the Soviet Union's western frontiers and the reactionary circles and press of the Western imperialist powers were openly egging Hitler on to undertake an "Eastern campaign", the Soviet Union was left no choice but to take steps to secure its own safety. Accordingly, on September 17, 1939, Soviet Army units crossed the frontier of Poland, which had virtually ceased to exist as a state, and began a mission of liberation which resulted in the re-union of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia with the Ukrainian and Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republics (it will be recollected that both these regions had been annexed by the bourgeois-landowner masters of Poland back in 1920). This action kept the regions in question from being overrun by the Germans.

The fall of Poland made no substantial change in the strategy or tactics of the Western powers. In the West, the war that be-

came known as the "*Sitzkrieg*", the "phoney war", continued, a war where there was no actual fighting. London and Paris, with the active support of Washington, endeavoured to carry on in the new situation their pre-war policy of appeasement, still under the illusion that German aggression would be directed against the USSR, while they themselves would remain on the side-lines.

The truth is that while they abstained from fighting nazi Germany the ruling circles of the Western powers were busy waging in earnest a war against those very Communists who had been and continued to be the foes of fascism. The French Government exhibited the greatest fervour in this respect. It had dissolved the Communist Party in the autumn of 1939, and had then banned all Communist publications, deprived the Communist deputies in the parliament of their parliamentary immunity and placed them under arrest. In Great Britain, too, as in the United States and other capitalist countries, Communists and progressively-minded people were subjected to persecution.

Baltic Countries Become Soviet Republics

After the war got under way nazi Germany stepped up its penetration into the Baltic countries. This was observed with consternation by the peoples of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, for just next door in Poland, under their very eyes, the German nazis had established a reign of terror. The fate of the Baltic nations was a matter of concern to the Soviet Union, from which the three countries had split away shortly after the October Revolution. The Soviet Government, aware of the aspirations of the people of the three republics, approached their governments with the proposal to conclude mutual assistance agreements; and these were duly signed in September and October 1939.

Late in 1939 and throughout the first half of 1940 there was a growing revolutionary movement in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, as a consequence of their worsening economic situation and the reactionary policies followed by their pro-nazi rulers. In June 1940, the peoples of the three republics rose in revolt and overthrew their pro-nazi governments. Genuinely free elections were held and popular governments formed. In July the parliaments of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia applied to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for admission into the Soviet Union and a month later were duly granted the status of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The reunion of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia with the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Byelorussia and the admission of

the three Baltic states into the Soviet Union substantially improved the latter's strategic position by moving the state frontier from 200 to 350 kilometres westward. The security of Leningrad, however, which lay within only 32 kilometres of the Finnish frontier, remained a matter of deep concern to the Soviet Government. An offer to cede a considerably greater area in Karelia in exchange for part of the Karelian Isthmus had been refused by the reactionary Finnish Government, which had thereafter intensified its preparations for war in close proximity to Leningrad. Supported and urged on by both the warring imperialist blocs, Finland's rulers ended by provoking an armed clash between Finland and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet-Finnish war began in late November 1939. And almost immediately Britain and France started feverish preparations for an attack on the Soviet Union. British and French expeditionary forces were formed, 100,000 and 50,000 strong, respectively, which were to go to the aid of the Finnish army. Another blow was to be aimed at the Soviet Union from Turkey, Syria and Iraq in the south by a Franco-British force supported by large numbers of bombers.

Despite the Western powers' attempts to support Finland, the Soviet-Finnish war ended, in March 1940, with Finland's defeat. A peace treaty was signed, which secured the safety of Leningrad.

During the summer of 1940 the problem of Bessarabia was also solved. That territory had been annexed in 1918 by the bourgeois-landowner government of Rumania. Now the Soviet Union's legitimate demand for the return of Bessarabia was accepted by Rumania, which did not wish to risk an armed clash with the Soviet Union in the complicated international situation of 1940. Northern Bukovina, with its Ukrainian population, joined the Soviet Union at the same time.

All these developments served to strengthen the Soviet Union's position and improve the prospects of the country's defence. Subsequently, however, these added advantages were not used as fully as they should have been.

Defeat and Capitulation of France

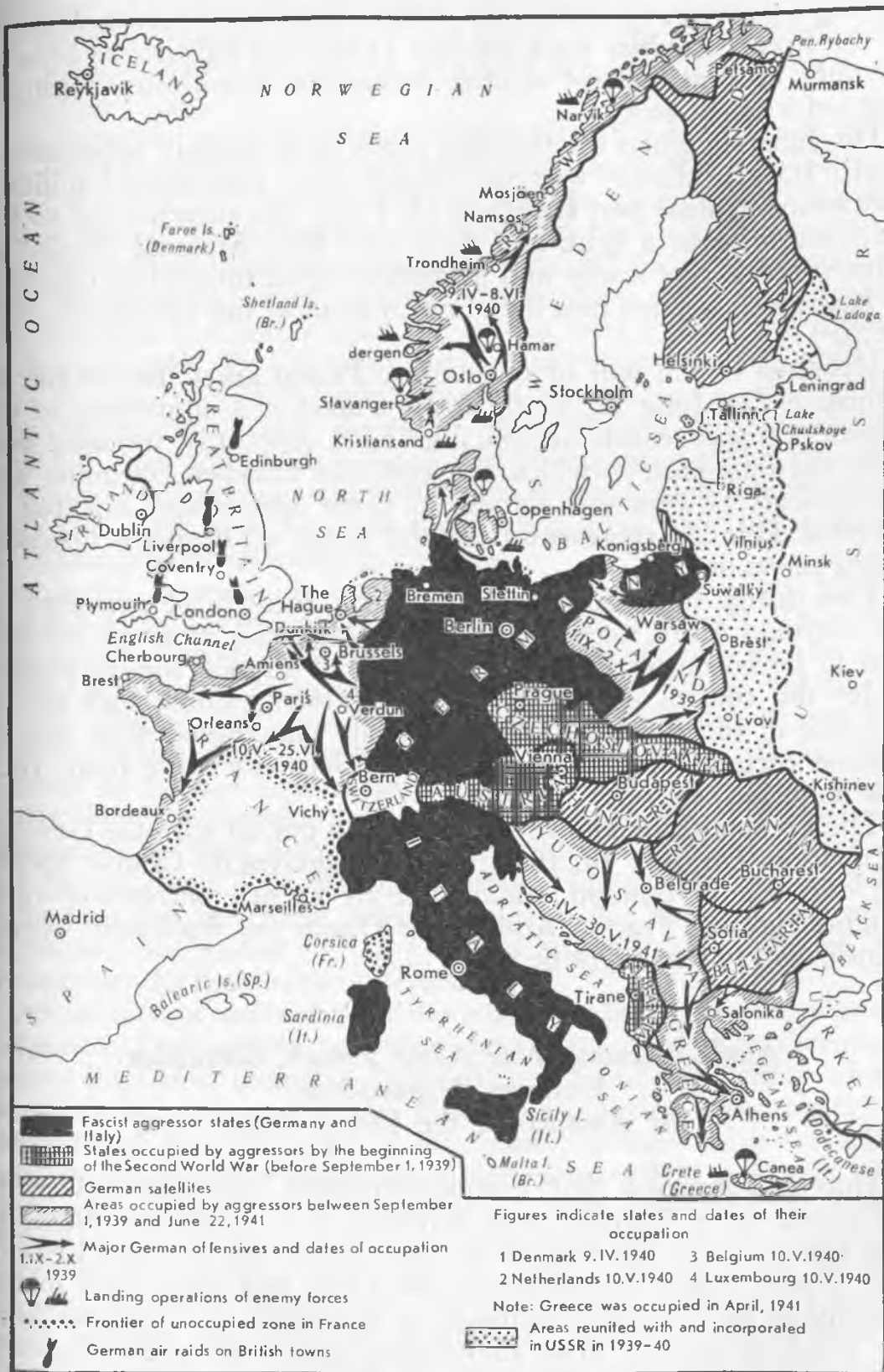
In the spring of 1940, having made excellent use of the breathing spell they had been given, the nazis opened their offensive in the West. In April the German forces drove into Denmark and landed troops in Norway, and the occupation of both these countries was rapidly completed. On the night of

May 10, the German army, supported by great fleets of tanks and planes, began a large-scale offensive against Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg. Defeated in battle after battle, the Dutch and Belgian troops were forced to fall back. Despite a display of real heroism in battle they were unable to offer any sustained resistance, and in the end they were betrayed by their own ruling circles, who came to terms with the nazis. Holland capitulated on May 15, Belgium on May 28. Pursuing their advantage, the German panzer and motorised divisions broke through the French lines in the vicinity of Sedan and carried the war into France. The Maginot Line, in which the French strategists had put so much hope, was simply outflanked on the north.

The German invasion of Belgium and Holland posed a definite threat to Great Britain, besides bearing witness to the complete failure of the policy pursued by Chamberlain, who continued to stake all on a German assault upon the Soviet Union. Britain found herself on the brink of a serious political crisis, and the country's leadership finally realised that Chamberlain must be relieved of his post of prime minister. That post was given to W. Churchill, one of the Conservative Party's outstanding members and Chamberlain's opponent in the field of foreign policy. A number of Labour Party leaders, such as Attlee and Bevin, were also included in the new cabinet—a definite concession to the popular demand for stronger action to counter the German aggression.

In France, too, the government headed by Daladier fell as a result of the nazi successes in the West. Unlike Britain, however, where the threat of German invasion strengthened the hand of those who stood for resistance to the nazis, in France the defeatist elements among the ultra-reactionary politicians and soldiers were gaining the upper hand. These latter did whatever they could to prevent the deployment of the larger army units then available, withdrew army units from the front to transfer them to areas away from the sector lying in the path of the main German assault, etc. That explains why the French army's great potential was never drawn upon and why the eagerness of ordinary Frenchmen in army uniform to come to blows with the enemy and the numerous cases of staunch and heroic conduct when they did so were utterly wasted. The German high command achieved a break-through on a wide front, surrounded a large body of allied troops near Dunkirk, and drove them to the beaches.

The then rulers of France feared their own people more than anything else, and therefore turned down the suggestion made by the Central Committee of the French Communist Party to issue arms to the population and organise the defence of Paris, then already under direct military threat. Haunted by the prospect of



Military operations in Europe and the Balkans in 1939-41

having a popular, revolutionary war on their hands, the gentlemen of the French cabinet were anxious to end the fighting as soon as possible, even at the cost of utter defeat and humiliating capitulation before the nazis.

On June 10, when the German tanks were already approaching Paris, Italy declared war on France and commenced military operations against her. On June 14, Paris was surrendered to the Germans without a fight, and three days later Marshal Pétain, an ultra-conservative leader and proponent of an immediate cessation of hostilities, stepped into the office of head of the French Government.

Heedless of the will of the nation, Pétain asked Berlin for an armistice. On June 22, 1940, in the Forest of Compiègne, in the private railway coach of Marshal Foch (specially brought here from the museum), in which the armistice between Germany and the Entente powers was signed 22 years ago, Hitler dictated to Marshal Pétain's representatives the terms of France's unconditional surrender.

Two-thirds of France, including Paris, were to be occupied by the German army, the cost of maintaining the army of occupation to be borne by France. The south of France was to remain under the control of the Pétain government, which had set up quarters in the spa town of Vichy. The unoccupied zone was to assume certain obligations to supply Germany with food, fuel, raw materials, etc.

The French people, however, refused to put up with the German occupation. On July 18, 1940, General Charles de Gaulle, speaking over Radio London, summoned all French patriots to rally around Fighting France. And inside France the Resistance Movement began to form fighting units.

Anglo-German War After French Surrender. German Preparations for Assault on the Soviet Union

Thus it happened that France—strongest capitalist power on the continent of Europe—was defeated in a matter of weeks, to find herself under the heel of the nazi Reich. As to Great Britain, only a part of her expeditionary force that had taken part in the fighting on the continent managed to re-embark for England from the Dunkirk beaches, after abandoning nearly all of its weapons, equipment and supplies.

The tragic finale of the summer 1940 events on the Western Front showed all too clearly the humiliating failure of the policy of encouraging nazi aggression. The nazi beast that had slipped

its leash and pounced on Britain and France was the very same one that the Western powers, and above all the rulers of Britain and France, had nurtured for years in the hope of setting it on the Soviet Union.

As a matter of fact Britain's plight after the French surrender was quite desperate. It looked very much as if she was likely to share the fate of her ally. For she had no other allies, and her armed forces, badly battered as they had been on the continent, were in need of thorough reorganisation; and German submarines were prowling the seas, sinking British ships one after another. The German blockade ringed the British Isles tighter and tighter. In August 1940, the Germans began massive devastating bombing raids on British cities and industrial centres, such as London, Birmingham, etc., with the aim of terrorising the population, breaking their will to resistance and disorganising the industry. Coventry, for instance, was reduced to so much rubble. Simultaneously the nazis went on with their much advertised preparations for landing German troops in England.

Actually, however, it turned out that there had never been a real threat of a German invasion of the British Isles. This was established beyond any doubt at the Nuremberg trials of nazi war criminals. Hitler's decision to attack the Soviet Union before defeating Britain had been taken in June 1940; for it was the Soviet Union that constituted the main obstacle to German mastery of Europe and in fact the world, and not Britain, which Hitler did not consider to be a serious opponent. "If Russia is defeated," he told his intimate associates, "England will have lost its last hope." In December 1940, Hitler endorsed the plan of war against the USSR, which was given the name of Operation Barbarossa in honour of the German emperor who had led the crusades in the East in the 12th century.

An important milestone on the road of nazi aggression was the Tripartite Pact signed in September 1940, by Hitler Germany, fascist Italy and imperial Japan. It proclaimed the unity of the three fascist countries in their drive to establish a "new order" in Europe and Asia, or, to put it differently, in their drive for world mastery. During the period from September 1940 to March 1941 Germany succeeded in bringing to heel Hungary, Rumania, Slovakia and Bulgaria, which it compelled to join the Tripartite Pact. These countries were turned into a staging area for the German attack on the Soviet Union. In April 1941, the German army invaded and occupied Yugoslavia, whose people refused to join the fascist bloc. About the same time German forces broke down the resistance of the Greek army, which had stood up successfully to the invading Italian troops. Thus Greece was added to the list of occupied countries.

By May 1941, practically all of continental Europe lay under the German heel and Germany seemed to have reached the peak of its power. With vast material resources and manpower at its command and flushed with its swift victories over the capitalist countries of Western and Eastern Europe, nazi Germany was now busy putting the finishing touches on its preparations for a war with the Soviet Union. That "operation", in the estimation of Hitler and his associates, would require eight weeks!

German Attack on the USSR. The Beginning of the Great Patriotic War

On June 22, 1941, at dawn, Germany launched its attack on the Soviet Union. There was no declaration of war. Fighting on the side of Germany were Italy, Finland, Hungary and Rumania. Altogether 190 German and satellite divisions were thrown against the Soviet Union. In preparation for the assault Germany had concentrated all four of the then available tank groups and four out of the five available air fleets. In the Far East, Japan had deployed important forces the length of the Soviet frontier, which compelled the Soviet Union to keep sizable contingents of troops in its Far Eastern region.

Unleashing his war against the Soviet Union Hitler aimed at the destruction of the Soviet state, the seizure of its resources, and the re-establishment of the bourgeois-landowner regime.

The Soviet people rose in arms to a man in the Great Patriotic War against the nazi invaders. The early frontier battles produced many heroic episodes destined to live forever in the memory of future generations. Thus, on June 22, D.V. Kokorev of the air force performed the first ramming attack in an aerial engagement, using his propeller, when his ammunition gave out, to sever a German bomber's tail-unit, send it crashing to the ground, then made a safe landing himself. In those early days of the war and later ramming tactics were used by L. G. Butelin, I. I. Ivanov, V. V. Talalikhin and many others. An outstanding feat of heroism was performed by the crew of a bomber commanded by Captain Nikolai Gastello. A direct hit on a fuel tank having set his plane on fire, Captain Gastello managed to crash into a column of German tanks and fuel cisterns, many of which were destroyed in the ensuing conflagration. He and his crew perished in the crash.

The garrison of the frontier fortress of Brest covered itself with undying glory. Led by Captain I. N. Zubachyov, Regimental Commissar E. M. Fomin, Major P. M. Gavrilov and other officers,



Volunteers enlisting in Moscow, June 23, 1941

this garrison stubbornly held the surrounded fortress for twenty-nine days, inflicting heavy losses on the two attacking German divisions. Stubborn battles were fought by the Soviet frontier forces on the banks of the Bug and Prut rivers and at Peremyshl.

Famous among the heroic episodes of the early phases of the war were the defence of Odessa, Kiev, Leningrad and Moscow, which subsequently received the honorary title of Hero Cities. Later, in 1942, similar military valour was displayed by the cities of Sevastopol and Stalingrad. Army and civilians joined in the heroic defence of these cities, laying down their lives to save the country from nazi enslavement.

Despite the valiant fight they put up the Soviet Army experienced, during that first phase of the war, the bitterness of defeat and heavy losses in manpower, weapons and equipment, especially as a result of encirclement. A vast area was lost to the enemy, including the Baltic Republics, Moldavia, Byelorussia, most of the Ukraine; Leningrad was under siege and the enemy was driving for Moscow. The country found itself facing a deadly peril. A legitimate question is: How did this happen?

The war had begun under auspices favourable to Germany, which enjoyed a number of distinct advantages. To begin with, her army was in a state of complete preparedness and had, moreover, the experience of two years of major military operations to its credit. Furthermore, the German economy had been

put on a war-time footing long before the outbreak of the war and had at its disposal the tremendous resources of the occupied countries, whose industry worked to supply the German war machine. The Soviet armed forces, on the other hand, had no recent experience of major warfare; this experience they were forced to acquire in battle with a powerful and crafty adversary. Then, too, the Red Army had not been fully mobilised. And although a powerful defence industry had been built up during the preceding five-year plan periods the country's economy as a whole had not been fully prepared for the war to come. For all these reasons the country suffered heavy losses when hostilities began, and the balance of power shifted decisively in favour of nazi Germany and her satellites.

Miscalculations as to the possible date of the German attack on the Soviet Union also played their role in being responsible for the country's inadequate preparedness for repelling the first enemy thrusts.

Important as these German advantages were during the first phase of the war, they could not be decisive in an encounter with a great power like the Soviet Union. The impregnable strength of the Soviet home front became apparent at the very outset. The serious reverses on the fighting front strengthened, rather than weakened, the close ties between workers and peasants and among the many peoples of the USSR. The morale of the Red Army was immeasurably higher than that of the nazi troops, because the Red Army was fighting a just war of liberation, and consciousness of the noble aims of the war spurred the Soviet fighters to unmatched feats of valour.

In response to the call of the Party and government the Soviet people rallied to the defence of their country. There was a spontaneous rush to recruiting stations, where hundreds of thousands volunteered for duty. In a brief space of time a vast majority of industrial plants had been converted to supply the front. Before 1941 was out more than 1,360 industrial plants had been dismantled and evacuated, together with their personnel, from invasion-threatened areas to the East. Some 1,500,000 railway cars had been required to move them. Their personnel worked valiantly to start the plants going at their new locations.

Hundreds of thousands of women came to work in plant and factory, quickly learning to replace their husbands, brothers and sons, now at the fighting fronts. Elderly people already on pension volunteered for work in industrial enterprises.

All over the country workers endeavoured to fulfil several daily work quotas: their own plus that of one, two or more of their comrades in the army. One man would operate several machine tools or handle two different jobs. Front-line brigades

came into being, which were called so for regularly considerably overfulfilling their production quotas. This practice became general in all branches of the national economy. An old tradition of civil war days was revived—Communist Subbotniks, overtime volunteer work on Saturdays and Sundays, usually to get some particular job of work done, with all the given personnel lending a hand.

Collective farms managed to handle all farm work in 1941, including getting in the crops and sowing considerably greater areas to winter crops in Siberia and the Soviet East, despite the difficulties created by the mobilisation of a substantial part of the manpower for military duty and of much equipment for the front.

People showed their patriotism in many different ways. A special defence account was opened, for instance, to which they contributed a part of their income, state loan bonds, valuables, etc. In the autumn of 1941 a drive was opened to collect warm garments for the front-line troops. And it was a general practice to send gifts and write letters to soldiers at the front.

Regular army reinforcements and People's Volunteer Corps formed in the front-line area were reaching the front in a steady stream. In the occupied regions partisan warfare was spreading and gathering force under the direction of underground Communist organisations. This kind of warfare aimed at disrupting the German rear, destroying communication lines, and aiding the Red Army in many ways.

As soon as hostilities broke out on the Soviet-German front peoples the world over came out emphatically in support of the Soviet Union, very rightly believing it to be the power that would be able to smash the German war machine and save our civilisation from the nazi barbarians. The peoples of the United States, Great Britain and other countries, for whom the earliest possible destruction of nazism was a matter of paramount urgency, pressed their governments for taking practical steps in furnishing all possible aid to the Soviet Union. The leaders of the Western powers realised, on the other hand, that the nazi aggression not only threatened the existence of the Soviet state and the vital interests of other peoples, but also menaced the interests of influential bourgeois groups in the United States, Great Britain and elsewhere; and these two factors: the pressure of public opinion and the necessity of protecting their own interests, prompted the Western governments to seek the creation of a common anti-Hitler coalition with the Soviet Union.

On June 22, 1941, in fact, Prime Minister Churchill, and two days later President Roosevelt of the United States, officially declared their support of the Soviet Union in its war with Hitler Germany and promised all aid to the Soviet Government. In July

a Soviet-British agreement was concluded regarding concerted operations in the war against Germany which was joined by some other states. During May and June 1942, a Soviet-British treaty of alliance in the war against Germany and its associates in Europe and co-operation after the war was signed, as well as a Soviet-American agreement concerning the "Principles Applying to Mutual Aid in the Prosecution of the War against Aggression".

Thus amid the din of battle a British-Soviet-American coalition was forged, an instructive instance of co-operation among states with different social systems.

Two Conflicting Policies Within the Anti-Fascist Coalition

Even now, however, just as in the past, the imperialist bourgeoisie of the West pursued aims poles apart from the progressive ideals of liberation which inspired the nations that were fighting fascism. Among the ultra-reactionary circles of the American and British bourgeoisie there were those who, as, for instance, President Truman and Senator Taft in the USA and Moore-Brabazon in England, made no secret, in their widely publicised statements, of their hopes that the war between the USSR and Germany would lead to the exhaustion of the two sides and thus create a situation favourable to Anglo-American domination in the post-war world.

Two policies were in continuous conflict within the anti-Hitler coalition throughout the war, that is, the policy of the Soviet Union which, conscious of its noble historic mission of ridding mankind of the fascist plague, bent its efforts towards defeating the nazi invaders in the shortest possible time, and the policy of the Anglo-American ruling circles, who conducted their military operations with an eye to their own selfish interests. Their purpose was to oust Germany, Italy and Japan as dangerous competitors in the world markets and to establish their dominance over the world.

The governments of the United States and Britain persistently put off opening a second front in Europe, thus adding to the burden carried by the Soviet Army and delaying the end of the Second World War. The Soviet Government had approached its Western Allies on the subject of a second front back in 1941, making it clear that by the second front it meant a landing of Anglo-American troops in force in northern France. Under the pressure of public opinion the governments of the United States and Great Britain undertook to open a second front in Europe in 1942, but failed to live up to their promise on the grounds that

preparations had not yet been completed. Nor was the second front opened in 1943. It was opened only in the summer of 1944, when the brilliant successes of the Red Army had already assured eventual victory; and when the Anglo-American troops did begin to land on the French coast their purpose was, essentially, to forestall the liberation of Western Europe by Soviet forces.

These delays with the opening of the second front had been dictated by the anxiety of the British and American governments to save their strength and simultaneously to see their Soviet ally seriously weakened, so that when the war was over the Soviet people, whose strength would have been drained by years of heavy fighting, would become economically dependent on the Anglo-American imperialists.

Japan Attacks USA. War in the Pacific Begins

The Red Army's heroic resistance upset the expectation of the German Command that the Soviet Union would be crushed in a matter of weeks. While it is true that in the autumn of 1941 the German armies had invested Leningrad, taken Kiev, and threatened Moscow, their *Blitzkrieg* had signally failed.

In the Far East, the Japanese militarists realised that Hitler's plan to smash the USSR in eight weeks had fallen through and that they, too, might find themselves embroiled in a dangerous and costly enterprise should they start a war with the Soviet Union, and therefore decided against risking such an armed conflict. Instead, they started (in great secrecy) all-out preparations for an assault upon the United States and Britain. To lull the enemy into a sense of security and gain time, which would make possible a sudden strike at their Far Eastern possessions, the Japanese resorted to outright perfidy: they initiated diplomatic talks in Washington regarding a "peaceful solution" of the differences between the United States and Japan. On December 7, 1941, in the midst of these negotiations, Japanese aviation and warships made a devastating raid on the main United States naval base at Pearl Harbour, in the Hawaiian Islands, which destroyed or put out of commission, within a few hours, nearly all of the United States Pacific Fleet, including eight battleships. Singapore, the main British naval base in the Far East, was heavily bombed at the same time, and other American and British strategic points in the Pacific and Indian oceans were assaulted.

Heavy losses sustained by the American and British navies allowed the Japanese to develop far-flung offensives in the Southeast Asia theatre. In a relatively short time (by May 1942)



Digging tank ditches in vicinity of Moscow (October 1941)

they occupied Malaya, Burma, the Philippines and Indonesia, and numerous American- and British-owned islands in the Pacific. Thus the Second World War spread geographically as more and more lands and nations were engulfed.

On January 1, 1942, a joint declaration was signed at Washington by the twenty-six Allied states, notably the USSR, the USA, Great Britain, China, Poland and Yugoslavia. The signatories confirmed their resolution to co-operate in pursuing the war until victory was achieved over the fascist bloc that was their common enemy, and undertook to conclude no separate peace.

Soviet-German Front—the Decisive Front. Resistance Movement in Europe

Without belittling the importance of the military operations in the Far East, in Northeast Africa, where British forces fought against the Germans and Italians with variable success all through 1940 and 1941, and elsewhere, it is necessary to emphasise that the crucial battles of the Second World War were fought on the Soviet-German Front. It was here that the fate of humanity was being decided, and here that the attention was focussed of the

millions who watched with bated breath the gigantic battle the Soviet people were waging to save civilisation from nazi barbarism.

The routing of the German army on the approaches to Moscow in the winter of 1941-42—its first serious defeat in the Second World War—became an important milestone. Two massive drives on Moscow were unleashed by the German army, the first in October, the second in November 1941. Powerful forces were thrown into the battle by the German Command, only to bog down in the face of stubbornly resisting Soviet troops, who displayed not only heroism of a high order, but growing skill in battle as well.

Undying fame was won by the 28 fighters of the 316th Division (later renamed the 8th Guards Division) commanded by General I. V. Panfilov. This unit, under political instructor V. G. Klochkov, was defending a position at the small railway station of Dubosekovo, near Volokolamsk. On November 16 it was attacked by fifty German tanks and a strong detachment of submachine-gunners. "Our Russia is vast, but we can't yield an inch: we've Moscow behind us!" was the slogan given by the commander, and the men, fighting tenaciously, destroyed eighteen tanks and made the Germans give up the attack, unaware, perhaps, that only four of the defenders were still alive.

People's Volunteer Corps divisions of Moscow fought with no less valour. Some 100,000 Communists and 250,000 Komsomol youths were mobilised by the Communist Party and the Young Communist League, respectively, for the defence of Moscow. Almost half a million men and women took part in building a defence belt around the capital, including anti-tank ditches and steel obstacles, barbed wire, trenches, bunkers, pill-boxes, etc.

Meantime partisans were increasingly active back of the enemy lines. Forty partisan detachments 10,000 strong operated in the Moscow area towards the close of 1941. In a short space of time they had killed 18,000 enemy soldiers and destroyed 222 tanks and armoured vehicles, six planes, and 29 supply depots and ammunition dumps.

For courage and valour these partisans were a match for the soldiers at the front. The Soviet people will ever hold sacred the memory of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya. A girl of eighteen, she volunteered for duty and undertook perilous assignments in the enemy rear. She was caught when trying to set fire to an important military objective. Tortured, she refused to betray her comrades; and with the hangman's noose around her neck she shouted to the people who had been driven to watch her execution: "I'm not afraid to die, Comrades! I'm happy to die for my people!"



Nazi soldiers taking Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya to her death (November 1941)

While heavy defensive battles were being fought on the approaches to Moscow, in the rear areas fresh Soviet armies were being formed, equipped with tanks, planes, artillery and mortars, and concentrated in the vicinity of the capital.

On December 6, 1941, when it became abundantly clear that weeks of heavy fighting on the approaches to Moscow had sapped the strength of the German army and its communication lines had become dangerously tenuous, the Soviet Army, supported by great numbers of tanks and planes, launched a powerful counter-offensive.

The German troops beat a hasty retreat, pressed by the Red Army and abandoning their weapons, equipment and supply trains. Fifty enemy divisions were smashed in the course of the Soviet winter offensive which recaptured 11,000 localities, including over sixty big and small towns, and upset the German plans for the seizure of Moscow and Leningrad.

The German débâcle at Moscow was the most important event of the first year of the Great Patriotic War. Hopes of a "lightning war" against the Soviet Union had gone by the board, and with them the myth of German invincibility.

The Soviet victory at Moscow had its effect far beyond the Soviet-German Front. It inspired the peoples of conquered Europe

to a determined struggle against the nazi invaders. The Resistance movement spread rapidly, workers, peasants, petty and middle bourgeoisie rallying to its support. Led by the Communists, the patriotic forces of France, Yugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Norway and other European countries struck telling blows at the invaders, destroying enemy personnel and those who worked for them, blasting airfields, blowing up bridges, derailing enemy troop trains, so that there was no longer any peace for the invaders in the occupied countries.

**Stalingrad Battle;
Its International Significance.
Allied Operations in North Africa**

Hitler Germany was still strong, however. In the summer of 1942, having concentrated some 240 divisions on the Soviet Front, the German army launched a new large-scale drive. This time, though, it was no longer capable of offensive operations along the entire front as in 1941, and this new drive was therefore limited to the southern sector. The aim of the drive was to seize the oil-rich areas of the Caucasus, the Stalingrad industrial region and the rich farmlands of the Kuban and Don valleys. Having built up a decidedly preponderant force, the Germans directed their offensive towards the river Don.

Fighting against great odds, the Soviet troops put up a heroic resistance. Eternal glory was won by Lieutenant Kochetkov's sixteen Guardsmen of the 1st Guards Army, who defended an important height near Stalingrad. After throwing back four attacks of an Italian infantry detachment they were attacked anew by a company of German submachine-gunners. This assault was also beaten off. At sunrise on the following day twelve German tanks moved against them. By then many of the sixteen were wounded, including the commander, but the German tanks did not pass: carrying bundles of hand grenades the defenders threw themselves under the tank tracks. None of the sixteen survived. And reinforcements reaching the height counted six burnt-out German tanks still smoking on its slope.

With numerical superiority on their side, however, and fresh reserves continuously coming up, the Germans achieved a breakthrough and crossed the Don. On August 23, at the cost of heavy losses, they reached the Volga at a point northwest of Stalingrad, and attempted an immediate assault of the city, preceded by a devastating aerial bombing. The city's defenders fought back skilfully and courageously, however, stubbornly defending every house. Sergeant Y. Pavlov, for instance, in command of a handful



Soviet soldiers defending the Red October Works at Stalingrad (1942)

of fighters held a building for 58 days, turning it into a veritable fortress.

Workers of the Stalingrad factories fought side by side with the soldiers, repeating the heroic defence of Tsaritsyn¹ in 1918. No small part in the city's defence was played by the sailors of the Volga Flotilla. Under ceaseless shelling and bombing the ships of the flotilla carried tens of thousands of fighters and thousands of tons of ammunition and food supplies across the Volga, and used their artillery to aid in the defence of the city.

The fury of the battle mounted, until over 2,000,000 men, 26,000 guns and mortars, over 2,000 tanks and some 2,000 planes were disputing possession of the city. More than 100,000 strikes were carried out by the German air force and something like 1,000,000 bombs were dropped in the course of the battle.

The valiant resistance of the Soviet troops had taken the punch out of the German offensive, while the Red Army had grown tough and learnt to fight in extremely adverse conditions. And a growing stream of arms and ammunition provided by the home front was reaching the defenders of Stalingrad.

On November 19, 1942, the Red Army counter-attacked at Stalingrad, and a few days later closed the ring around the main

¹ Tsaritsyn—renamed Stalingrad in 1925 and Volgograd in 1961.

body of enemy forces in the area. All German efforts to break out of the encirclement failed. Following the refusal of the German Command to lay down arms the Red Army launched, on January 10, 1943, an operation calculated to wipe out the enemy force at Stalingrad.

In the beginning of February the Battle of Stalingrad ended in a brilliant victory of Soviet arms. Twenty-two picked enemy divisions had been smashed and over 90,000 officers and men under Field Marshal Paulus, Commander of the German Sixth Army, had surrendered. Vast quantities of weapons and equipment had been seized. What had started out as a counter-offensive developed into a general offensive along the Soviet-German Front. Smashing through the German defences, Soviet troops moved as much as 600-700 kilometres westward in some sectors, crushing 112 Nazi and satellite divisions. The Red Army went about the business of driving the invaders from Soviet soil with tremendous zeal and resolution. Reports of deeds of valour poured in from all fronts. Thus, on February 23, 1943, Alexander Matrosov, a private of the 254th Guards Regiment, threw himself bodily on the loop-hole of a pill-box to silence a machine-gun that had been holding up his regiment's advance. His feat was repeated by more than two hundred Soviet fighters in the course of the war.

The Soviet victory on the banks of the Volga was an event of tremendous international import. Hitler Germany had been dealt a blow from which it was never to recover. The Anglo-American forces were now free to commence military operations in North Africa. A large allied force was landed in Algeria and Morocco in November 1942, and engaged an enemy force considerably weaker in numbers and equipment. This offensive ended with the capitulation of the German-Italian forces in Africa in May 1943.

Axis Partners Face Crisis. Anti-Fascist Coalition Strengthened

With the Allied African campaign brought to a successful close, the situation was definitely favourable to the opening of a second front in Europe. A factor in favour of large-scale offensive operations in France and adjacent West European countries was the upsurge of the Resistance Movement that had followed the German débâcle at Stalingrad. Nevertheless Great Britain and the United States again postponed the all-important invasion of Europe across the English Channel, preferring a landing in Sicily, which was carried out in July 1943. The rulers of the Western powers cherished the hope that after occupying

Sicily their forces would break through into Southeastern and Central Europe, thereby preventing the arrival of Soviet troops there and helping maintain the reactionary bourgeois-landowner regimes in the countries of that area.

Meanwhile the German reverses on the Soviet-German Front had produced a serious crisis in the fascist camp. In Italy, Rumania, Finland and Hungary discontent was on the increase in regard to the war that more and more people in all walks of life were coming to consider hopeless. Anti-war and anti-government sentiment in the satellite countries was given a particularly strong impetus by the miserable failure of the German offensive at Kursk in the summer of 1943. The German High Command had concentrated a powerful striking force within a small confined area in preparation for that offensive, in the hope that it might avenge the defeat at Stalingrad. But the outcome at Kursk was the same as at Stalingrad. The German plans were soon upset, and the German troops, worn out by heavy fighting, began to roll back under heavier and heavier hammering by the Red Army, which was now developing a counter-offensive on a wide front. Before 1943 was out, two-thirds of the Soviet territory at one time held by the enemy had been liberated. The offensive destined to drive the enemy completely from Soviet soil was now in full swing.

About this time, a serious political crisis was brewing in Italy, where fascism had had its origin. The Italian people refused to fight and demanded a break with nazi Germany. The Italian troops in Africa had suffered a heavy defeat, and the Italian army of ten divisions dispatched by Mussolini to the Eastern Front had been completely routed. The greater part of the Italian navy had been sunk or damaged. After the Anglo-American forces occupied Sicily the leaders of the Italian bourgeoisie realised the futility of continuing the war and decided to depose Mussolini and begin negotiating with the Allies. Towards the end of July 1943, Mussolini was placed under arrest. A new government was formed, with Marshal Badoglio at its head; and by agreement with him British and American troops landed in the south of Italy. On September 8, Italy surrendered. This event was followed by a German invasion of northern and central Italy, and on October 13 the Badoglio government declared war on Germany. A puppet fascist "republic" was created on the German-occupied territory, and Mussolini, who had, with German aid, made good his escape, was placed at its head.

The victories of the Red Army at Stalingrad and Kursk, which became the decisive turning-point of the Second World War, stimulated closer union among the members of the anti-Hitler coalition and strengthened the international prestige and influence of the Soviet Union. This is evidenced by the fact that periodic

conferences at the highest level of the Allied powers, that is, the USSR, USA and Great Britain, commenced precisely in the autumn of 1943. A conference of foreign ministers, held in October 1943 in Moscow, made arrangements for a conference of the Heads of Government of the USSR, USA and Great Britain, which met at Teheran from November 28 to December 1, 1943. It was at this conference that the decision was reached to open a second front in Western Europe (not in the Mediterranean area as insisted upon by Churchill) in May of the following year, and the basic outlines of a co-ordinated strategy of all three powers were worked out. The conference adopted a Declaration regarding concerted action in the war against nazi Germany and post-war co-operation, which was destined to prove of great political importance. Thus at Teheran, as at other subsequent conferences of the heads of the Soviet, British and American governments, thanks primarily to the determined efforts of the Soviet delegation, extremely important decisions were made both on problems of the war with the fascist bloc and on certain problems relating to the post-war period.

Decisive Red Army Victories. Second Front Opened in Europe

For the Red Army the year 1944 was a year of decisive victories over the armies of Germany and its satellites. During January and February the Soviet forces inflicted a heavy defeat on the enemy Army Group North and lifted the blockade of Leningrad, which had lasted 900 days. About the same time a group of over ten enemy divisions was surrounded in the area of Korsun-Shevchenkivsky, the Ukraine. When they turned down a Soviet offer to surrender the entire group was either annihilated or taken prisoner. During February, March and April the Red Army had routed the enemy Army Group South, cleared the Ukraine west of the Dnieper, reached and crossed the Czechoslovak and Rumanian frontiers, and was now pursuing its westward drive to liberate the German-occupied countries. In April the Soviet forces freed the Crimea. During the winter and spring Red Army offensives 175 enemy divisions were put out of action and over a million officers and men killed, wounded or taken prisoner.

The growing power of the Red Army offensive made it plain that it was by itself fully capable of crushing nazi Germany and thus achieving its noble mission of liberating the captive nations. Faced with this prospect, the British and American monopolies could no longer afford to delay the opening of a second front.



Anglo-American forces landing in Northern France, June 6, 1944

Accordingly, on June 6 British and American troops began the long-overdue landing operations on the north coast of France. Despite their overwhelming land, sea and air superiority over the enemy in this theatre, their advance in Northern France was extremely slow and hesitant. On August 15, British and American troops made a landing in the south of France and began to move north. Summoned by the leaders of the Resistance, the French people rose in arms against the invaders. Numerous towns were liberated one after another, and on August 18, French patriotic forces engaged the German garrison in Paris. By August 25, when the Allied divisions entered Paris, they found it already in the hands of the patriots. Although there was now a second front in Europe, the Soviet-German Front remained the crucial battleground of the Second World War, where the German High Command continued to keep its main forces.

Invaders Driven From Soviet Soil. Fascist Bloc Crumbles

During the summer and autumn of 1944 the Red Army delivered a series of fresh, exceptionally heavy blows against the enemy. One of the most important operations of the war, the liberation of Byelorussia, was completed during June and July

with the encirclement and destruction of the powerful German Army Group Centre totalling over a million men. During the second half of 1944 the northern flank of the German army—the army group in the Baltic area—was also crushed; and about the same time the Red Army put out of action the army groups Northern Ukraine and Southern Ukraine, totalling some 90 divisions, thereby causing the southern flank of the German army to crumble.

The successful operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in 1944 brought a decisive military defeat to the nazis: 183 enemy divisions had been destroyed and 2,600,000 officers and men killed in action. These losses in manpower and equipment could no longer be replaced. Moreover, all of the Soviet territory at one time overrun by the invaders had now been cleared and the state frontier of the Soviet Union once again re-established from the Barents Sea in the north to the Black Sea and the Danube in the south.

The destruction of the armed forces of the German satellites by the Red Army made the final collapse of the criminal Axis bloc inevitable. Such factors as the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives in battle, the extreme suffering and privations of the civilian population, and the realisation of the injustice and futility of the war—all this exercised a powerful influence on the peoples of the fascist countries, increasing anti-war feeling together with the desire to make an end of the reactionary cliques that had plunged their countries into a world war at Hitler's bidding.

When the armies of Marshal R. Y. Malinovsky's Second Ukrainian Front and Marshal F. I. Tolbukhin's Third Ukrainian Front crushed the enemy divisions at Kishinev and Jassy, Rumanian patriots staged an armed revolt and toppled, on August 23, 1944, the venal Antonescu dictatorship. A new government was set up, which concluded an armistice with the Allies and declared war on Germany.

On the strength of the fact that the ruling circles of Bulgaria had actively aided Hitler all through the war, the Soviet Government proclaimed, on September 5, 1944, a state of war existing between the Soviet Union and Bulgaria; and Soviet forces crossed the Bulgarian frontier. On September 9, the Communist-led Patriotic Front raised a popular revolt against the reactionary ruling clique and set up a Patriotic Front government, which, having concluded an armistice with the Allies, also declared war on Germany.

In September 1944, Finland, too, dropped out of the fascist bloc. In October 1944, the Red Army's developing offensive took it into Hungary, where, beating down the stubborn resistance

offered by the Hungarian fascist forces, it began to converge on Budapest. In December 1944, a provisional national Hungarian government was set up in Debrecen, which concluded an armistice with the members of the anti-Hitler coalition and also declared war on Germany. In Yugoslavia, the Soviet forces gave valuable aid to the People's Liberation Army led by J. Broz Tito in driving the nazis from that country.

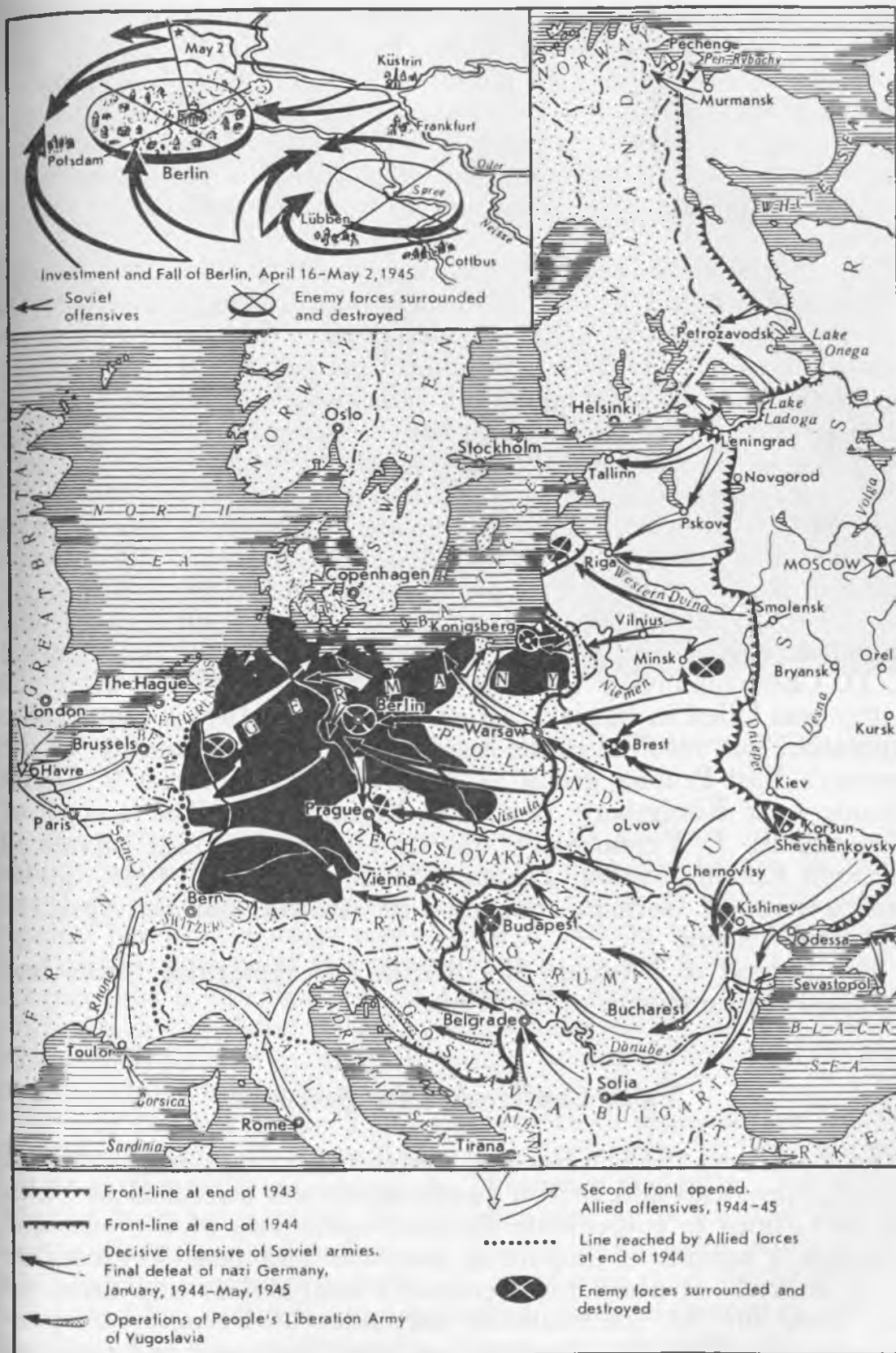
Driving the nazi invaders and their local collaborationists out of the countries of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union left it to the peoples concerned to choose their own state system. While pursuing the policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the liberated countries, the Soviet Union barred any attempts against their sovereignty and independence by other states, the rulers of Great Britain and the United States above all. The British and American imperialists were thus deprived of a chance to force reactionary bourgeois-landowner regimes upon the peoples of Eastern and Southeastern Europe or to prevent radical democratic and, later, socialist reforms.

As a result of the decisive victories of the Soviet armies Germany found itself shorn of all its Allies in Europe and virtually completely isolated. Gripped in a vice between two fronts, the German troops were forced to wage heavy defensive battles.

Red Army Liberates Poland, Austria and Czechoslovakia

The war in Europe was now in its final phase. The immediate aim was to liberate Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria and to deal the death blow to the foe in his own homeland. This was no easy task. It was necessary to break through powerful defence systems built up by the enemy over many years. Aware of imminent disaster, the nazis fought desperately to stave it off, using terror and deceit to make millions in the army and on the home front carry on the futile resistance. Even then Germany had substantial forces and means at its disposal.

Towards the end of December 1944, as a matter of fact, the German army launched an offensive in the West and achieved a break-through on the British and American front in the Ardennes. The plan was to reach Antwerpen, surround the main body of Allied troops, force Britain out of the war, and induce the United States to conclude a separate peace. The British and American forces were on the brink of defeat, when Prime Minister W. Churchill of Great Britain addressed the Soviet Government, on January 6, 1945, a message requesting a large-scale Soviet offensive to relieve the situation.



Military Operations in Europe and the Balkans in 1944 - 45

In order to help the Allies, the Red Army opened a great offensive along the entire front, from the Baltic Sea to the Carpathian Mountains, on January 12, 1945 (instead of January 20, as scheduled); and on that very same day the German High Command called off its assault on the British and American positions. The reserves that had been held in readiness for a renewed German westward drive were transferred to the Soviet Front.

The onslaught of the Soviet Army against the Germans carried tremendous force. The powerful German defence system was smashed along a line 1,200 kilometres long. The troops of Marshal I. S. Konev's First Ukrainian Front liberated Silesia in a drive that carried them across the Oder, and by the end of February stood on the banks of the Neisse. By January 17, the troops of Marshal G. K. Zhukov's First Byelorussian Front, fighting shoulder to shoulder with the First Polish Army, had driven the Germans from Warsaw. Swiftly advancing on westward, these forces reached the Oder and established a bridgehead on its western bank in the area of Küstrin, within 60 kilometres of Berlin.

The troops of the Second and Third Byelorussian fronts, commanded respectively by Marshal K. K. Rokossovsky and General I. D. Chernyakhovsky (by Marshal A. M. Vassilevsky after the latter was killed in battle), carried out early in 1945 a remarkable operation that resulted in the encirclement and annihilation of the enemy's East-Prussia group of 38 divisions. On April 9, Soviet troops took Königsberg (renamed Kaliningrad). The troops of General A. I. Yeremenko's Fourth Ukrainian Front advanced through Czechoslovakia. During March and April 1945, Soviet troops crushed German resistance in Austria and on April 13 liberated Vienna.

By the end of February the British and American forces had resumed their offensive in the West.

Yalta Conference; Its Decisions

In February 1945, a second conference of the heads of the Soviet, American and British governments was convened at Yalta in the Crimea to co-ordinate the final operations of the war and examine a number of important post-war problems. The conference worked out plans for Germany's final defeat and drew up the terms for the unconditional surrender of Germany. A programme providing for Germany's military, economic and political disarmament was submitted by the Soviet Union and accepted by the Heads of Government of the United States and Great Britain in recognition of the Soviet Union's major contribution



W. Churchill, F. Roosevelt and J. Stalin at Yalta (Crimea) Conference (1945)

to the victory over nazi Germany and its growing influence in the international arena. The programme provided for the destruction of German militarism and fascism and for guarantees against leaving Germany any chance of making war in the future.

Another important document drawn up by the Yalta Conference was a "Declaration on Liberated Europe", in accordance with which the three Great Powers undertook to aid the nations liberated from nazi tyranny in setting up democratic regimes and to afford them economic assistance.

It was decided at the Yalta Conference to establish the United Nations Organisation, and the basic principles of the United Nations Charter were drawn up. The noble and lofty aims of the United Nations included the maintenance of peace and the security of nations, settlement of differences between states solely by peaceful means, prevention of aggression, and the promotion of friendship, mutual understanding and co-operation among nations. The Soviet diplomats played an important role in the drafting of the Charter; many important progressive provisions were included in the text of the Charter thanks to the determination and firmness they exhibited. The United Nations Charter is



Last nazi troops to surrender, Berlin (May 1945)

based on the principle of peaceful co-existence and co-operation of states regardless of their social and political systems.

The establishment of the UNO, finally formalised at the San Francisco Conference in April 1945, became an event of great international significance, harmonising with the aspirations of peoples everywhere who hated war and longed for an enduring peace. If the activities of the United Nations have often failed to reflect these ideals, the reasons should be sought in the departure of the Western powers from the principles adopted in 1945 and their desire to impose their will and their way of life on the nations of the world. One more decision reached at the Yalta Conference at the request of Great Britain and the United States concerned the entry of the USSR into the war against Japan three months after the end of the war in Europe.

Berlin Taken by Storm. Unconditional German Surrender

Hitler Germany's final spectacular collapse was brought about by the Berlin operation carried out by three Soviet army groups. This operation had been prepared with maximum thoroughness.

Vast quantities of *matériel* had been assembled, including 41,600 artillery pieces and mortars, 8,000 planes, 6,300 break-through tanks, etc. The morale of the troops investing Berlin was excellent; the Soviet fighters were out to plant their banner of victory over the Reichstag.

At daybreak on April 16, 1945, Soviet artillery opened up with a concentrated massive shelling of the enemy defences. Simultaneously tanks moved into action, with the air force providing support. Despite bitter resistance the German defence system was cracked. By April 21 fighting had been carried into the city's suburbs, and on the 25th units of the First Byelorussian and First Ukrainian fronts joined forces in the vicinity of Potsdam, thus completing the encirclement of the enemy force in Berlin. That same day units of the First Ukrainian Front and those of the American First Army met at Torgau on the west bank of the Elbe.

Despite the hopeless position of the surrounded German forces the German High Command continued to fight back. Hitler counted on the arrival of American troops and a collision between them and the Red Army. The newly formed German Twelfth Army moved to the relief of the troops in Berlin, but failed to save the situation. The German losses southeast of Berlin totalled 60,000 killed in battle and 120,000 taken prisoner.

Inside Berlin the Germans battled with fanatical desperation. The Soviet troops fought on from house to house, from block to block. The fighting for the Reichstag was especially fierce. On the night of April 30, sergeants M. Yegorov and M. Kantaria planted the Banner of Victory on the roof of the Reichstag. On May 2, the Berlin garrison laid down its arms. Hitler and Goebbels had committed suicide. Over 300,000 German officers and soldiers surrendered to the Soviet troops.

On the night of May 8, an act of unconditional surrender on behalf of Germany was signed at Berlin by representatives of the German High Command. This act was followed by the capitulation of German troops in isolated pockets in the Baltic area, east of Danzig, and elsewhere. One important enemy force holding out in Czechoslovakia and Austria, under the command of General Schoerner, refused to surrender to the Soviet Command, in violation of the act of capitulation. Resolute action was called for to crush this force and come to the aid of the Czechoslovak patriots who had risen, on May 5, against the German invaders. The Third and Fourth Armoured Guards Armies of the First Ukrainian Front, commanded, respectively, by Generals P. S. Rybalko and D. D. Lelyushenko, moved rapidly on Prague. At daybreak of May 9, Soviet tanks entered the city. They were followed into the city by motorised infantry. By 10 o'clock Prague



Signing nazi Germany's unconditional surrender act. Seated, left to right: Chief Air Marshal A. Tedder, Marshal G. K. Zhukov, General C. Spaatz, General de Lattre de Tassigny, and General Field Marshal W. Keitel, May 8, 1945

was completely in the hands of Soviet troops and its destruction had thus been averted. The Soviet troops were enthusiastically welcomed by the population. On the same day mobile units of the First and Second Ukrainian fronts joined forces 35 kilometres southeast of Prague and Schoerner's entire army group, numbering some 60 divisions or nearly 1,000,000 men, was surrounded and forced to surrender.

As a result of the Soviet-German war 506 German and at least 100 satellite divisions had been crushed, while German battle casualties totalled 10,000,000, or 73.5 per cent of the aggregate German battle casualties in the Second World War. Some 77,000 planes, 48,000 tanks and 167,000 artillery pieces had been destroyed by the Red Army.

The Potsdam Conference

Supreme power in the defeated nazi Reich now devolved on the Allied powers: the USSR, USA, Great Britain and France. Germany was divided into four zones of occupation: Soviet, American, British and French. By way of proving its good will and desire to co-operate with its Western Allies the Soviet Government agreed to have Berlin partitioned into four sectors (though the city was within the Soviet zone) under the rule of officers representing the occupying powers.

On July 17, 1945, a conference of Heads of Government of the USSR, USA and Great Britain opened at Potsdam (near



Territorial Changes in Europe Following the Second World War



Soviet troops crossing the Great Khingan Mountains in Manchuria, August 1945

Berlin) and continued to August 2. The conference proclaimed the main aims of the Allied powers in respect of Germany to be: demilitarisation, denazification and democratisation. One important decision was that despite its temporary occupation and its partitioning into four separate zones Germany was to be regarded as an economic and political entity and that a common policy was to be followed in regard to the population of all four zones. An International Military Tribunal was to be set up to try the leading German war criminals.

Peace treaties with Germany and its former allies were to be drafted by a Council of Foreign Ministers of the four Great

Powers. Regardless of the final settlement of territorial problems the conference decided that a part of East Prussia, including Königsberg, was to be turned over to the Soviet Union, the rest being transferred to Poland. Poland's western frontier was to run along the rivers Oder and Neisse.

The decisions of the Potsdam Conference were of great international significance. Public opinion the world over welcomed them as an important contribution to the establishment of an enduring peace and as convincing evidence of the possibility of co-operation among the Great Powers. To understand how it came about that the governing circles of the United States and Great Britain were led to conclude agreements largely at variance with their plans and aims it is necessary to visualise the background against which the conference met. Anti-fascist feeling was running high as never before all over the world at the time, the wounds inflicted by fascism on millions and millions were still fresh, and people were united in their desire to end, uproot the fascist menace once and for all. Moreover—and this was an extremely weighty factor—the Soviet Union had not emerged from the war in a weakened condition, as the ultra-reactionaries among the British and American bourgeoisie had wished. The British and American governing circles were compelled to reckon with the military power of the Soviet Union as well as with its greatly enhanced prestige in the international arena. It is hardly to be doubted that enduring peace could have been achieved had the Western powers carried out the provisions of the Potsdam agreements.

Military Operations in the Far East, 1943-1945. Second World War Ends

The changed balance of power between the warring coalitions altered the situation in the Pacific theatre as well. From 1943 on the American and British fleets developed offensive operations, as did their ground forces on the Asiatic mainland. Meantime the national liberation movement of the peoples in Japanese-conquered lands was also on the upswing. Patriotic forces in Vietnam, Burma, Indonesia, Korea and the Philippines were waging an armed struggle for freedom and independence. Liberated areas in China were being expanded and strengthened.

During their 1944 offensives the Allied forces occupied the Marianas and the Marshalls in the Pacific and began the battle for the Philippines. One of the greatest naval engagements of the Second World War was fought off Leyte, an island of the

Philippine group, in October, ending in a holocaust for the Japanese fleet, which lost three battleships, four aircraft carriers, ten cruisers, nine destroyers, and other ships. The Allies were successful in Burma, too, and by the end of 1944 the Japanese had been driven out of Northern and, partially, Central Burma. The Japanese thus found themselves deprived of important sources of petroleum and rubber. The situation here was favourable on the whole to the British and American forces, which had shifted their operations to the South China Sea and the Archipelago.

At the close of 1944 the situation in the Far East and Southeast Asia nevertheless remained serious. Driven from part of the areas she had occupied, Japan still had very powerful forces at her disposal, mainly in the shape of land forces that had not yet taken an active part in the war with the United States and Great Britain. Together with the picked Kwantung army, which formed their core, these land forces were more than 5,000,000 strong. Their quality as a fighting force had been demonstrated in their 1944 offensive in China, when they occupied in a matter of months a strip of coast several hundred kilometres broad, penetrated into the southwestern provinces and joined up with the Japanese forces operating in Indo-China.

Uncertain of their ability to defeat Japan in a reasonably short time unaided, the British and American governments approached the Soviet Union on the subject of its joining in the war with Japan. On August 9, 1945, the Soviet Union, acting in compliance with the obligation assumed at Yalta, declared war on Japan. The government of the Mongolian People's Republic followed suit. Attacking on a wide front, in co-ordination with the Mongolian troops, the Soviet armies broke through the enemy's defence systems and forced the Kwantung army to lay down arms. The last remaining islands of Japanese resistance in Northeast China, North Korea, Southern Sakhalin and the Kuriles crumbled under the weight of the Soviet onslaught.

On September 2, 1945, Japan, Nazi Germany's last surviving ally in the Second World War, signed an act of unconditional surrender. The ceremony took place on board the United States battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. Japan's capitulation ended the Second World War.

On August 6 and 9, or less than a month before the Japanese surrender, American planes, on orders from President Truman, had dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, respectively, practically wiping out both and causing enormous loss of life. The use of atomic weapons against Japan had not been dictated by military necessity. Coming at a time when Japan's fate was to all intents and purposes sealed, this

act of senseless savagery was never meant to hasten the end of the war in the Pacific. It pursued an entirely different purpose. It was intended to frighten the world at large and above all the Soviet people, so that United States rule, American imperialist "leadership" in the post-war world would never be challenged. Subsequent events showed, however, that the hopes of the American atomic strategists and diplomats were fortunately not destined to be realised.

Substantial losses had been inflicted on the capitalist system by the Second World War. Entering upon the second phase of its crisis, the world capitalist system continued to lose ground.

Chapter Seven

THE SOVIET UNION AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR. COMMUNIST CONSTRUCTION

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

Soviet Union Resumes Peaceful Construction

Now that the war was over and the world was once again at peace, the Soviet people were free to turn again to that work of peaceful construction which the war had interrupted.

War and nazi occupation had taken a staggering toll of death and caused wide destruction. The loss of life exceeded 20,000,000. 1,710 towns had been sacked and ruined, over 70,000 villages destroyed by fire, something like 32,000 industrial plants demolished. The nazis had destroyed the metallurgical works which had accounted for over 70 per cent of the country's output of steel; they had flooded the coal-mines which had produced around 60 per cent of the coal output; and blown up 4,100 railway stations and 65,000 kilometres of railway track.

In agriculture, too, destruction had been heavy: 1,876 state farms, 2,890 machine and tractor stations and 98,000 collective farms had been plundered. The loss in livestock totalled 71,000,000 head. This meant that the technical resources of agriculture in the formerly occupied areas had to be built up anew. Heavy damage had been sustained by cultural and medical facilities and housing. The total loss suffered by the country as a result of the war has been put at around 2,600,000 million rubles, including military expenditure and temporary loss of income from the national economy in the occupied areas. The war had set back the country's development by at least ten years.

There was a critical shortage of food supplies. Manufactured goods were also in short supply. The housing situation was disastrous, both in town and country: millions lived in dug-outs.

The Soviet people, however, who had stood the crucial test of war, did not let these difficulties discourage them. Instead, they tackled with great enthusiasm the task of economic reconstruction and further development.

In June 1945, that is to say, almost immediately after the victory over Germany, the Soviet Government began to demobilise the armed forces. By March 1948, this demobilisation was completed, the numerical strength of the army having been reduced from 11,400,000 to 2,900,000, which was the minimum compatible with the country's security. The Soviet Government thereby clearly demonstrated that it stood for peace and harboured no aggressive intentions.

The government made the welfare of the demobilised soldiers its particular concern, providing them with a considerable cash allowance, jobs, living quarters and fuel. Lumber for building homes was provided free of charge in the areas that had suffered under enemy occupation, together with adequate loans.

Meantime, the government had acted to repatriate as speedily as possible the Soviet people who had been carried off to work in Germany, and by the end of 1945 some 5,200,000 men and women had been repatriated, including over 600,000 children.

The state of emergency was terminated as soon as the war was over. Industrial facilities which had been contributing to the war effort, as well as many armament plants, began to shift back to peace-time production. The 8-hour working day was re-established, and compulsory overtime work, which had been a war-time measure, was abolished. And regular paid vacations for workers and employees were reinstated (cash compensation had been allowed in lieu of vacations during the war).

Elections to the Second Supreme Soviet of the USSR, held on February 10, 1946, bore evidence of great political enthusiasm, nearly all of the electors (99.7 per cent, to be precise) unanimously voting for the candidates nominated by the Communist and non-Party bloc. Elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union and Autonomous Republics were held in February 1947, and to the local Soviets at the close of 1947 and in early 1948. Participation was nearly 100 per cent.

Economic Reconstruction

The advantages of socialist planned economy became apparent once more in the process of the reconstruction of the country's economy. The Fourth Five-Year Plan of Economic Reconstruction and Development, drawn up by the planning authorities and approved by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, covering the period 1946-50, established the ways and means of raising the nation's economic and cultural level and living standards. In accordance with this plan the Soviet Government concentrated the available

material and manpower resources and channelled capital investments into the top-priority reconstruction projects.

The transition from war-time to peace-time production on a national scale was accomplished in a single year, all the difficulties involved notwithstanding. Millions of men and women participated enthusiastically in the work of peaceful construction, in friendly competition for fulfilling the new five-year plan ahead of schedule. Hundreds of thousands of workers formally pledged themselves to anticipate the deadline in respect of their personal yearly or five-year quotas. Initiative was displayed in many novel ways, such as by speeding up the processes of cutting metal, drilling oil wells, smelting ores, etc., or by economising raw materials, supplies, fuels, or electric power in order to apply the savings thus effected to increasing output over and above the volume planned. Workers of certain Moscow enterprises launched a movement for increasing such accumulations through improved organisation of production, higher productivity of labour, lower costs, quicker turnover of capital, etc. This resulted in increasing the output over and above the volume planned by more than 20,000 million rubles in 1949 alone.

Workers, technicians and engineers displayed great ingenuity and resourcefulness in speeding up the reconstruction of demolished industrial plants. At the Azovstal Metallurgical Works in Mariupol, for instance, one of the blast-furnaces dynamited by the Germans had been knocked out of shape and out of position. The first decision was to dismantle it and build a new one, but the plant's Party organisation suggested, and the engineers and workers figured out, a way to set it right again, and the huge blast-furnace weighing 1,300 tons was actually straightened out and moved back into place in just six weeks.

The personnel of the Dnieper Hydropower Station invented a novel way of shutting off the channel-type spillways of the dam, which made it possible to reconstruct the plant considerably under the scheduled time, so that it was back in operation in March 1947. The Donets Coal Basin, the country's most important supplier of coal, was put back in operation in record time. 650,000,000 cubic metres of water had to be pumped out of the pits here, which was like draining a lake with an area of 70 square kilometres and 10 metres deep. Over 2,500 kilometres of debris-blocked workings had to be cleared, which could be roughly likened to excavating and timbering a tunnel reaching from Moscow to Paris at a depth of 700 metres.

The work of reconstruction, in industry as well as transport, gathered speed from year to year. The annual increase of industrial production was 20 per cent in 1946, 22 per cent in 1947 and 27 per cent in 1948. The average monthly level of industrial

output of the pre-war year 1940 was reached as early as October 1947, in advance of the date set under the five-year plan, and in 1948 the 1940 level was reached and surpassed in respect of the aggregate annual volume of output.

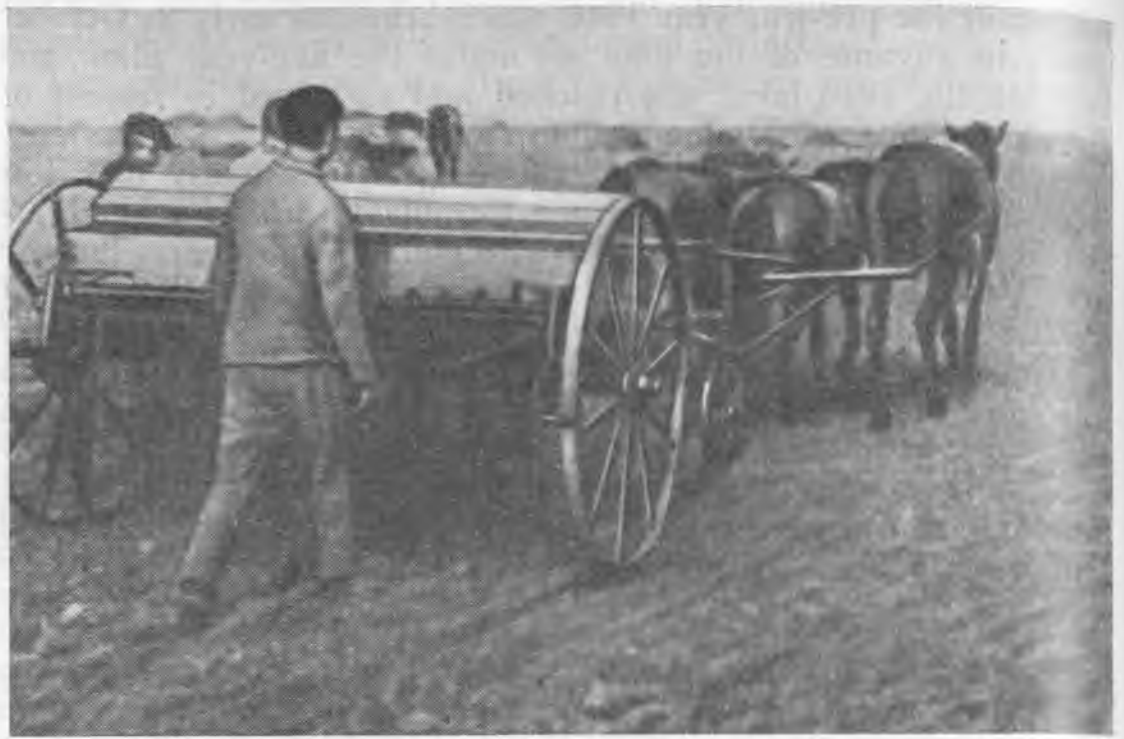
It will thus be seen that the Soviet people actually took less than three years to accomplish the formidable task of rehabilitating industry and re-equipping it with modern machinery, thereby giving convincing proof of the limitless possibilities of the socialist system of economy.

Under the Fourth Five-Year Plan, however, the Soviet Union did more than rebuild the demolished plants; for in parallel with this work of reconstruction old plants were enlarged and new ones built. A total of over 6,000 important industrial plants were built or reconstructed under the five-year plan. The industrial output of 1950 was 70 per cent higher than the pre-war level.

Achievements of New Soviet Republics

The achievements of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which joined the family of Soviet Socialist Republics only in 1940, may be taken as a good illustration of the advantages of the socialist system of economy. Their national economy had been completely wrecked by the German invaders, who had demolished industrial plants, blown up all the power stations and driven off hundreds of thousands of men and women to forced labour in Germany. The entire country came to the aid of the three republics: machinery, equipment, raw materials and fuel were shipped here from all parts of the country, and workers and engineers from Russia advised the workers of the Baltic Republics on the methods of socialist construction. As a result, in 1950 Estonia tripled her industrial output as compared with 1940. Her shale industry was reconstructed from top to bottom: new, first-class mechanised pits were built, equipped with coal-cutters, conveyers and electric locomotives supplied by the other Soviet Republics. The Krenholm Textile Mill at Narva, the Baltic Textile Mills at Tallinn, and other plants were rebuilt and equipped with first-class Soviet machinery. Estonia began to build ships, motors, wireless receiving sets, machine tools, and so on.

Latvia's industrial facilities, too, were entirely rebuilt and re-equipped, and many new plants were added. Her industrial output of 1950 was three times that of 1940, the share of her heavy industry having doubled. Important new industries were introduced in Lithuania, which began manufacturing electric motors, metal-cutting machine tools, building equipment, wireless receiving sets, measuring instruments, etc. The industry of bourgeois Lithuania



Sowing winter wheat on Kiev Region collective farm (1946)

had accounted for 25 per cent of the aggregate output of her economy, whereas the share of Soviet Lithuania's industry, in 1949, topped 50 per cent.

Agriculture Faces Difficulties

Agriculture found itself up against great difficulties after the war, having suffered the heaviest losses. Areas under cultivation and crop yields had dwindled during the war years, so that the aggregate output of agricultural produce in 1945 totalled only 60 per cent of that of 1940. The number of tractors and other farm machines had dwindled by one-third, and what remained was worn out. And the number of able-bodied men and women in collective farms was considerably less than before the war.

The drought of 1946 was even more disastrous than that of 1921. Moreover, recovery in agriculture was complicated by the fact that the government channelled the comparatively slender resources at its disposal chiefly into the reconstruction of heavy industry and transport.

Nevertheless, all of the collective and state farms in the liberated areas, as well as most of the machine and tractor stations, were reconstructed with the help of the government, and supplied with tractors, lorries, farm implements, cattle, seed and

fodder. A great deal of attention was given to the material and technical basis of agriculture. Four new tractor works were built, in addition to the old ones that had resumed production after the war. At the end of the Fourth Five-Year Plan period agriculture was better off in respect of machinery and equipment than before the war, possessing in 1951 nearly 600,000 tractors and 211,000 combines, or 10 and 16 per cent more, respectively, than in 1940.

In the early 1950s a reform was carried out in agriculture to create large collective farms through the amalgamation of smaller ones. 254,000 small economies were thus amalgamated to form 93,000 large collective farms, which could diversify production, make better use of their equipment, put out more marketable produce, reduce overhead costs, etc. Socialist emulation was initiated on the farms for more efficient use of equipment, higher crop yields, and higher productivity in animal husbandry.

While these developments favoured recovery in agriculture, certain factors operated in the opposite direction. Thus, collective farms had to sell a considerable part of their output to the state at comparatively low procurement prices; income from the marketing of cereals, potatoes and animal products was also low; and in many collective farms farmers received insufficient pay for their labour, which led to their losing interest in their work. Industrial crops fared better. High procurement prices on cotton and sugar-beet promoted material interest in increasing their production. The 1950 cotton crop, for instance, was 650,000 tons bigger than planned.

The production of cereals continued to lag by comparison with the country's requirements. In 1953 the overall yield was 80 million tons. State procurements totalled only 29.6 million tons, which was less than it had used up, and it became necessary to take 2.56 million tons out of the state emergency reserves in order to meet consumer needs. Lagging grain production, moreover, was the main cause of a lag in animal husbandry.

Drastic reforms were needed to improve the situation in agriculture.

VICTORY: COMPLETE AND FINAL

Leninist Standards Restored

The 1950s were—for the Soviet Union—a period which witnessed the conclusive stages of socialist construction, the complete and final victory of socialism, including, more specifically, such outstanding achievements as a powerful industrial upswing, the pioneering and development of virgin lands, the commission-

ing of the world's first atomic power plant, the launching of a man-made satellite of the Earth, also a world's first, and the attainment of a new high level in prosperity, culture and technology.

These achievements were made possible by the creative activity displayed by the masses, by wider and closer contacts between the Party and the people, and by the Party's greater role in directing and organising communist construction; all these developments, in turn, being primarily due to the restoration and further development of the Leninist standards of Party and state activity that had been grossly violated during the last years of Stalin's life. After his death, in March 1953, steps were taken to assure genuinely collective leadership within the Party and the government. The Supreme Soviets of the USSR and the Union Republics expanded the range of their legislative activities, their presidiums regularly functioning in their capacity as collective bodies; local Soviets and public organisations widened the sphere of their activities and stepped up their tempo.

Measures to strengthen socialist legality were vigorously implemented.

In 1953 the Central Committee of the Communist Party exposed and terminated the criminal activities of Beria and his associates, who had till then held important posts in the security services. Stern punishment was meted out to them by the Soviet courts for their crimes against the people. Political cases were re-examined and all those who had been illegally sentenced were rehabilitated.

Twentieth CPSU Congress

The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU met in Moscow in February 1956.

This was a Congress of historic significance, ushering in, as it did, a momentous era for the CPSU, for the development of the Soviet society, and for the world-wide communist movement. It gave clear proof that the Party and its Leninist Central Committee were a collective centre not only politically and organisationally but also as focussing the development of the Marxist doctrine. The Central Committee's report, as well as the resolutions unanimously adopted by the delegates representing more than 7,200,000 members of the Communist Party, stressed that the salient feature of the current period was the expansion of socialism beyond the frontiers of a single country and its transformation into a world system. The Congress came to the momentous conclusion that it was actually possible at the present

time to avert world wars. It elaborated further Lenin's proposition about the diversity of forms in which different countries could effect the transition to socialism. It also defined the aims of Soviet foreign policy, which were: to work consistently for peace, to strengthen by all available means fraternal relations with the People's Democracies, and develop cordial relations between the Soviet people and the working people of all lands.

A broad development programme was drawn up by the Congress for the national economy and in the cultural field designed to improve living standards. This programme was set forth in the Directives for the Sixth Five-Year Plan for the period 1956-60. In further developing socialist democracy the Congress firmly condemned the Stalin personality cult and urged that the standards applicable to the Party's activities and the principles of collective Party leadership worked out by Lenin should be scrupulously observed.

The decisions of the Twentieth Congress were acclaimed by the Soviet people, who went to work with a will to carry them out.

New Developments in the Countryside

In the early 1950s, the rate of development in agriculture was inadequate to meet the country's growing requirements. The gap between supply of farm produce and demand had created a perilous situation.

This lag in agriculture was caused by circumstances beyond human control, as well as by factors of a subjective nature.

During the preceding years the country had been unable to maintain the same rapid pace of development simultaneously in heavy industry, light industry and agriculture. It had had no choice but to channel effort and means primarily into the production of means of production, which is the corner-stone of its socialist economy; and investments in agriculture had consequently been only moderate. Another factor that had held up for years the development of agriculture was the enormous destruction inflicted upon it by the war. And still another had been the drought of 1946. Having analysed the factors holding up development in the agricultural sector, the Central Committee of the CPSU, at its plenary meetings of 1953, 1954 and 1955, outlined a programme of action designed to increase agricultural production.

Prime attention was given to the strengthening of the material and technical basis of agriculture. The deliveries of tractors, lorries and various other machines to the farms sharply increased. The machinery-farmer ratio of 1958 was nearly three times that of 1940. Government investments in the mechanisation of agri-

culture over the period 1954-58 were 2.5 times larger than over the preceding five-year period.

Provision of machinery was not the only form of aid offered by the city to the farm: over 120,000 technicians were assigned to jobs in collective farms. And the number of Party workers in collective farms increased, over the period 1954-58, by nearly 250,000. Party organisations existed in practically every collective farm in 1956, instead of in one out of eight, as in 1941.

Procurement prices on farm produce delivered by collective farms to the state were appreciably raised, while the volume of obligatory deliveries of such farm produce as cereals, potatoes, vegetables, etc., was reduced. So was the volume of deliveries of produce grown on the collective farmers' individual plots, which were entirely cancelled in 1958.

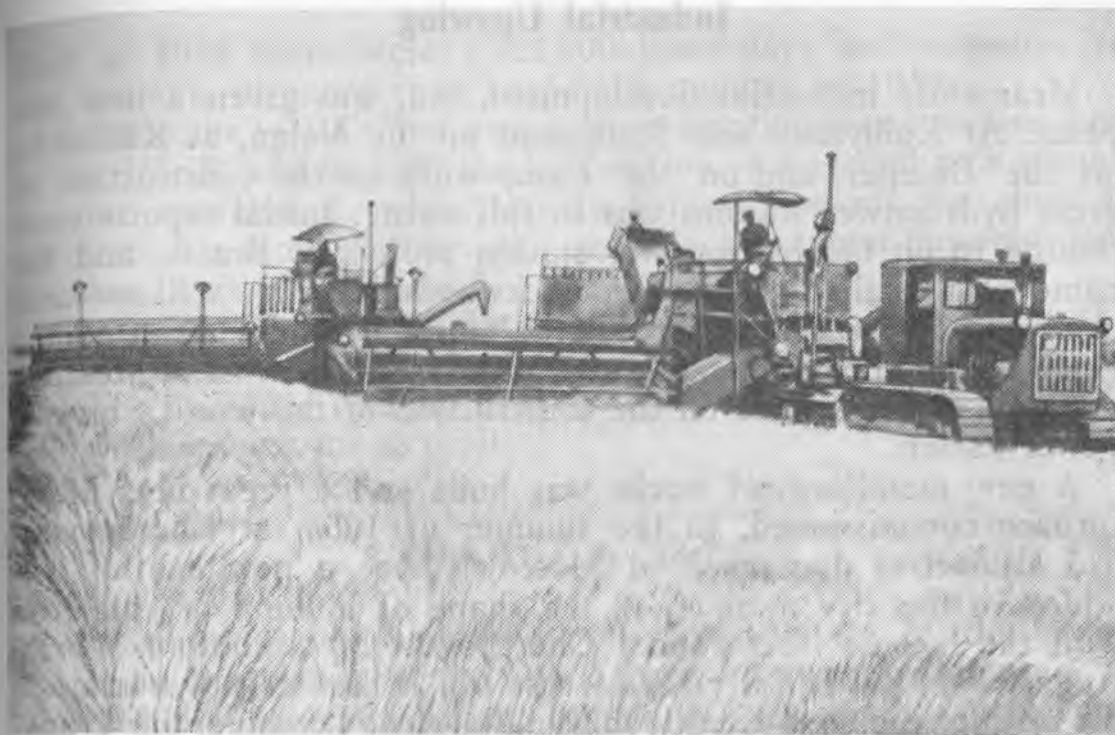
A more rational system of income distribution in collective farms was introduced, including monthly and quarterly advances against work-day units earned for collective-farm labour.

These measures stimulated interest in increasing the output of farm produce and furthered agricultural development, so that the output for the period 1954-58 increased by more than 50 per cent as against the output of the preceding five-year period. Collective-farm incomes grew. And rural living standards improved.

With collective farms now on a firmer basis, it became possible to put through a timely reform, namely, to turn over tractors and other farm machinery to the collective farms. Before 1958, the farms were serviced by the machine and tractor stations (MTS) that possessed this machinery, which was a rational and advantageous enough system while collective farms were small and economically weak. Since they became amalgamated and economically stronger, however, they found it more advantageous to operate farm machinery at their own discretion. Accordingly, this issue was brought up for discussion on a nation-wide scale and, in 1958, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR passed a law providing that the MTS should be turned into repair shops and the farm machinery in their possession should be sold to the collective farms.

Reclaiming Virgin Land

An important contribution to the country's grain budget was made by the eastern parts, where a gigantic campaign was launched for reclaiming and developing virgin and long-fallow lands. An exhaustive study of the problem of reclaiming such lands with a view to rapidly augmenting the country's grain supply was undertaken as soon as the September 1953 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee was over. Economists,



Harvesting wheat on a state farm on the virgin lands in Alma-Ata Region (1956)

agriculturists, Party and government workers were called in by the Party Central Committee and the government for consultation on related problems, and 47 combined expeditions with a staff of over 2,000 specialists in land use, agronomists, soil specialists, geologists and hydraulic engineers undertook a detailed survey of untilled areas in Siberia and Kazakhstan.

In February 1954, a plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee adopted a decision to bring under cultivation up to 13,000,000 hectares of virgin and long-fallow land in two years, and the Party called for volunteers to go to the East to do the job. Its appeal evoked an enthusiastic response among the people.

Steadfastly overcoming all difficulties Soviet people had ploughed up, by August 1954, more than 14,000,000 hectares of virgin land. Modern settlements, state farms and stations mushroomed all over the steppe.

As to the end results of this virgin land development campaign, a good illustration is furnished by Kazakhstan, where 337 state farms have been set up and where the grain crop of 1958 yielded 15,200,000 tons as against 2,336,000 tons in 1953, which means a 6.5-fold increase. In 1956 the Young Communist League was awarded the Order of Lenin for its contribution to the development programme, and 30,000 youngsters and girls were decorated with various orders and medals.

Industrial Upswing

Meanwhile industrial development, too, was given a new impetus. At Kuibyshev and Stalingrad on the Volga, at Kakhovka on the Dnieper, and on the Kama work on the construction of great hydropower stations was in full swing. Initial reports were coming in on the hydropower station project at Bratsk, and the name of the almost unknown backwoods Siberian village came overnight to focus attention all the world over, for here, on the Angara, 700 kilometres north of Irkutsk and 4,000 east of Moscow, a start had been made on the construction of the world's biggest power station.

A new metallurgical works was built and a great new blast-furnace commissioned, in the summer of 1955, at Cherepovets, 375 kilometres due north of Moscow. Here a new exhibit was added in the city museum in the shape of a lump of cast iron with the laconic inscription: "Cherepovets Metallurgical Works. August 24, 1955. First yield of cast iron." Similarly was marked the birth of the Orsk-Khalilovo Metallurgical Combine, the Transcaucasian Metallurgical Works, the Baku Pipe-Rolling Works and many other industrial plants which made important contributions to the production of ores, coal, petroleum and shale, as well as to the output of machine-tools and chemicals.

While the Soviet industry was thus scoring signal successes, certain defects were becoming increasingly apparent which were slowing the pace of industrial development. Some plants and even individual industries were slow to install modern equipment or introduce new production techniques, and the quality of their output was below foreign standards. Intolerably slow was the development of the chemical industry. Coal accounted for a major part of the country's fuel budget, instead of petroleum and gas, as required by the national economy. Steam locomotives hauled most of the freight, as in times past. This in turn had a harmful effect on other branches of the national economy. Manual labour was still widely used in lumbering and the building industry.

A plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, held in July 1955, made a careful study of the prospects of industrial development. The conferences of industrial leaders, builders and leading workers, held in advance of the plenary meeting, helped to reveal these shortcomings and bring them to light. A course was outlined for a speedy technological progress, for invigorating the creative initiative of inventors and innovators and removing any obstacles hindering specialisation and co-operation among industrial enterprises.

Creative endeavour was winning an ever greater number of adherents among the masses, as may best be seen from the fact

that in 1958 there were 1,725,000 innovators and inventors in the country, or more than triple the number in 1950.

In 1954 the world's first atomic power station was commissioned in the USSR, and in 1958 the first section of a second such station became operational; while shortly before, towards the close of 1957, to be more precise, the world's first atom-powered ice-breaker *Lenin* was launched.

Crowning all these achievements came the launching of the world's first man-made Earth satellite. This event took place on October 4, 1957; and in 1958 a third satellite weighing 1,327 kilogrammes was put in orbit.

Fifth Decade Begins

A socialist society had been built, in the main, by the Soviet Union in the twenty years that elapsed between 1917 and 1937. That society, however, cannot be said to have reached perfection or to have been fully developed. It remained to carry the work of building that society through to the end, to a complete and final victory, and to make that victory secure.

Two more decades passed. They were a difficult period, those twenty years between 1938 and 1958: they covered the pre-war period, the great ordeal of the war years, and the years it took to recover from the disastrous effects of the war. On balance, there had been rather few years in which the country could go about its work of peaceful construction. Which is why the country's great achievements under Soviet rule tower all the higher.

The period 1938-58 witnessed a tremendous growth of the socialist society's material and technical basis. Some 18,600 important industrial enterprises were built, and a large number of lesser plants. The volume of industrial output in 1937 was only six times greater than that of 1913, but in 1958 it was 33 times greater, and 72 times greater in respect of the means of production. The aggregate capacity of Soviet power stations in 1937 was 8,200,000 kw, or seven times more than in 1913, but in 1958 it had reached 53,600,000 kw, or 47 times more than before the Revolution. The output of consumer goods had increased to 13 times that of 1913. This constituted a tremendous increase, yet it lagged sadly behind the growth of heavy industry and was in many respects unable to meet consumer needs.

These great quantitative changes in Soviet industry were paralleled by radical qualitative changes. Great technological progress was made, and the workers' cultural and technological level was now higher. This, in turn, contributed from year to year to the increase in labour productivity in industry; in 1958 it was ten

times that of 1913, despite a considerably shorter working day. By the end of the 1950s the Soviet Union possessed a first-class, highly developed, diversified industry with modern plant, producing all kinds of modern machines and equipment.

The country's socialist agriculture comprised, in 1958, 67,700 collective and over 6,000 state farms. Areas under cultivation totalled 195,600,000 hectares, or 77,400,000 more than in 1913. Definite progress had been made in supplying machinery and equipment to the farms, which now had in their possession over 1,000,000 tractors, over 600,000 harvesting-combines, 700,000 lorries and motor-cars and a large number of other farm machines.

Living standards had risen markedly. By 1958 per capita national income, which determines the level of prosperity, was 15.4 times higher than before the Revolution. Three-fourths of the national income are distributed among the members of the society according to work performed, in line with the relative socialist principle, to satisfy consumer demand; and the remaining one-fourth goes into the accumulation fund in the interests of the society. Much was done in the 1950s to improve the socialist principle of distribution, as, for example, by reducing the gap between the higher- and lower-paid brackets and by raising the income of collective farmers.

In the second half of the 1950s a seven-hour working day was introduced for all workers and employees and a six-hour day for underground workers and those engaged in work injurious to the health. Higher pension scales were established and tuition fees were abolished in respect of senior forms of secondary schools and higher educational institutions (these fees were introduced a year before the war, while tuition in respect of all other forms and schools remained free). Appropriations for all kinds of social security allowances were considerably increased. And substantial investments were made in the sphere of public health.

Indicative of the profound changes in the lives of Soviet people since the Revolution and of the achievements under the socialist system, especially over the past twenty years, was the country-wide population census of January 15, 1959 (the previous census dates back to January 17, 1939). The size of the population, as of the date of the census, stood at 208,800,000, or 18,100,000 more than on the eve of the Second World War, despite the heavy loss of life suffered during that war. The birth rate reached a high level (25.3 per 1,000 population in 1958), while the death rate dipped sharply, especially infant mortality, which may be attributed to the financial aid extended by the state to mothers of large families and unmarried mothers (in 1959 such aid was received by 7,000,000 mothers), more effective maternity and child care, expansion of public health services and improved medical

care, and—which was most important—the consistently growing prosperity of the Soviet people.

Intensive industrial development was conducive to a substantial growth of the urban population, which now numbered 100,000,000 or 40,000,000 more than in 1939; and 503 new towns and 1,354 urban-type settlements were put on the map of the Soviet Union since that year.

The 1959 census testified to a rapid rise of the cultural level, with literacy standing at 98.5 per cent. In 1959 the proportion of workers and collective farmers having a secondary and even a higher education had reached 39 and 21 per cent, respectively, whereas only 4.3 per cent of those engaged in manual labour had a secondary education in 1939. The creation of a multi-million intelligentsia truly of the people has been one of the greatest achievements of the Soviet system.

These achievements, put together, meant that the Soviet people, under the leadership of the Communist Party, had succeeded in building a matured socialist society. It meant that the socialist system had been put on a firm footing.

Meanwhile, a radical change had occurred in the power balance as between the capitalist world and the socialist. Gone forever were the times when the USSR was the only socialist country in the world and the military intervention of the imperialist powers threatened it with a restoration of capitalism. In the 1950s the world had to reckon with a community of socialist countries. Moreover, the military might of the USSR and the socialist community was now incomparably greater than ever before. Any imperialist military effort to destroy the socialist system in the USSR was now destined to fail.

Socialism, to sum up, had been victorious in the USSR both in its internal and external aspects. Its victory, in other words, had been complete and final.

That being the case, the dictatorship of the proletariat may be said to have accomplished its historic mission and outlived its usefulness. With the development of those fundamental features that had been inherent in the Soviet state ever since its inception, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat had developed into a socialist state of the whole people. The working class, being eminently advanced, astute and well organised, has retained leadership within the Soviet society, but it has deliberately renounced its dominant role. Leadership in all the activities of the socialist state of the whole people is exercised by the Communist Party, which now represents the people as a whole and acts on its behalf.

The Fortieth Anniversary of the October Revolution was a solemn and joyful occasion. The Soviet people had every reason to

be happy and proud. The celebration in Moscow was attended by representatives of all the socialist countries and sixty-four foreign Communist and Workers' Parties, as well as hundreds of visitors from abroad, many of whom had been in the Soviet Union on previous occasions.

Very soon after the Revolution Lenin spoke on one occasion of the tremendous tasks confronting the Communist Party and the Soviet people, and in this connection recalled some famous lines of Nekrasov, nineteenth-century Russian poet, in which he spoke of Russia as being at once abundant and wretched, mighty and impotent. And, voicing the will of the Bolsheviks, Lenin proclaimed their "... unbending determination to ensure that at any price Russia ceases to be wretched and impotent and becomes mighty and abundant in the full meaning of these words".¹

This was largely achieved during the first four decades of Soviet rule. In 1913 the industrial output of the United States was 14.5 times that of Russia by volume and 21.4 per capita, but in 1958 that lead had shrunk to 2 and 2.5, respectively. In regard to certain important items of industrial output, such as iron ore, petroleum, coal, steel, cast iron and cement, the Soviet Union had forged ahead of the United States both in pace of growth and absolute increase.

The English *Times*, which cannot be suspected of pro-socialist sympathies, wrote, in October 1957, as follows: "When the Winter Palace was being stormed and the All-Russian Congress of Soviets met to proclaim the victory, the date on the Russian calendar was October 25. Russia—then thirteen days behind the western calendar—was a hundred years behind western industry and at least a hundred and fifty years behind in her political and social structure. Now the Soviet Union and its Allies are having their grand stock-taking as they prepare for the fortieth anniversary of the Great October Revolution on November 7. They have certainly much to rejoice in. There is no country in the world that has not been changed in some way by the swing in the balance of forces. The upsurge of Russia to be the second greatest industrial Power and possibly the strongest militarily; the spread of Communist rule over China and eastern Europe; the growing impact of the Soviet Union, as a State, in the Middle East and Asia; the growth and diligence of Communist parties—all these forces have shaped the world, and no one can say that they have reached their peak."²

Those first four decades of Soviet rule that elapsed between the storming of the Winter Palace and the bold venture into outer

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 160.

² *The Times*, October 25, 1957, p. 11.

space were a truly heroic epoch in the history of mankind, ending in the complete and final victory of socialism in the USSR. Standing on the threshold of its fifth decade, the Soviet Union began to consider the targets immediately involved in the building of a communist society.

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME OF COMMUNIST CONSTRUCTION

Programme of Communist Construction

"The only scientific distinction between socialism and communism," wrote Lenin, "is that the first term implies the first stage of the new society arising out of capitalism, while the second implies the next and higher stage."¹ Having its origin in socialism, communism represents a continuation and a development of socialism. Taking into account the actual possibilities of the Soviet society, the Twenty-First Congress of the CPSU, held in 1959, adopted a seven-year plan of economic development covering the years 1959-65, which would initiate a period of communist construction. During this period the Congress proposed to complete the building of the material and technical basis of communism, to achieve the development of communist social relations, and to accomplish the moral education of the Soviet people in accordance with communist principles.

A new, third Party Programme was worked out by a special commission, approved by a plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, and submitted in 1961 for public discussion with the participation of some 73,000,000 men and women, after which it was finally adopted by the Twenty-Second Congress. The new Party Programme examines the ways and means of building communism and gives a detailed description of the communist society that is to be.

The Congress opened on October 17, 1961, in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses, only recently built. Five thousand delegates attended, representing a CPSU membership nearly ten million strong. Delegations from the Communist and Workers' Parties of eighty countries were present. Its agenda included important problems bearing on the further development of the world's first socialist country and the adoption of the programme of communist construction in the USSR.

The new Party Programme is an outstanding document reflecting a creative Marxist-Leninist approach, summarising the vast expe-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 420.

rience accumulated in the building of socialism in the USSR and other socialist countries, and outlining the road to communism.

The Programme sets as the main aim the creation of the material and technical basis of communism, which implies complete electrification of the country and all-out improvement on this basis of production organisation and plant; complex mechanisation of production processes and increasing automation of such processes; increased utilisation of chemistry in the national economy; and the organic wedding of science and industry. This should raise the country's productive forces to a level that will assure an abundance of goods and services.

A gradual merging of the two present forms of socialist ownership will do away with the differences between classes, and workers and peasants will belong to a classless society. The essential differences currently existing between town and country, as well as between manual and mental work, will be eradicated in the main, and economic and spiritual oneness of the various nations of the Soviet Union will increase. As Soviet democracy is developed and perfected and more and more Soviet citizens take part in government, social activities and production, the organs of state power will be gradually replaced by organs of public self-government.

The noble aims of the CPSU Programme are in line with the vital interests of all Soviet citizens, who have accepted it as a realistic programme of action to achieve a happy future or, to put it differently, to achieve communism, which stands for peace, endeavour, freedom, equality, brotherhood and happiness for all the peoples on earth.

Communist Labour Movement

The Soviet people took up the challenge of the seven-year plan with great enthusiasm. The workers of the Moscow railway marshalling yard, the very same yard that had initiated the communist week-end volunteer work movement called Subbotnik in the spring of 1919, launched, in October 1958, an emulation movement among the workers, perhaps the most impressive example of this enthusiasm, to win the title of a shock worker of communist labour or a communist labour team.

This initiative of the Moscow railwaymen was widely supported, and the communist labour movement spread rapidly all over the country. Numerous industrial plants, shops, farms and teams had earned the honorary title of collectives of communist labour.

There was yet another remarkable manifestation of a genuinely communist attitude towards work. This was a movement for



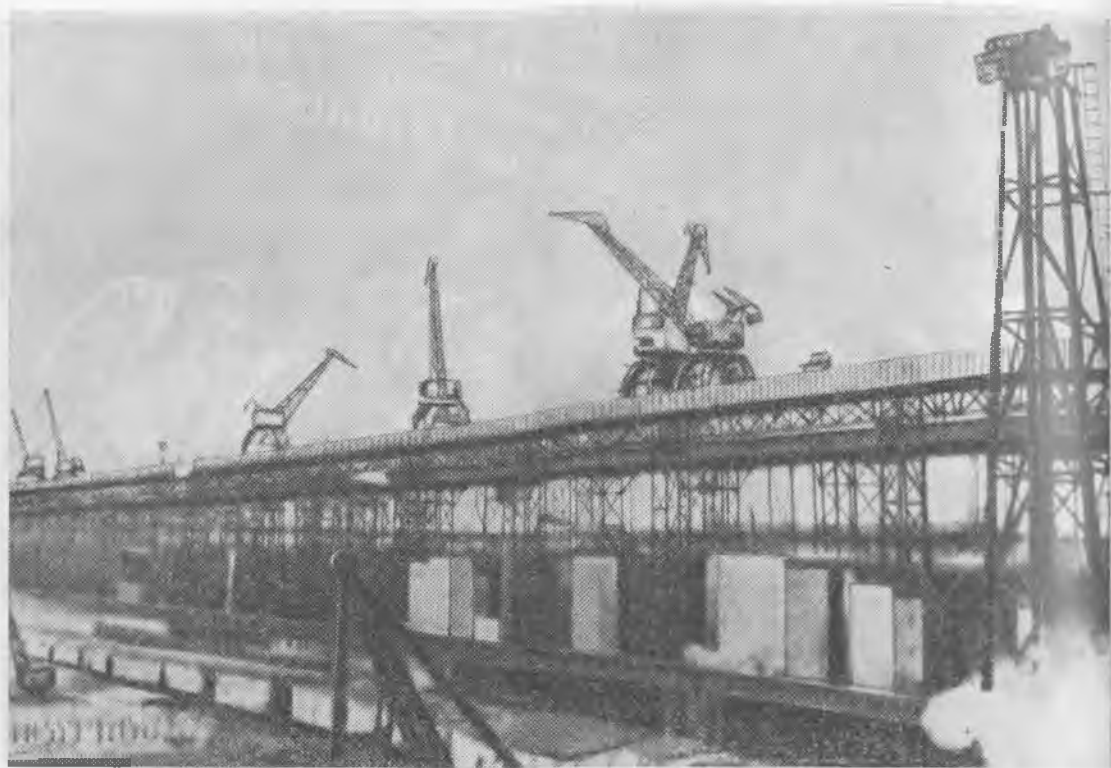
Valentina Gaganova and her brigade

leading industrial workers to help those teams, shops or plants that lagged behind. Here the initiative belonged to Valentina Gaganova, team leader at the Vyshny Volochok spinning factory. Hers was an expert team, earning very high wages, yet she deliberately had herself transferred to a less efficient team, at a sacrifice of wages, and in a short time helped it catch up and come to the fore. Gaganova's example was followed by tens of thousands of leading workers in industry, transport and agriculture.

Engineers and technicians also joined in the communist labour movement. This enthusiastic approach to their work on the part of workers, engineers and technicians made it possible to fulfil successfully the basic targets of the seven-year plan in respect of industry and transport.

National Economy in the Seven-Year Plan Period

This seven-year period witnessed a tremendous development of capital construction, primarily in the industrial field. The number of large industrial plants built and commissioned between



Kuibyshev Hydropower Station in construction

1959 and 1965 totalled more than 5,500. Total government investments in industry, transport, agriculture, housing, culture and services amounted to more than 200,000 million rubles or approximately as much as had been invested over the entire period of socialist construction.

Total industrial output showed an 84 per cent increase over the seven years instead of 80 per cent as planned, with heavy industry in the lead, as usual, showing a 96 per cent increase, while the output of consumer goods increased by 60 per cent.

Universal electrification also made giant strides. New power stations were commissioned one after another, each of greater capacity than the one before, such as the Votkinsk power station on the Kama (1,000,000 kw), the Volzhsky power station on the Volga (2,300,000 kw), and the Bratsk station on the Angara, the world's biggest (4,100,000 kw), not to speak of numerous others. The aggregate capacity of Soviet power stations amounted to 110,000,000 kw in 1965 and the total amount of electric energy generated to 507,000 million kwh. Substantial progress was made in the construction of atomic power stations, whose aggregate capacity reached 1,000,000 kw. Equally good headway was made in linking existing power stations into a single power grid.

In the metallurgical industry the seven-year plan was also fulfilled. The plan had called for 86-91 million tons of steel in

1965, and the actual output was 91,000,000 tons. An outstanding feat was performed by the builders of metallurgical works, in particular in building the works for the supply of large-diameter pipes for the construction of natural gas pipelines.

Construction of chemical plants was on a particularly large scale. In this a prominent role was played by members of the Komsomol, 160,000 of whom had volunteered to help in sweeping development of the chemical industry. Result—a 150 per cent increase of the annual output of chemicals at the end of the seven-year period.

There were important changes in the structure of the country's fuel budget. While the output of coal increased on the whole, the petroleum and especially the gas extracting industries developed at a more rapid rate. Large deposits of fuels with a high calory content were discovered in the Northern Urals and Central Asia. The oilfields of Siberia were opened up when, in March 1962, the first well at the backwoods village of Markovo on the Lena began to spout oil; 243,000,000 tons of oil were extracted in 1965, as compared with the 230,000,000-240,000,000 ton target set for the seven-year plan. And although the overall coal and gas output fell somewhat short of the targets, the country's fuel balance was substantially improved, for the share of petroleum and gas therein had risen from 32 per cent in 1958 to 52 per cent in 1965.

Electric and diesel traction were definitely in the lead on the country's railways by 1965. 71,000 kilometres of railway track were serviced by diesel and electric locomotives by the end of 1965, as against 20,600 in 1958.

All these various achievements helped the country attain the main objective of the seven-year plan, which was to forge ahead as far as possible in the economic competition with the leading capitalist countries. Average annual industrial growth rates were: in the USSR (1959-65)—9.1 per cent; the USA (1958-64)—3.9 per cent; Great Britain—3.5 per cent; France—5.6 per cent; and the FRG—6.3 per cent. In 1957, Soviet industrial production equalled 47 per cent of that of the USA, but in 1963, only six years later, it had risen to about 65 per cent thereof. Meanwhile the Soviet Union had outstripped the United States in the production of iron ore, coke, coal, metal-cutting machine tools, diesel and electric locomotives, tractors, grain combine-harvesters, cement, reinforced concrete elements, woollen and flaxen textiles, etc.

There were, nevertheless, some serious shortcomings in the operation of Soviet industry. There was considerable loss of time in putting into operation the capacities of new industrial plants, which resulted in serious underproduction of manufactured goods.

As for the quality of many kinds of goods, this was still below that of foreign makes.

There were serious miscalculations in industrial planning and management. Thus, a system of management based on the territorial principle had been introduced in 1957, that is to say, the functions of management were transferred to the Economic Councils put in charge of the various economic regions. These Economic Councils made a certain contribution by promoting specialisation and co-operation in production, amalgamation of minor plants, etc. On balance, however, the reform did not prove worth-while. The time had come to effect a radical improvement in the planning and management of the national economy and to introduce greater economic stimuli in the sphere of socialised production.

Agriculture Marks Time

In industry as a whole the targets of the seven-year plan had been achieved; but things had worked out very differently in the field of agriculture. Thus, while the seven-year plan envisaged high growth rates in agriculture, capital investments therein were inadequate. As a matter of fact they were even below those of the past few years. The material and technological infrastructure of agriculture had been strengthened to some extent under the seven-year plan, but collective and state farms were nevertheless inadequately provided with farm machinery and implements and what they did have was not efficiently used. This was particularly true of animal husbandry. There were serious shortcomings in planning the distribution of crops and in the regulations governing state purchases of farm produce. Weather conditions were another unfavourable factor. They were bad in 1959 and 1960, but the greatest damage to crops was suffered in 1963 when a severe winter was followed by an everlong spring and then by a parching summer drought. Government grain purchases in 1963 amounted to no more than 44,800,000 tons, or 12,000,000 tons less than in 1962, which made it necessary to buy a considerable quantity of grain abroad.

October 1964

Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee

A Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee convened in October 1964 played an important role in solving a number of political and economic issues of prime importance. The meeting

condemned subjectivism and voluntarism in making decisions on economic issues and excessive use of administrative methods in management. It relieved N. S. Khrushchev of his duties as First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and elected L. I. Brezhnev to that office, while A. N. Kosygin was appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR as Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

This Plenary Meeting was a signal milepost in the country's development and exercised a beneficial influence on all aspects of the activities of both the Communist Party and the Soviet state. Its decisions served to accelerate construction of the material and technical basis of communism. Of no less moment were the decisions of the Plenary Meeting of September 1965, regarding improvements in industrial management and planning and increasing economic incentives to stimulate production. In industry, the territorial principle of administration was abandoned in favour of administering each branch of industry through a special ministry fully responsible for the development of all aspects of that particular branch on the basis of the most modern achievements of science and technology. In addition, the decisions provided for greater functional and economic independence for enterprises, abolition of superfluous regimentation, adequate appropriations for developing and improving production, and extensive use of such important economic levers as profits, prices, bonuses and credit.

The main purpose of these measures is to emphasise economic methods as all-important in industrial management.

The questions of further developing agriculture were discussed by the March 1965 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, which adopted a programme of economic measures designed to accelerate the development of this important branch of the national economy. This programme provided for bigger investments, a substantially greater output of machinery, wide electrification of rural areas, increased use of chemicals in agriculture, and continued development of irrigation and land improvement. Improvements were introduced in the system of planning state purchases of farm produce and conditions of the sale of farm produce to the state were made more advantageous for the collective farmers. Important decisions were also taken to improve state- and collective-farm management and to strengthen collective-farm democracy. Much greater independence was granted state and collective farms in the field of economics, production planning, distribution of revenues, etc.

These decisions were received with deep satisfaction by the farmers.

Living Standards Grow

Before 1960 a seven- and six-hour working day had been introduced for all workers and employees, while wages, rather than decrease, markedly increased, as, for instance, by 12 and 11 per cent, respectively, in the chemical and steel industries. Minimum wage rates were raised once more, which meant a further narrowing of the gap between the high and low income brackets. The government consistently reduced tax rates; as of October 1, 1961, tax-exempt minimum wages were set at 60 rubles. In the summer of 1964 a decision was taken to introduce a scheme of pensions and allowances for collective farmers, as well as wage increases in respect of personnel working in the sphere of education, health, municipal services and utilities, trade, catering and certain other service branches of the national economy. One-fourth of all workers and employees received an average wage increase of 21 per cent.

Of paramount importance was the continuing growth of the social consumption funds, which assured a concurrent expansion of free schooling, medical care, pensions and allowances schemes, paid vacations, etc. Thus, in 1963, some 26 million men and women drew pensions from the state and, partially, from collective farms. Over 5 million students of various special educational institutions received scholarship grants and were provided with living quarters. Some 10 million children were cared for in crèches and kindergartens. Over 9 million working people, and their children, vacationed or received treatment in rest homes or sanatoria or Young Pioneer camps, the relative expenses being covered either entirely or partially out of the social insurance or collective-farm funds. In 1963, significantly, private savings bank accounts totalled nearly 14,000 million rubles, as against only 3,800 million in 1953.

As real wages grew, so did the purchasing power of the population, which meant an increasing volume of sales of high-quality consumption goods.

Housing construction expanded as never before: over the period 1959-65 roughly as much housing was built as over all the preceding years since the October Revolution.

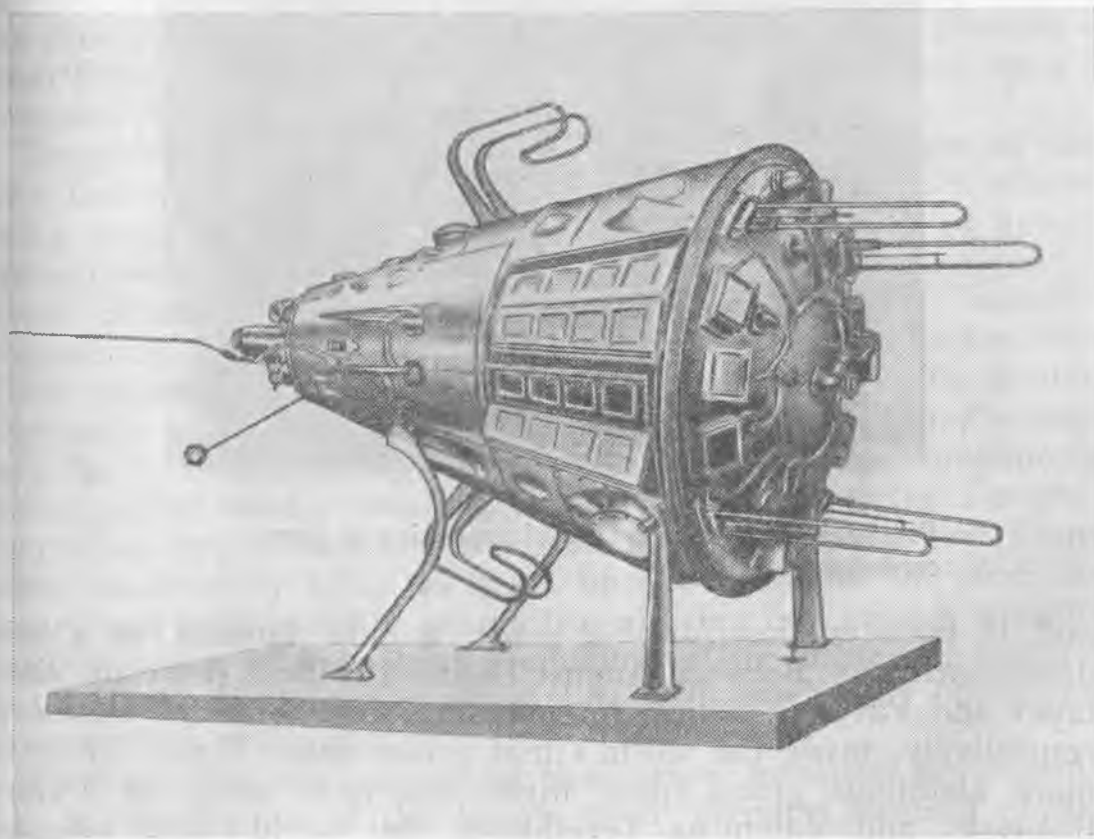
Generally healthier working and living conditions were bringing down the death rate. The average life span in the USSR was somewhat over 70 years. The birth rate continued to be high, and there was thus a substantial population increase. In 1965 the country's population topped 230,000,000 which meant an increment of somewhat more than 20,000,000 over the past seven-year period.

Outer Space Exploration

Among the outstanding achievements of Soviet science and technology over the period 1959-65, its exploits in the exploration of outer space were the most remarkable.

Following the launching by the Soviet Union of the world's first Sputnik in 1957, the space exploration programme continued to expand from year to year. In September 1959, a Soviet space rocket delivered a metal plaque bearing the national emblem of the USSR to the surface of the Moon. And a month later a Soviet automatic space station photographed the far side of the Moon, which it televised to the Earth.

A culminating achievement in this space exploration programme was the history-making flight of a man in space. On April 12, 1961, the spaceship *Vostok* carried Yuri Gagarin, pilot-cosmonaut, member of the Communist Party, on the world's first Earth-orbiting flight, lasting 108 minutes, and made a safe landing in the designated area. News of this first venture of a human being into outer space caused a world-wide sensation. On August 6, 1961, Gagarin's exploit was repeated by Herman Titov, in the spaceship *Vostok-2*. After circling the Earth 17 times in 25 hours



Soviet artificial satellite Sputnik



Pilot-cosmonaut Y. A. Gagarin speaking at press conference

and 18 minutes, the *Vostok-2* made a safe landing at a predetermined spot. Between August 11 and 15, 1962, Andrian Nikolayev and Pavel Popovich, in spaceships *Vostok-3* and *Vostok-4*, respectively, made the world's first group space flight. An even more ambitious group space flight was next made by Valery Bykovsky and Valentina Tereshkova, the world's first woman-cosmonaut, who remained aloft, respectively, 119 and 71 hours. In October 1964, the *Voskhod*, a piloted spaceship, was put in

orbit around the Earth, carrying on board Vladimir Komarov, the commander, Konstantin Feoktistov, a researcher, and Boris Yegorov, a physician.

On March 18, 1965, the spaceship *Voskhod-2*, piloted by Pavel Belyaev, the commander, and pilot-cosmonaut Alexei Leonov, was put in orbit. During this flight Alexei Leonov, wearing a special space-suit, became the first man in the world to step out of the ship into outer space.

Higher Efficiency of Socialised Production Envisaged

The Twenty-Third Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, held in Moscow in late March and early April 1966, drew up a programme embodying the tasks facing the Soviet people in the ensuing period. The resolutions adopted by the Congress contained a penetrating analysis of the current stage of development of the Soviet society as well as of the processes and phenomena of the international scene. The Congress further approved the proposals of the Party Central Committee on improving the forms and methods of national economic management and the new system of planning and economic stimuli; and ratified the directives on the new (eighth) Five-Year Economic Development Plan for 1966-70 envisaging continued rapid growth for all branches of the national economy.

Tangible successes were recorded in 1966, the first year of the new five-year plan, the industrial production plan as a whole being achieved and even exceeded. Notably high rates of development were shown by those industries which, in current conditions, determine the level of technological progress, namely, engineering, chemistry, metallurgy, electric power production, etc. Many industrial enterprises were commissioned, such as the Bratsk aluminium works, the Aragatsk perlite plant (the country's largest), the Primorsk mining and chemical complex, the Novolipetsk metallurgical works, the Izhevsk automobile plant, the Dneprodzerzhinsk hydro-electric power station, to name but a few. Steps were concurrently taken to speed up production in the food industry and light industry generally and bring into greater equilibrium the rates of growth of production of the means of production and of consumer goods, in line with the policy of raising the standards of living.

That was also the purpose of the various measures implementing the resolutions of the March 1965 Plenary Meeting of the CC CPSU relating to agriculture. During 1966 the great majority of collective farms changed to the system of fixed monthly wages,

with a resulting increase of efficiency in agricultural production. Other important measures were the introduction of higher state purchase prices, additional bonuses for deliveries of produce to the state in excess of the plan, etc. A record crop was harvested in 1966, greater than any since the birth of the Soviet state. All this went far to put an end to the perennial lag in agriculture and to ensure the success of the economic reform initiated in 1966, which was designed to raise socialist production to a new and higher level in line with the demands made upon it by the current scientific and technological revolution.

Soviet achievements in the field of science and technology have received universal recognition. One such achievement relates to selenology. In February 1966, *Luna-9*, a Soviet automatic cosmic station, made a soft landing on the surface of the Moon—the first in the history of mankind—and made a series of radio and television broadcasts of exceptional scientific interest from the Earth's natural satellite. In April 1966, the station *Luna-10* was placed—again for the first time in history—in a satellite orbit around the Moon, and steady radio communication was maintained with it. Still another automatic station, *Luna-13*, made another soft landing on the Moon in December of the same year and collected new scientific data of the kind necessary to prepare manned planetary flights.

Soviet Union Marks 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution

Magnificent achievements in all fields of human endeavour marked the 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution, filling the Soviet people with a feeling of legitimate pride in the historic feat of the Soviet state, which had transformed pre-revolutionary Russia, a backward agrarian country, into an economically and socially advanced modern state. Despite its limitless resources, tsarist Russia's share in the world's industrial production amounted in 1913 to slightly over 4 per cent and to a bare 3 per cent in 1917. During the 50 years of Soviet rule that share jumped to 20 per cent. To put it differently, the output of the Soviet Union's socialist industry in 1967 was 73 times that of the tsarist Russia of 50 years ago. Such a rate of growth—both rapid and sustained—was made possible by the application of socialist methods in the national economy. If we take the period from 1929 to 1967, for example, we shall see that the average annual increment of industrial output in the USSR amounted to 11.1 per cent as against only 4 per cent in the USA and 2.5 per cent in Great Britain and France. In the USSR the 1967 output equalled that of the entire first post-war five-year period, i.e., 1946-50.

These figures will be seen in a truer perspective when we recall the conditions in which the Soviet people fought to build a socialist economy. Of the 50 years that elapsed since the October Revolution over 20 were either wasted on wars waged against the Soviet Union by the imperialist powers, which brought incalculable destruction in their wake, or else devoted to the work of rehabilitation. What the Soviet people actually did, however, was to build what was essentially a new industry, second only to that of the United States, with which, incidentally, it had been catching up year by year. Besides fully meeting the needs of the national economy, Soviet industry produced a large volume of commodities destined, within the framework of economic assistance, for other countries, notably the socialist states and the developing countries of Asia and Africa.

Some 400 large industrial plants were commissioned during the jubilee year, including the Bratsk hydro-electric power station with a capacity of 4.1 million kw, currently the world's biggest. The first two power units of the Krasnoyarsk hydro-electric power station with a designed capacity of 6 million kw were put into operation. On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution the world's biggest blast-furnace was commissioned at the Krivoi Rog iron and steel mill. And a gas pipeline connecting Central Asia with the central areas of the Soviet Union, 2,750 kilometres long, with an annual capacity of 10,500 million cubic metres, was put into operation, bringing gas from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to the Urals and on to Moscow and Leningrad. Other gas and oil pipelines were under construction to contribute to the improvement of the country's fuel balance in line with the requirements of technological development. In 1967 the importance of oil and gas in this balance reached 55 per cent, as against 38.4 per cent in 1960.

Impressive gains were made in the metallurgical industry where, in 1967, the output of steel surpassed 100 million tons—for the first time in the country's history. Coal output reached 600 million tons in 1967; and the target quotas of the most important kinds of fuel were reached before the year was out. High rates of growth were characteristic also of the instrument-building, chemical, food and consumer goods industries. During 1967 the effects of the economic reform began to make themselves felt, with planning now on a strictly scientific basis, ensuring greater efficiency in the introduction of scientific and technological discoveries and inventions. Some 7,000 enterprises, accounting for 40 per cent of aggregate industrial production, had changed over to the new system by the end of the year. All of the indices of their activities were higher than those of the enterprises working under the old system. Many new lines of high-grade goods were put

into mass production. Comprehensive mechanisation and automation of production processes were speeded up.

No less successful was the year 1967 in the field of agriculture. Despite some adverse weather conditions the grain crop was even better than the record crop of 1966. The gross grain crop was 13 per cent bigger than the annual average for the preceding five years. Production of the basic industrial crops was also greatly increased. Taking agriculture as a whole, farm production may be said to have tripled over the past 50 years of Soviet rule.

Let us take a closer look at the achievements in the field of science and technology during the jubilee year 1967. June saw the launching of a space rocket bearing the automatic interplanetary station *Venus-4*. In October, after covering a distance of 350 million kilometres, *Venus-4* reached the surface of that planet. Even more important for space science was the linkup and subsequent separation, in orbit, of the two terrestrial satellites *Cosmos-186* and *Cosmos-188*, achieved—once again for the first time in history—toward the end of October. Of importance for nuclear research was the commissioning of the world's biggest proton accelerator at the Institute of High-Energy Physics, which has produced a 70,000 million electron-volt proton beam. The achievements of Soviet scientists in the respective fields of rocketry, aviation, electronics, energetics, instrument-making and so on have received wide publicity.

It must be emphasised, however, that these efforts to advance industry, agriculture and science have never been an end in itself: they were always directed towards meeting more fully the material and spiritual needs of the people. The September 1967 Plenary Meeting of the CC CPSU drew up a programme of action in this respect, and minimum wage rates were raised and paid vacations extended for certain categories of workers, and pension regulations improved. Over 50 million were affected by these measures. Much, also, was done in the housing field. Housing construction during the 1950s and 1960s grew at a higher pace than in any other country. Nearly half the country's population either moved into new flats or otherwise improved their housing conditions between 1957 and 1967. It should be pointed out, incidentally, that a family's rent was no higher than 4-5 per cent of its income. Over those 50 years of Soviet rule the real income of Soviet workers increased by a factor of 6.5, that of the peasantry by a factor of 8.5. A five-day working week with two days off was introduced in 1967.

Such, in brief, were the achievements the Soviet people could point to with pride on the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution. Many foreign guests representing 95 countries gathered in Moscow to attend the celebration.

As a prologue to the celebration came the unveiling of a monument to Lenin, founder of the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet state, in the Kremlin, where he had lived and worked during the last years of his life. On November 3, 1967, a solemn joint meeting of the CC CPSU, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation opened at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses in honour of the 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution. Assembled at this meeting were those whose heroism and dedicated endeavour had brought signal victories in battle and peaceful construction. L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CC CPSU, read the report "Fifty Years of Socialist Achievement", in which he reviewed at length the road of struggle and victory the Soviet people had travelled in those past fifty years and gave a penetrating analysis of the motive forces back of the historic achievements of the Soviet Union. The speaker outlined the tasks that had to be fulfilled in order to make fuller use of the tremendous opportunities opened up by the socialist system.

The heads of foreign delegations spoke of the admiration evoked by the successes of the Soviet people, which inspired revolutionaries the world over to wage war on oppression and exploitation. All of the speakers wished the Soviet people further success in their work of socialist and communist construction.

On November 5, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Council of Ministers published a declaration addressed to the people of the Soviet Union, which reviewed the road that had been travelled and expressed the firm conviction that new impressive advances would be made along that road to communism. A new order was established to honour the 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution, to be known as the Order of the October Revolution. First to be awarded the new order were Leningrad, cradle of the Revolution, and Moscow, the nation's capital. Other orders and medals were awarded in honour of the anniversary to a large number of those who had taken an active part in the Revolution and the civil war. Over 128,000 men and women were thus honoured, including several foreign veterans of the Revolution. The celebrations were a manifestation of the international unity of the revolutionaries throughout the world.

The Struggle for Peace and Security

True to the Leninist principles of foreign policy, confirmed in the resolutions adopted by the Twenty-Third Congress of the CPSU, the Soviet Union continued a consistent struggle for peace

among nations and in support of all peoples fighting against oppression at the hands of imperialism and reaction. There were definite successes in the Soviet Union's efforts to secure peaceful co-existence among nations. Nevertheless, in the course of 1967 the subversive activities of the imperialist powers once again increased international tension. Contributing factors were the obstinate refusal of the US ruling circles to end their war of aggression in Vietnam and withdraw their troops from that country; and the Israeli aggression against the Arab states, coupled with the continued occupation of the Arab lands seized in June 1967.

The Soviet Union consistently stood by the principle that every nation should be entitled to freedom and independence. It insisted that the savage US aggression in Vietnam should be stopped, and, in line with this policy, it was giving the Vietnamese people free massive aid in the shape of modern arms, supplies, equipment, food, etc.

Full support was given by the Soviet Union to the United Arab Republic, Syria and the other Arab countries that have been the targets of Israeli aggression. The USSR, together with other socialist countries, took steps, in June 1967, to force Israel to halt military operations: they broke off diplomatic relations with that state and called for a sharp denunciation of its actions first by the Security Council and, later, by the UN General Assembly, convened at the request of the Soviet Union. In November, the Security Council adopted a resolution requiring Israel to withdraw from the UAR, Syrian and Jordanian territories occupied in contravention of international law. That resolution was largely the result of the efforts of Soviet diplomacy. The Soviet Union supplied the UAR with the necessary weapons to withstand the possible Israeli acts of aggression.

Soviet policy won the approval of progressive forces throughout Europe and had the support of sober-minded business circles. The Soviet Union and France drew nearer together on a number of controversial international problems; relations between the two countries were now an example of peaceful co-existence between states with differing social systems.

The Soviet Union built its policy on the necessity of facing the actual situation prevailing in post-war Europe, on the necessity, above all, of recognising the inviolability of state frontiers and the existence of two sovereign and equal German states. In 1966 the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Treaty countries proposed that an All-European Conference be convened to discuss questions of European security and peaceful coexistence with a view to consolidating peace on the continent.

Chapter Eight

THE WORLD SOCIALIST SYSTEM

A NEW WAY OF LIFE

People's Democracies in Central and Southeast Europe

The final battles of the Second World War were still to be fought when already a number of countries in Central and Southeast Europe had begun to build a new way of life for themselves; for the moment was propitious: the Soviet armies had inflicted a smashing defeat on the main armed forces of Nazi Germany. Thus, during 1944 and 1945, the peoples of Poland, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Albania, no longer under German occupation, put an end to landlord and capitalist dominance and took over the state power. In this manner there appeared in the middle of Europe several states which took for themselves the generic name of "people's democracies". In their early years these countries were ruled under the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry.

Reactionary statesmen of the capitalist world still insist that the revolutions in Central and Southeast Europe were brought in on the points of Soviet bayonets and were not a matter of historic development. Actually, such assertions are utterly false.

The peoples of Central and Southeast Europe had suffered cruelly under their old regimes. The countries' wealth, that is, their land, minerals, factories, banks and important shops, belonged to a small clique of wealthy proprietors who ruthlessly exploited the working people. The ruling classes had brought most of these countries to a point where they were entirely dependent on the major imperialist states; so that the working people had to live under a double oppression—domestic and foreign. The contradictions that had been rending the societies of the countries under discussion had been brought to a climax by the Second World War, the entire burden of which was carried by the working people.

Life—for the working people—had become unbearable. The daily bread ration had dwindled to 150-200 grammes. A working day of 12-14 hours was the rule; and a truly convict-labour regime was practised in factory and farm. Enslaved by German nazis or Italian fascists the peoples of such countries as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Albania faced the possibility of physical extermination in jails or concentration camps. Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria had lost their national independence and fallen into German servitude.

However, the peoples of these countries rose against the invaders and their local collaborationists. Led by the working class and directed by the Communists, the patriotic forces in the countries of the Central and Southeast Europe threw off, with the help of the Soviet armies, the double yoke of the invaders and home-bred fascists.

The workers, working peasants and tradesmen were initially joined by some of the wealthy elements, such as industrialists, merchants, bankers, high-salaried officials, kulaks, etc., in the state administration of the People's Democracies.

As the war drew to its close, the plunder and pillage practised both by the invaders and their local allies caused discontent among a considerable section of the bourgeoisie in the countries in question, which made them join with the working people in a movement to drive out the invaders. Bourgeois political parties thus built up substantial influence among the less well-to-do segments of the population, particularly among artisans, tradesmen and small peasants. As a rule these bourgeois parties used such popular slogans as "Freedom", "Democracy", "Genuine government by the people", etc., to camouflage their true intentions; and there were many who simply could not yet make out who their genuine defenders were, the parties of the working people or the bourgeoisie.

The establishment of People's Democracies brought many changes into the life of people. The new governments granted the working people freedom of speech, press, assembly and organisation and, moreover, placed the needful facilities at their disposal. Fascist political and military organisations were dissolved and prohibited. Worker control was established in industrial enterprises.

The reforms introduced after the establishment of the new governments went from the beginning farther than reforms under bourgeois-democratic governments; for besides destroying fascism and all vestiges of feudal relations they set restrictions on the exploitation of the working people by the big and middle bourgeoisie.

Peasants Get Land

Important changes came into the lives of the peasants, too, who made up the majority of the population in the People's Democracies. Land reforms introduced in Albania, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia between 1944 and 1946 took land away from the gentry and handed it over to the working peasants. This reform did away with landlords as a reactionary class, and the peasants could now work entirely for themselves. In Czechoslovakia, large landed estates were expropriated in the spring of 1948.

Bulgaria, unlike the other countries, had had no landed estates owned by the gentry. Here landless and short-of-land peasants were given, in March 1946, lands expropriated from kulaks, usurers, profiteers and the church.

When the tasks which the anti-fascist segment of the bourgeoisie of the People's Democracies had sought to accomplish jointly with the working people (i.e., destroying fascism, securing national independence and putting through an agrarian reform) had actually been accomplished, the bourgeoisie and the working class came to a parting of the ways. The working class and its allies were out to develop the revolution, that is, to further restrict and in the event eliminate the exploiting classes and strengthen the government of the working people; whereas the bourgeoisie were satisfied to go no further than the anti-feudal, bourgeois-democratic reforms and anxious to prevent a socialist revolution.

Bourgeoisie and Landlords Offer Resistance

Elements of the exploiting classes, both those who had been put out of business and those who still carried on, made strenuous efforts to maintain their positions. The landlords endeavoured to get back their estates, using to this end the influence which the bourgeois parties were able to exert in the state administration. The old civil servants still entrenched in the administration did everything in their power to frustrate the purging of reactionary officials who were sabotaging economic reconstruction after the ravages of the war. Many capitalists, working through professional profiteers, sold goods in the black market, making huge profits and incidentally contributing to the process of inflation; and the working people, short of food, clothes and shelter, had to foot the bill.

Reactionary elements were actively aided by the monopolies of the USA, Great Britain and other capitalist countries. Under-



Demonstrators at Bucharest demand ousting of reactionaries from government

ground terrorist groups, espionage, subversion and economic sabotage—such were the weapons widely used by the domestic enemy and their foreign patrons in their struggle against the people's governments. In Poland, over 20,000 Communists and members of other democratic organisations were struck down by counter-revolutionary bands during the years when the people's democratic form of government was taking root and gathering strength.

Under the direction of the Communist Parties, the working people fought back with determination against the encroachments of the bourgeois and landlord reactionaries. At numerous meetings, assemblies and demonstrations workers and peasants pledged themselves to prevent any return of requisitioned estates, clear all reactionary elements out of the civil service, and deal ruthlessly with terrorists, profiteers and saboteurs of the national economies. As the people increased their pressure, reactionary ministers, one after another, began giving up their posts.

Reactionary Conspiracies Collapse

During January-May 1947, an anti-republican conspiracy headed by Ferenc Nagy, Béla Varga and others was uncovered and dealt with in Hungary. The plot had aimed at overthrowing the popular-democratic government and restoring bourgeois-land-

lord domination. It had drawn support from among the expropriated landlords, urban bourgeoisie and kulaks. Help had been expected from the foreign imperialists, notably British and American.

During the summer of that same year 1947 a reactionary plot was uncovered in Rumania. It came out at the trial that the members of the conspiracy, headed by Y. Maniu, leader of the National-Tsaranist (National-Peasant) Party, had plotted to overthrow the government and had received active support from the American and British intelligence services.

A similar complete failure was the fate of an attempted counter-revolutionary putsch in Czechoslovakia. Powerless to defeat the revolution in open battle, the reactionaries, here too, had secretly armed themselves and made plans to seize important strategic installations in the capital and elsewhere throughout the country.

This conspiracy was traced to certain capitalist countries, drawing active support, notably, from the Vatican. In February 1948, twelve reactionary bourgeois ministers demonstratively handed in their resignation. This was to have served as a signal for the putsch. The ministers had an idea that their action would cause the fall of the government and they would then be able to set up a new one, without the participation of Communists and other progressive statesmen.

The Czechoslovak people, however, struck back vigorously at the reactionaries. Committees of action were organised by the workers, artisans and working peasants to maintain revolutionary order. A workers' militia was organised at industrial plants to assure their safety. A huge meeting assembled in Staromesto Square, in Prague, on February 21, 1948, showed that the people were determined to make an end of reactionary plotting and placed full confidence in the Communist Party.

Popular pressure compelled President Beneš to accept the ministers' resignation and give his approval to a government formed by Klement Gottwald, leader of the Communist Party, now reinforced by more proponents of Czechoslovakia's further democratisation. The new government enjoyed the full support of a people resolved that there should be no return of the old order. In sum, the events of February 1948 served to strengthen the people's democratic system of government and to establish a working-class dictatorship.

Bourgeois Parties' Influence Ebbs

The exposure of all these reactionary conspiracies seriously damaged the prestige and influence of the bourgeois and kulak

parties. More and more people came to realise that their slogans were just so much camouflage calculated to conceal the desire of the bourgeoisie to save their possessions and maintain the kind of order which favoured luxurious living for a small fraction of the population at the expense of the vast majority. This loss of influence among the people cut the ground from under the representatives of the bourgeois parties in the parliaments, governments, ministries, leading bodies of public organisations, etc.

In the course of 1947 and 1948, in all of the European People's Democracies state power was completely taken over by the working class and the closely allied working peasantry, and their governments now functioned as proletarian dictatorships.

The process of elimination of bourgeois representatives from government bodies was a comparatively peaceful one. The bourgeoisie did not risk taking up arms in defence of their positions: they sensed that people would not support them. In these circumstances the working class and its allies saw it fit to resolve the contradictions within the society by peaceful means, without resorting to armed warfare against the propertied classes.

People Take Over Industrial Plants

As they pressed the fight for political power, the working people proceeded to take over industrial plants, banks, railways, etc. A great majority of industrial plants in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Rumania was transferred, during 1947 and 1948, from private to state ownership, that is to say, ownership by the people as a whole. In Poland, Albania and Yugoslavia this transfer had been carried out earlier, between 1944 and 1946.

Proprietors of minor trading establishments and workshops were allowed to keep them.

In this manner, after eliminating the landlord class the People's Democracies eliminated the big and middle urban capitalists as a class and proceeded to tackle the task of building a socialist society in which all citizens would enjoy equal rights in practice and not merely in words, and where each shares the good things of life proportionately to the labour performed.

Throughout the Second World War the Communists in the countries under discussion had fought staunchly against fascism and actively stood up in the post-war years for the rights and demands of the working people. This had won them great prestige among the masses. And it was natural, when socialist construction was undertaken in these countries, that the Communist and Workers' Parties concerned should take the organisation and direction of this work in their hands.

German Democratic Republic Formed

The defeat of nazi Germany in the Second World War brought freedom to the German people after twelve years of nazi rule. According to the decisions of the Potsdam Conference of the Soviet, American and British leaders never again was nazism to be allowed in Germany. A new, democratic Germany was to arise on the rubble of the nazi Reich, which would live in friendship with all nations.

The decisions of the Potsdam Conference, however, were carried out consistently only in East Germany, which was under Soviet military occupation. Here, as in the other People's Democracies, the country's destinies became the concern of the working people.

The nazi party and its affiliated organisations were outlawed. In 1945 landlords, as a class, were eliminated and the requisitioned land was turned over to short-of-land farmers and farm workers. Industrial plants, banks, railways, etc., belonging to important capitalists or active nazis were confiscated and declared the property of the people.

Reconstruction of the demolished towns and villages was begun by the German working people under the direction of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SUPG) formed in 1946 as a result of the fusion of the German Communist Party and the German Social-Democratic Party in the Soviet occupation zone and with the aid of the Soviet military administration.

In West Germany, occupied by American, British and French troops, things worked out differently; for the Western powers purposely disregarded the decisions of the Potsdam Conference and helped the big capitalist monopolies get back on their feet. Various reactionary organisations began to stir again, while organisations and individuals who fought for a unified democratic Germany became the object of persecution.

What the governing circles of the United States, Great Britain and France wanted was a Germany split in two and its western part turned into a staging ground for operations against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. An agreement was reached between the Western leadership and the West German imperialists, and the Federal Republic of Germany was set up, in September 1949, as a separate state, with its capital in Bonn. The heads of the FRG made no secret of their hostility to the socialist countries nor of their intention to re-establish, by force of arms, Germany's former power and repossess the territories which had been returned to Poland, Czechoslovakia and other countries. Those in power then in Bonn proclaimed it their intention to "unite" Eastern Germany with the FRG.

This situation left the working people of East Germany no alternative but to unite all the patriotic forces and create a genuinely democratic state that could assure the security of the progressive achievements of the people of East Germany and fight for the creation of a united peaceful and democratic Germany.

Thus, there was proclaimed on October 7, 1949, a German Democratic Republic. This was an event of supreme significance for the German people. For the first time in its history a state had been created whose foreign and domestic policies were conceived in the interests of the people at large instead of those of a small clique of exploiters.

Wilhelm Pieck, Chairman of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, prominent in the German and international workers' movements, became, by election, the first president of the GDR. Otto Grotewohl, exponent of the finest traditions of German social-democracy, who had spent long years fighting to heal the split in the German workers' movement, was appointed prime minister of the Republic. Walter Ulbricht, secretary of the SUPG Central Committee and staunch champion of the German people's freedom, was appointed first vice-premier.

People's Revolution Wins in China

When the Soviet forces defeated Japan's Kwantung Army the outcome of the war between China's patriotic forces and the Japanese invaders became a foregone conclusion. By September 1945, the Japanese had been driven out of all the Chinese provinces they had occupied.

When the Second World War ended, China found herself split into two camps. Three-fourths of the country were controlled by the Chiang Kai-shek government, which had at its disposal an army of several million, a considerable part of which had been trained and equipped by the Americans. Elsewhere in the liberated areas a people's government was in control, supported by the vast majority of the population, the People's Army of Liberation and the people's volunteer corps. These main striking forces of the revolution were led by the Chinese Communist Party.

In 1946, the Chiang Kai-shek clique, egged on by the comprador bourgeoisie, started military operations against the People's Army of Liberation, which developed into a civil war that went on for more than three years. While it lasted, \$6,000 million-worth of arms, ammunition and battle equipment was supplied to the Kuomintang forces by the Americans. Nothing, however, could now save the day for the Chiang clique and his overseas bene-

factors. Fighting brilliantly, the people's army inflicted a crushing defeat on the Kuomintang troops, and Chiang Kai-shek, with the remnants of his army, took refuge on the island of Taiwan, occupied by the armed forces of the United States in contravention of international law.

Before a huge gathering on Tien An Men square, in Peking, a Chinese People's Republic was solemnly proclaimed on October 1, 1949. The Republic was to be ruled under a people's democratic dictatorship. Finally rid of foreign imperialists and the "home-bred" variety of exploiters, the Chinese people embarked on the road of socialist construction.

Korean People's Democratic Republic Formed

Japan's defeat in the Second World War spelled the end of her dominance in Korea. By an agreement concluded between the victorious powers, implementation of the terms of Japan's surrender in North Korea (north of the 38th parallel) was to be supervised by the Soviet Military Command, that in South Korea by the United States Military Command.

When North Korea had been cleared of the invaders, democratic reforms were put into effect, state power being now vested in a Provisional People's Committee, set up in February 1946, and its local organs. Reconstruction of the demolished plants, mines, railways, etc., was begun, with the aid of the Soviet military.

In March 1946, the Provisional People's Committee promulgated a law on agrarian reform giving the peasants over 1,000,000 hectares of land expropriated from the gentry. Also in 1946, nationalisation was effected of industrial plants, banks, railways and means of communication which had belonged either to the Japanese or to Korean collaborators. An eight-hour working day in industry was decreed; and women and minors were equalised with men in regard to wages. Annual paid vacations were introduced, along with labour safety and free medical care. Korean became the language of instruction in schools.

In August 1946 the Korean Communist Party and New People's Party¹ joined together to form the Korean Party of Labour in North Korea under the chairmanship of Kim Il Sung. This party organised a United Democratic National Front of workers, peasants, employees, and those small entrepreneurs who were in favour of national development on democratic principles.

¹ The NPP had been formed in February 1946; its membership included progressive intellectuals, workers and peasants.

In South Korea, events took a different turn. The US Army Headquarters maintained the old colonial order, so well hated by the people, the only difference being that the Japanese were now replaced by the Americans. Unemployment, hunger and stark need were still the lot of many South Korean households. In May 1948, Syngman Rhee, traitor of the Korean people, was appointed head of the South Korean state.

The democratic forces of Korea waged an active struggle against the regime of Syngman Rhee and his bosses. In August 1948, elections to the Supreme People's Assembly, which was to be the people's supreme governing body, were held throughout the country owing to the joint efforts of the progressive parties of North and South Korea. In the South they were conducted secretly. The returns bore evidence of the wish of the preponderant majority of the Korean people to see the country a united independent democratic state.

In September 1948, the First Session of the Supreme People's Assembly proclaimed a Korean People's Democratic Republic, an independent state, in accordance with the will of the entire Korean nation.

A constitution was adopted by the Supreme People's Assembly, which legalised the rights won by the working people of North Korea. The main purpose of the KPDR was defined as the construction of the basis of socialism. The Assembly directed messages to the governments of the USA and USSR requesting a simultaneous withdrawal of their troops from Korea. Such a withdrawal would have given the Korean people an opportunity independently to decide on its future course.

The Soviet Government was quick to comply with the Assembly's request: by the end of 1948 all Soviet troops had been withdrawn from North Korea.

The government of the United States, on the contrary, not only failed to withdraw its forces of occupation from South Korea, but began to prepare the latter for a war against the Korean People's Democratic Republic.

Democratic Republic of Vietnam Formed

During the Second World War Vietnam was occupied by the Japanese army. The people of Vietnam refused, however, to put up with this regime of military occupation, just as they had refused to tolerate that of the French. Peasants and workers started guerilla warfare against the invaders, in which they were joined by the petty bourgeois, who also wanted independence for their country. The Communists were in the vanguards of this struggle.

And a battle-hardened People's Army came into being in the process of this armed resistance against the invaders, while people's committees were set up in the liberated regions as agencies of the new government.

The entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan made an exceptionally strong impact on the war of liberation waged by the Vietnamese people. An uprising swept the country in August 1945, which toppled the government run by the Japanese and their puppets; and on September 2, a Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) was proclaimed, with Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Vietnamese Communists and prominent fighter for the freedom and independence of Vietnam, elected president, and state power taken over by the republican government and the people's committees.

This respite from warfare was not allowed to last long, however, for late in September 1945, British troops made their appearance in the south and Chinese Kuomintang forces in the north of the country, under the pretext of assuring Japanese capitulation. France, too, rallied her forces and, in December 1946, launched an offensive on a broad front, initiating the "dirty war" against the people of Vietnam, as the working people of France aptly called it. That war was started by the French imperialists for the purpose of turning Vietnam again into a French colony and preventing its development along democratic lines.

For eight interminable years machine-guns and submachine-guns rattled and bombs and shells exploded in the fields and jungles of Vietnam, and napalm laid waste defenceless towns and villages, killed their peaceful inhabitants, slaughtered cattle and destroyed crops. And all in vain, for the Vietnamese people, led by the Working People's Party of Vietnam (the main body of which were Communists) and supported by peace-loving peoples all over the world, inflicted defeat after defeat upon the invaders.

Dien Bien Phu, the last stronghold left the invaders in the north, fell in May 1954, and the French were forced to negotiate an armistice, after suffering several tens of thousands battle casualties and throwing away several billion francs with nothing to show for it. An agreement to end the war was signed in July 1954, at an international conference held in Geneva. A line of demarcation running along the 17th parallel temporarily partitioned the country into North and South Vietnam. A conference decision provided for elections to an all-Vietnam parliament in two years, after which both parts of the country could join to form a single state. This last provision, however, was never carried out. The government of South Vietnam, actively supported by the US imperialists who had come to replace the French

colonialists, went back on their commitment in regard to the elections and decided to keep the country partitioned.

A landlord-capitalist regime was established in South Vietnam, a reactionary regime of terror maintained solely with the aid of American dollars and bayonets. Any manifestation of discontent brought harsh retribution. The hated regime would have been smashed by the people, were it not for American interference in the domestic affairs of South Vietnam.

In the Democratic Republic of Vietnam the government is run by the working people, urban and rural. And socialist construction is well under way under the direction of the Working People's Party of Vietnam.

World Socialist System Formed

The revolutions in Europe and Asia were the most important event in the history of the world since the October 1917 Revolution in Russia. They resulted in thirteen countries in Europe and Asia breaking away from the world capitalist system and a consequent aggravation of the general crisis of capitalism and a further expansion of the revolutionary and anti-imperialist national liberation movement.

Following the emergence of the People's Democracies socialism was no longer confined to two countries. The road to socialism was now followed by the People's Republic of Albania, People's Republic of Bulgaria, Hungarian People's Republic, Democratic Republic of Vietnam, German Democratic Republic, Chinese People's Republic, Korean People's Democratic Republic, Mongolian People's Republic, Polish People's Republic, Rumanian People's Republic¹, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia,² and Czechoslovak People's Republic.³ Before the Second World War the countries engaged in socialist construction accounted for 17 per cent of the world's surface and 9 per cent of its population, whereas after the war the socialist countries accounted for over 25 and 33 per cent, respectively, of our planet's area and population. The impact and drawing power of the principles of socialism and democracy are convincingly illustrated by the people's revolution in Cuba.

¹ Renamed the Socialist Republic of Rumania in accordance with the new constitution of July 1965.

² A new constitution was adopted in Yugoslavia as of April 7, 1963, which changed the name of the Yugoslav state to Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

³ On July 11, 1960, the Czechoslovak National Assembly adopted a constitution legalising the laying of the country's socialist foundation as an accomplished fact and changing its name to Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

Revolution Wins in Cuba

On a dark night of December 1956, a small group of men came ashore in a lonely spot of the island's south-eastern coast. Its members were Cuban patriots, revolutionaries who had been forced to leave their country to avoid persecution. They were led by a young lawyer named Fidel Castro. And their declared aim was to overthrow the reactionary regime of Batista, a tool of the United States. After an encounter with Batista's soldiers, in which they were outmatched, only 12 out of the group of 82 remained alive. Instead of surrendering, Fidel Castro led his men into the jungles of the Sierra Maestra Range, where they took shelter and prepared to carry on their fight for the liberation of the Cuban people.

From their jungle fastness, a small transmitter sent out a message telling the Cuban people that the aim of the revolt was not only the overthrow of Batista's dictatorship but also the economic, political and social liberation of the country. News of the heroic struggle of the patriots in their mountain stronghold spread like wildfire over the countryside and all those to whom Batista's regime was hateful and who were ready to take up arms against him were eager to join Castro's group. The partisan army grew fast, and counted several thousand in its ranks by the end of 1958.

The leaders of the insurgent forces decided to move in two columns into the interior and liberate Havana, the Cuban capital. As they liberated small towns and villages on their line of march the insurgents immediately proceeded to confiscate landed estates and to distribute them among the landless and short-of-land peasants; and this policy won great and increasing popularity for the revolution.

By the autumn of 1958 all the eastern provinces were in the hands of the insurgents. Batista's forces were beaten in battle after battle, active United States support notwithstanding. When the strategically important town of Santa Clara fell Batista's position reached a critical stage. And as soon as he became convinced that he was fighting a losing battle he packed his plunder and fled to the Dominican Republic where he would be under the protection of his friend Trujillo, the local dictator.

On January 1, 1959, the insurgents entered Havana, where they were hailed by jubilant crowds. The Cuban revolution, a people's revolution, democratic and anti-imperialist, had won. A people's government was presently set up, headed by Fidel Castro.

One of the first acts of the victorious revolutionary forces was to chase the United States military mission out of the country.

Another move was to make an end of Batista's military intelligence and anti-communist bureau, that is to say, the two bodies chiefly responsible for the suppression of democracy. The Cuban Government could now proceed, with the full support of the Cuban people, to carry out its programme of far-reaching revolutionary and democratic reforms.

BUILDING SOCIALISM

Industrialisation of European People's Democracies

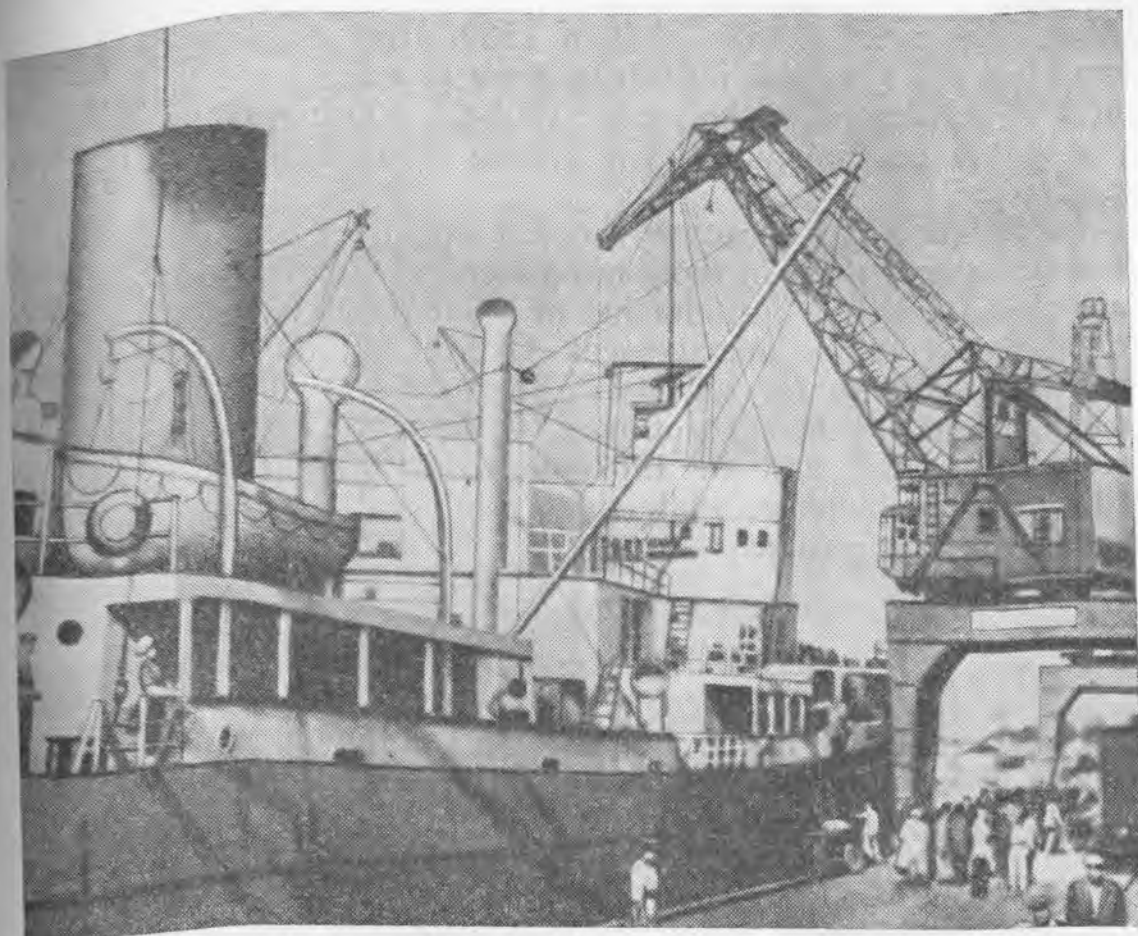
In the years of people's government the socialist countries have shown a remarkable advance.

Capitalism has been the source of incalculable suffering and misery for the peoples of these countries, and the Second World War—a particularly vile product of the capitalist system—brought them to the brink of disaster on a national scale. In Poland and Hungary, for instance, the total damage caused by the war was five times the size of their national income for the pre-war year 1938.

After taking over state power and becoming masters of their lands and their industrial establishments the working people of the People's Democracies applied themselves to the task of socialist construction. Most of the countries under consideration had been industrially backward before the war. The reorganisation and development of their industries after the war were planned in a manner to assure industry a leading role. As soon as the reconstruction of their war-ravaged economies was completed the countries of Central and Southeast Europe embarked on a programme of socialist industrialisation, financed primarily out of the accumulations of the state sector in industry, trade and agriculture, a part of the personal savings of the population as represented by state bonds, and the proceeds of the graded taxation of the income of persons employing labour. Economic development was governed by state economic plans drawn up in accordance with a given economy's requirements and possibilities.

Bulgaria

Far-reaching changes have occurred in Bulgaria during the period under review. Under the fascist monarchy the country had no metallurgy, lacked many other modern branches of industry, and produced less electric energy than practically any of the other



Unloading cargo at Burgas, Bulgaria

countries of Europe. There were no industrial plants capable of supplying agriculture with machinery and artificial fertilisers.

The First Five-Year Plan (1949-53), which may be said to have charted the course of the country's economic development, stressed the building up of a heavy industry, that is to say, mining, metallurgical, engineering, chemical and power.

Bulgaria's socialist industrialisation continued under the Second Five-Year Plan (1953-57), which saw the completion of many new construction projects, such as the Iskur hydropower complex, the initial stage of the Batak project and other hydropower facilities, the V. I. Lenin Metallurgical Works, a lead and zinc works, a superphosphate fertiliser plant, a penicillin factory, etc.

Bulgaria was like a vast construction site during this time. Plants and factories were springing up, high-voltage transmission lines built and roads and railways laid throughout the length and breadth of the country. The Batak string of power plants in the Western Rhodope mountains was completed, comprising reservoirs, power stations, tunnels and canals stretched out over a route 600 kilometres long. Bulgaria's 1965 industrial output was

21.6 times greater than that of 1939. Her engineering, metal-working and chemical industries grew at an average annual rate of 21.7 per cent over the period 1956-64, which would have been out of the question under any system other than a people's democracy.

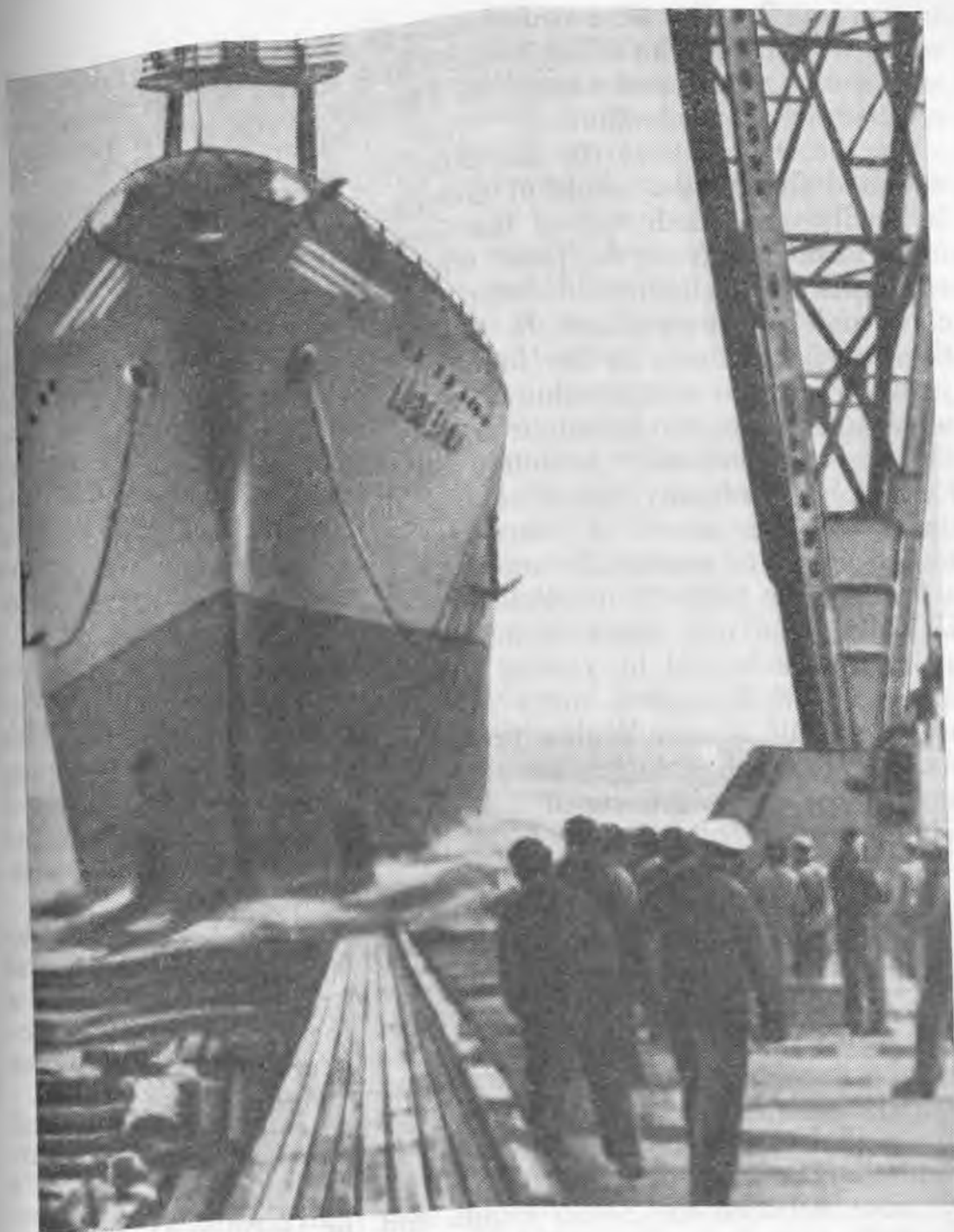
In Bulgaria, as in other socialist countries of Europe, 1966 marked a new stage in the development of the national economy, associated with the introduction of an improved system of planning and economic management. Overall output showed a 12.2 per cent increase for that year. Improvement of planning and management methods continued, with particular emphasis on economic levers; and in 1967 industrial production showed a 13.4 per cent increase, while that in selected important kinds of goods was even greater.

German Democratic Republic

This part of Germany, industrially lagging in the past, now ranked fifth among the countries of Europe in respect of industrial output, thanks to the effort of its people.

When they took up the task of laying the foundations of socialism on German soil the working people of the German Democratic Republic encountered many difficult problems. With Germany split in two, East Germany found itself without a mining and metallurgical industry, inasmuch as both were practically entirely confined to the country's western areas. To be more precise, when the GDR was established in Eastern Germany it had at its disposal only five old low-efficiency blast-furnaces as against West Germany's 120 modern high-efficiency furnaces. It should be recalled, moreover, that the frontier with West Germany remained open until 1961, so that the GDR had to develop its national economy in the teeth of continuous sabotage on the part of the FRG.

Nevertheless, with the help of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland and other socialist countries the Republic's working people soon created a heavy industry of their own, including such branches as shipbuilding, chemical engineering, petro-chemistry, electronics, etc. The old metallurgical works at Brandenburg, Honningsdorf and Riesa were reconstructed and considerably expanded to provide industry with metal; and two giant new metallurgical combines Ost and West, were built at the same time. The GDR does have sizable supplies of brown coal, but its low calorific value lessens its usefulness as raw material for metallurgy; or did so, rather, until GDR scientists and workers joined forces to discover a method of making it quite fit to serve as such.



Warnow Werft, largest shipbuilding concern in the German Democratic Republic

This discovery led to a rapid expansion of brown coal mining in the Republic, which now ranks first in the world in this field.

While expanding the coal-mining industry, the GDR Government also acted to step up the production of electric power, and great new power stations had been commissioned at Trattendorf, Benzdorf and Fokkeroide. Thermal power stations, the biggest

in Central Europe, were constructed at Lubbenau and Fetchau to use brown coal. The GDR ranked first in the sixties among the socialist countries and second in Europe in respect of per caput electric energy production.

By the end of 1964 the Republic's aggregate industrial output equalled that of the whole of Germany in 1936, though its area is hardly one-fourth that of the former Germany. This achievement is the result of the joint effort of the Republic's workers, engineers and scientists, directed by the party of the working class and the government. In the German Democratic Republic the accomplishments in the field of industrial development may justly be viewed as a genuine economic miracle, inasmuch as they were attained under incomparably more difficult conditions than those of the post-war economic reconstruction of the Federal Republic of Germany, which was based on an economic structure developed over scores of years and on a wealth of natural resources of a kind practically non-existent in the GDR.

Under the 1966-70 national economic development plan the GDR made a new increase in the industrial production all of which was achieved by raising the productivity of labour. This was attained through a more rational combination of planning and economic levers. Within the socialist community of states it was one of the first to initiate economic reform, and it succeeded in raising the productivity of industrial production to a substantially higher level.

New important enterprises were commissioned one after another, such, for instance, as the Schwarze Pumpe brown coal works. Soviet petroleum supplied to GDR industrial plants over a pipeline ensured their uninterrupted work; the Schwedt-Merseburg section constructed by the end of the sixties brought the pipeline as far as the Leuna-Werke chemical plant at Leuna.

On August 13, 1961, the Government of the GDR implemented certain measures designed to strengthen its West Berlin frontier. The authorities now established full control of the Republic's frontiers. The Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Cooperation between the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic, signed in June 1964, came as a serious check to the West German militarists' schemes of revenge. This treaty made an important contribution to the strengthening of peace and security on the continent of Europe.

Hungary

Within a short space of time old Hungary's industrial backwardness became a thing of the past: new industrial towns and areas emerged, such as Dunaujváros, Bekeváros, Komló,

Borsod industrial area. The V. I. Lenin Metallurgical Works at Diosgyör, the country's biggest, was reconstructed and improved. Dozens of big new industrial plants and mines were commissioned. New branches of industry appeared, such as instrument-making, motor-car construction, ball-bearing manufacture, etc. As a result, the industrial output of 1965 was 6.1 times greater than that of 1938.

Hungarian diesel locomotives, electric trains, river craft, cranes, autobuses, wireless equipment and electrical instruments have made a name for themselves in many foreign markets. In line with the recommendations of the Council for Mutual Economic Aid (among the socialist countries) Hungary made a decision to concentrate on the development of industries involving limited raw material consumption but requiring extensive industrial plant and highly trained labour, such, notably, as the production of certain kinds of electronic, radio and electrical equipment, agricultural machine-building, and the manufacture of pharmaceutical preparations. The development of these branches of industry was particularly fruitful. A considerable share of their output was meant for export.

While the annual rate of increase of industrial production may be said to be high, having reached 9 per cent in 1967 as against 6 per cent in 1966, the Hungarians were certain that they could do even better. During 1966 the groundwork began to be carefully laid for an economic reform designed to improve the economic machinery as a whole, accelerate plant modernisation, and make the best possible use of all production facilities.

Poland

The people of Poland built a gigantic metallurgical works at Nova Huta. The construction of the 1st Polish aluminium works at Skavin started Poland in the non-ferrous metallurgical industry. Coal mining was reconstructed and expanded. New power stations were built, providing the country with a mighty power system. Engineering, the nucleus of Poland's industry, was restored and its production 20 times surpassed that of pre-war years.

Poland's industrial output in 1965 was 11.2 times that of pre-war years. The Polish United Workers' Party and the Government of the Polish People's Republic stressed the special importance of a rational distribution of capital investments, accelerated technological advance, higher productivity of labour, and personnel training.

Before the war, Polish exports comprised mainly raw materials and foods; machinery and equipment never exceeded one per cent

of the total. By the early 1960s, however, machinery and equipment accounted for practically one-third of the country's exports, including such goods as railway rolling stock, sea-going ships, electrical equipment, machine tools and motor-cars. Of growing importance in Poland's exports were complete sets of industrial machinery and equipment for Polish-design plants constructed abroad with the aid of Polish experts.

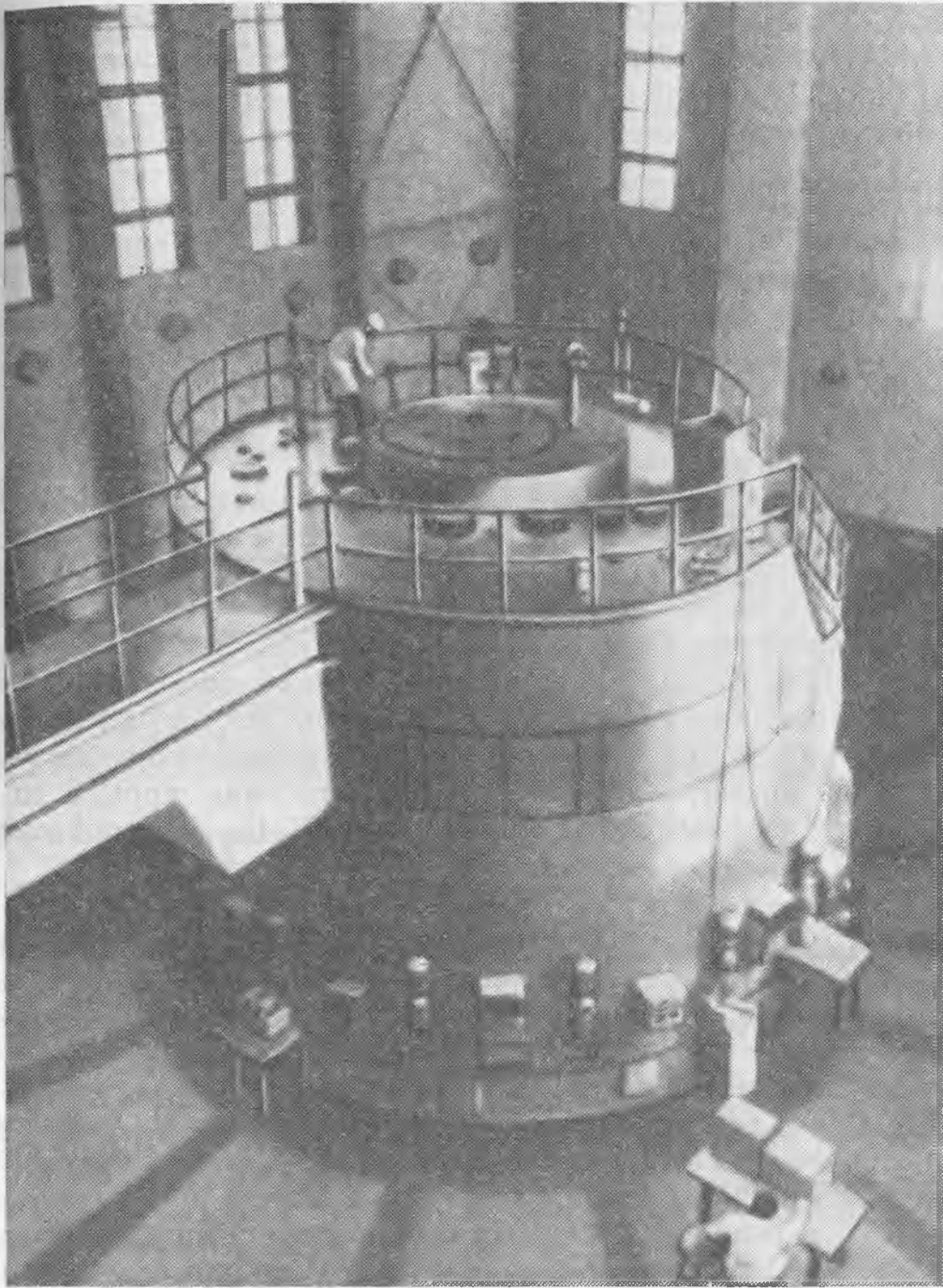
Rumania

In pre-war Rumania, the most important industry used to be the extraction of petroleum. With the establishment of a people's democracy Rumania became a country with a highly-developed petroleum-processing industry, as well as an exporter of petroleum. Engineering, ferrous metallurgy and a metal-working industry were reconstructed and substantially expanded, and a thriving and developing chemical industry was created.

Rumania's particular pride, however, is ship-building. The country borders on the Black Sea and has a navigable river, the Danube. Yet under the monarchy she built practically no ships of her own, her few small shipyards being used mainly for repair and refitting, so that ship-building may be said to have been introduced in Rumania only with the establishment of a people's democracy. In May 1958, the Galati shipyard launched Rumania's first motorship, with a displacement of 2,000 tons. A great number of river craft and ocean-going ships has been built since then. In 1965 the country's aggregate industrial output was 9.5 times greater than in 1938, the average annual increment between 1951 and 1965 being somewhat over 13 per cent. In the machine-building industry the average annual rate of growth was more than 20 per cent, which played a decisive role in re-equipping and expanding all branches of the country's industry. Further industrialisation was an important aspect of the domestic policy laid down by the Rumanian Communist Party headed by N. Ceaușescu.

Czechoslovakia

In Czechoslovakia, which was already a highly industrialised country, further industrial development meant chiefly adjusting the existing disproportions between the various branches and introducing technological improvements. In pre-war Czechoslovakia, light industry (e.g., textile, tanning, footwear, glass, ceramics) accounted for a major share of the national economy; and with the establishment of a people's democracy the government therefore concentrated on the development of a heavy industry, especially machine-



Atomic reactor built in Rumania with Soviet assistance

building. By 1965 the country's industry as a whole had increased by a factor of 5.1 as compared with 1937. Better utilisation of natural and economic conditions considerably expanded the raw-materials base of the production and raised its technical level. Ten new blast-furnaces, 21 open-hearth furnaces, a number of rolling-mills and several power stations with an aggregate capacity of 5 million kw had been built between 1945 and 1965 in Czechoslovakia.

Radical changes have been made under the new government in Slovakia, formerly a backward region that furnished raw materials and cheap labour to the Czech and Slovak bourgeoisie. With Czech assistance Slovakia has been able to develop an industry of its own.

Selfless efforts of the working class and developing co-operation with the other members of the world socialist community have raised the country's economy to a substantially higher level. Producing more steel per caput of population than France, England or Italy, more electric locomotives than England, France or the FRG, and more chemical equipment than the USA, Czechoslovakia is now one of the most highly industrialised countries in the world.

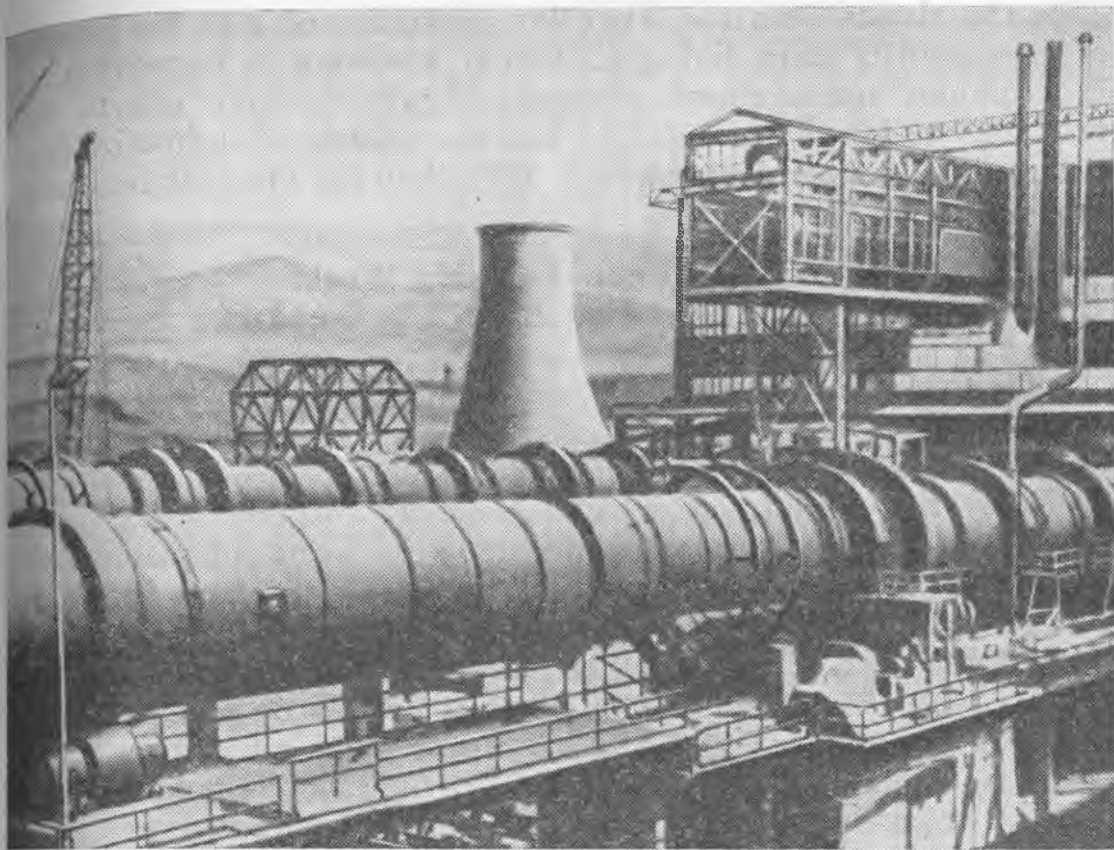
At the same time certain disturbing signs began to appear in the early 1960s: undue delay in the introduction of modern industrial equipment caused certain Czechoslovak manufactured goods to fall below internationally accepted quality standards. This prompted the Czechoslovak Communist Party and government to reject certain now obsolete methods of industrial management, especially its excessive centralisation. Serious thought was given to increasing production efficiency and improving the quality of output. The economic reform was applied to all branches of the national economy. In 1967 the national output showed a 7.1 per cent increase.

Yugoslavia

In Yugoslavia, the pace of economic development in the post-war period was set by the metallurgical, machine-tool construction and chemical industries, and electrification.

The rapid advance made by the metallurgical industry is illustrated by the following comparison. The few existing blast-furnaces (at Zenica, Jesenice, Sisak and Vares) produced in the year 1945 a total of 84,000 tons of metal: in 1960 the same quantity was being produced monthly. Manufactured goods imported in pre-war times from abroad are now being produced at home. These include motor-cars, tractors, harvesting combines, internal-combustion engines, turbines, film-projectors, refrigerators, etc. Yugoslav-built passenger and cargo vessels, tankers and floating docks are known far and wide.

By dint of sustained, concentrated effort her people turned Yugoslavia, formerly a backward, agrarian country, into a highly developed industrial state with excellent prospects for the development of its productive forces. By the end of 1965 Yugoslavia's industrial output and national income had reached a level 7.5 and 3 times higher, respectively, than that of the pre-war years.



Metal works in construction at Skoplje, Yugoslavia

This high rate of growth of her national income was highly illustrative of Yugoslavia's achievements in socialist construction. The annual rate of growth over the period 1947-63 averaged 7 per cent, as compared with only 2 per cent for the period between the First and Second World wars.

The government set to rectifying the extremely haphazard distribution of industry characteristic of pre-war Yugoslavia, when Serbia, Slovenia and northern Croatia used to constitute the country's industrial region. Many industrial enterprises were commissioned in such regions as Bosnia, Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro. The new distribution pattern helped develop the previously backward regions, and this was one of the major achievements of the peoples of Yugoslavia in the field of socialist construction.

Numerous new industrial plants were built after the war equipped with modern machinery, and many of the old factories were largely reconstructed. Obsolete equipment still existed, however, in many of the country's textile mills, tanneries, and food-processing plants, ruling out the possibility of any substantial increase of their output.

In the sixties both the Yugoslav Government and the League of Communists were giving particular attention to improvements in economic management methods. However, these efforts had produced no tangible results. In fact the volume of industrial production was 0.4 per cent lower in 1967 than for the year before.

New Attitude Towards Work. Industrialisation Picks Up Speed

As the people's democracy form of government took deeper and deeper root, people began to revise their attitude toward work as such. Two movements became popular: one was socialist emulation, the other—improvement of technology and technique. In the sixties, following the example of Soviet teams of communist labour, teams of socialist labour were organised in increasing numbers in the socialist countries of Europe.

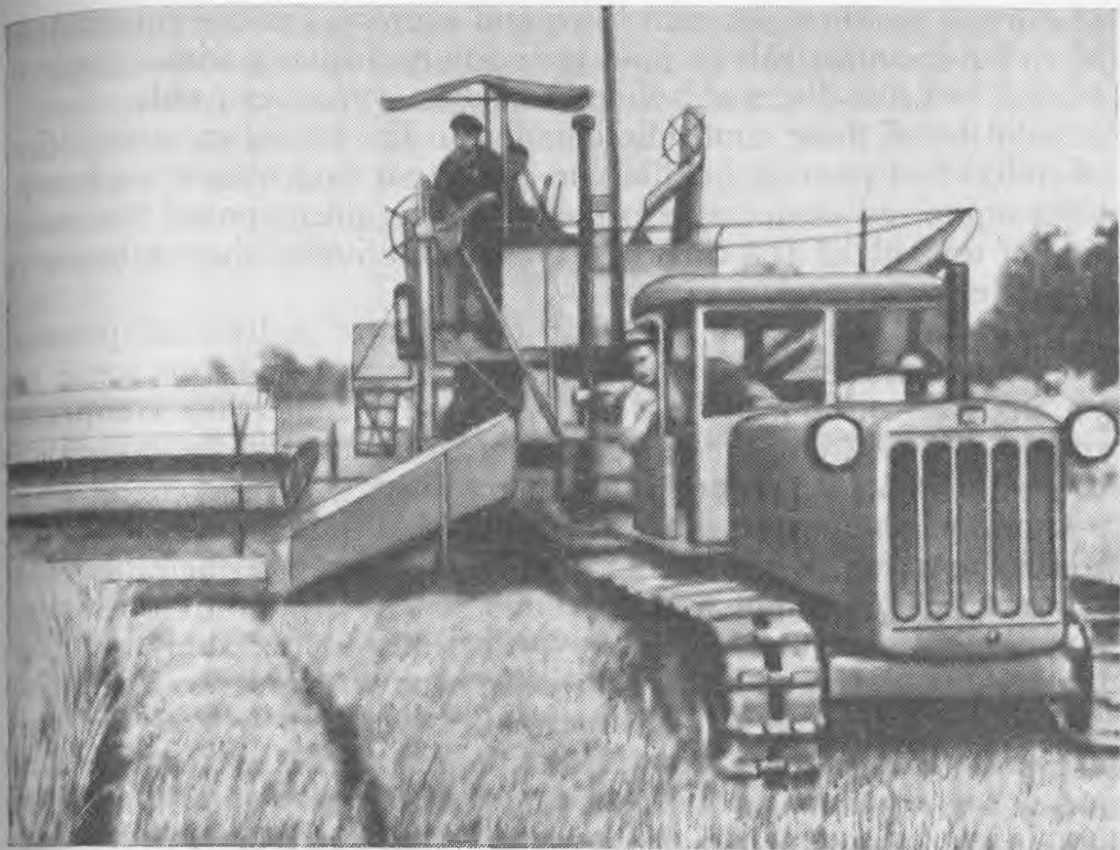
The high rates of industrial development shown by the socialist countries speak convincingly of the advantages of socialism over capitalism. Compared with the history of mankind, ten or fifteen years are a negligible span of time, yet they were enough for the socialist countries to multiply their industrial output many times as against the pre-war level. Thus, 1964 data indicate that since 1938 production multiplied as follows:

Electricity—	over	10 times
Steel—	nearly	5 „
Petroleum—	„	7 „
Cement—	over	9 „
Cotton textiles—	over	2 „

A certain faltering in the rate of growth of industrial production over the first half of the 1960s, resulting from the inadequacy of the old methods of management in conditions of the current scientific and technological revolution, was overcome by the implementation of the economic reform and a consequent substantial increase in productivity. A very high increase in industrial production was reached in 1967, exceeding 13 per cent in Bulgaria and Rumania, for instance.

Nearly all the People's Democracies of Europe became industrial-agrarian states capable of both meeting the requirements of their domestic markets in manufactured goods and exporting a varied line of domestically manufactured goods to foreign markets. Gone forever were the times when these countries were mere suppliers of primary products to the big imperialist powers.

Rapid industrialisation banished the scourge of unemployment and with it the enforced yearly migration of millions to foreign



Harvesting on a co-operative farm in Bulgaria

lands in search of work, characteristic of the past. Industrialisation laid the basis for a better life for the people. Heavy industry had developed at a particularly rapid rate over a number of years in the socialist countries of Europe and had thus been able to overcome its perennial backwardness in a short space of time. In the second half of the sixties light industry was developing at a faster rate to narrow the gap between the rates of growth of heavy and light industries in these countries and as a result there was a substantial expansion of the output of consumer goods, notably durables.

Socialist Reforms in Agriculture

Agriculture in the European People's Democracies also underwent far-reaching changes. The early anti-feudal agrarian reforms served to throw into greater relief the disparity between individual peasant farming and large-scale socialised industrial production. The small peasant holdings prevalent in agriculture were unable to meet growing requirements in raw materials and farm produce. Kulak activities also interfered with the establishment

of normal relations between town and country, for the kulaks, that is, rich peasants, dealt in food products exclusively with an eye to profits, in utter disregard of industrial or consumer needs.

Solution of these contradictions lay in the voluntary association of individual peasant holdings in collective agricultural co-operatives organised on socialist principles. This presupposed the isolation of the kulaks as a class and the termination of their subversive activities.

Bulgaria was one of the first to organise individual peasant proprietors into co-operatives. 3,500 co-operative farms were set up in that country by mid-1958, whose membership comprised roughly 90 per cent of the peasantry. Subsequently, the trend was towards fewer but bigger co-operatives.

Participating peasants were required to pool their holdings, which, however, while used in common, remained their personal property. This form of organisation was necessitated by the strong traditions of private ownership prevailing among the Bulgarian peasantry. And therein lay the difference between the Bulgarian co-operative farm and the Soviet collective farm where the land granted by the state to the members of the farm *artel* in perpetual ownership becomes public property. Under the Bulgarian system earnings were computed on the basis of both the individual contribution in labour and the size and quality of the land made over to the co-operative on admission.

1967 saw the adoption of a new set of rules for co-operatives, which brought their activities in line with the principles of the new system of economic planning and management, and made the amount of work done the sole criterion for the distribution of income among the members.

Collectivisation of Bulgarian agriculture ended the exploitation of the peasantry by the rural bourgeoisie, the kulaks, Bulgaria's last remaining exploiting class. The Bulgarian society was hence composed basically of two friendly classes: workers and co-operative peasants, together with the intelligentsia elements they produce.

The farm co-operatives assured the Bulgarian peasantry higher living standards, as well as higher productivity of labour. The gross agricultural output of 1964 was 1.7 times greater than that of 1939, which had been considered one of the best in old Bulgaria. In 1967 the overall agricultural output showed a 15 per cent increase. And there was a marked increase in the yields of the most important crops. The new government headed by T. Zhivkov contributed in various ways to the further development of the socialist agriculture.

In Hungary, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, the GDR and Albania the vast majority of peasants also adopted the collective form of

farming. The consequences were most beneficial. Hungary, for instance, was able—for the first time in her history—to solve her grain problem. In Poland and Yugoslavia the collective form of farming was not so far predominant. Both the Polish United Workers' Party and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, however, were working to spread the idea of farming co-operatives among the peasantry.

Strengthening the System of Government

The development of industry and agriculture was paralleled by efforts to strengthen the system of government in the People's Democracies. To begin with, personnel loyal to the former ruling classes were dismissed from the staff of ministries and other administrative bodies wherever this action had not been taken earlier. Constitutions are now in effect in all of the socialist countries, which have legalised those rights and freedoms won by the working people that contribute to socialist construction. The Constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic, adopted in August 1949, following discussion of its draft on a national scale, may serve as a good example.

This Constitution reflects the democratic character of the Hungarian state, in which state power belongs to the working people as personified by the local Soviets and the State Assembly (or parliament). The Constitution states that the preponderant share of the means of production belongs to the society as public, state or co-operative property. Building up and safeguarding socialist property is one of the essential duties of all citizens. Private ownership is allowed by the Constitution within certain limits.

The Constitution grants and guarantees the working people broad social rights and freedoms, such as the right to elect and be elected to government bodies; the right to work, recreation and education; freedom of speech, press and assembly; freedom of conscience and worship. Any manifestation of racial or national discrimination is a grave offence against the law.

Having legalised the basic principles governing the country's state and social system and the rights and duties of the citizens, the Constitution outlined a programme of further development for Hungary, which provided for a gradual elimination of capitalist elements and the creation of a socialist economy. In accordance with the Constitution the principle applied in Hungary is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

The constitutions adopted by certain socialist countries, as in Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, for in-

stance, reflected already in the 1960s the vast changes that had taken place since the Second World War. They are based on the fact that exploitation of man by man has been ended and that socialist production relations now prevail. Political power, in its entirety, belongs to the working people. The 1968 Constitution of the GDR describes the fundamental principles of the socialist system as "a lasting alliance of the working class, the co-operative peasantry, the intellectuals, and other population strata; socialist ownership of the means of production, production planning and management based on the most modern achievements of science. . . ."

In the process of building a socialist society working people see for themselves the advantages of socialism over capitalism.

Higher Living Standards

In the old Bulgaria, the average span of life used to be 48 years for men and 49 for women. In Socialist Bulgaria it rose to 64 and 68 years, respectively. Four times as many beds were provided in hospitals which were adequately staffed with medical personnel; and medical care became free of charge. An old-age pension system was introduced. Numerous rest homes and sanatoria for working people were established in the pleasantest localities of the Balkan mountains and the Black Sea coast. A large-scale housing programme was launched in the sixties, and some 135-140 new modern flats were being provided daily for the population.

In the old Poland, the wealth and luxury enjoyed by bankers, industrialists and leading merchants had co-existed with incredible poverty. Such contrasts were banished forever. There was no more unemployment. People were considerably better fed, both in town and country. In the sixties the consumption of meat, fats and sugar, for instance, more than doubled in Poland as compared with pre-war times. Housing construction was being carried on on an ambitious scale. Secondary and higher education became available free to the children of workers, peasants and the working intelligentsia. A great many other facilities, besides schools, were established by the state to provide recreation and training for children, such as had never been known in pre-war Poland.

Towns in the socialist countries began taking on a new look. The sharp contrast between modern central districts and dirty dilapidated outskirts was gradually disappearing, as streets were paved and modern shops and comfortable residential buildings went up all over the country.

The countryside also changed. The number of tiny individually owned plots was dwindling, ceding ground to extensive solid blocks of co-operatively owned fields worked by modern farm

machinery. And the villages looked different, for homes provided with modern amenities, including electricity and radio, ceased to be a novelty.

This continuously rising level of prosperity and culture was characteristic of the development of the socialist countries. Despite the devastation caused by the Second World War, the national income had reached by 1950 the pre-war level in all of these countries and even surpassed it in several cases, and continued to grow, so that by 1967 it had increased as against 1950 as follows:

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Increase</i> (by a factor of)
Bulgaria	4.6
Hungary	over 2.5
GDR	3.4
KPDR	over 5
Poland	over 3
Rumania	4.8
Czechoslovakia	2.7

A rapid growth of the national income meant a steady rate of extended reproduction, which in turn meant a steady growth of the public and personal consumption funds.

Common to all of the socialist countries was an expanding network of schools of all kinds and a correspondingly increasing student body. Vocational and technical training was increasingly emphasised. With illiteracy now practically non-existent, it is useful to recall that under the old regimes illiteracy had stood at around 25 per cent of the population in Poland and Bulgaria, 50 per cent in Rumania, over 80 per cent in Albania and practically 100 per cent in Mongolia.

An important element of the new way of life was a developing socialist consciousness. The working people became convinced that socialism was conducive to a combination of personal prosperity and personal interests with the interests of the society as a whole. And this conviction engendered enthusiasm in personal contribution to the common effort and promoted general progress.

Counter-Revolution

The nascency of this new way of life was not a process altogether smooth and unobstructed. On the contrary, the socialist system was taking root in sharp conflict with the old order. The capitalists and landowners, now shorn of the political power they wielded, the entrepreneurs, merchants, profiteers and kulaks, now divested of their wealth, still clung to the hope that the capitalist

system would be re-established and missed no opportunity to injure the new society in their anticipation of that event. And they invariably received moral and financial support, in their pernicious activities, from foreign quarters.

A particularly illustrative instance of the class conflict going on in the socialist countries since the end of the war were the events of 1956 in Hungary, where, in late October and early November, counter-revolutionary forces, directly incited and aided by aggressive elements in Western states, attempted a *coup d'état*. The aim was to destroy the country's socialist achievements, pluck it out of the socialist commonwealth and turn it into a staging ground for a war against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

The counter-revolutionary *coup* was staged by former capitalists and landowners, urban petty bourgeois, vacillating intellectuals, certain strata of university students, and *déclassé* elements. Some working-class elements had been inveigled by false pretences. The reactionary forces used to good advantage the understandable dissatisfaction among the population caused by the errors of Rákosi and certain other Hungarian leaders, who had been guilty of serious infractions of the fundamental principles of socialist democracy.

On balance, however, the great majority of workers and peasants did not support the counter-revolution. The Hungarian people proved capable of defending its socialist achievements. A Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government set up on November 4, 1956, headed by János Kadar, a prominent leader of the Hungarian communist movement, announced a programme envisaging rectification of the errors and abuses of power made by the former leadership and further progress towards socialism.

The Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government further requested the Soviet Union's aid in putting down the counter-revolution; and that request was granted by the Soviet Government in fulfilment of its international duty. The joint effort of the Hungarian revolutionary forces and units of the Soviet Army resulted in the defeat of the counter-revolution. And the Hungarian people, after repairing the damage inflicted by the counter-revolution, went on with their work of socialist construction.

Mongolian People's Republic

The Mongolian People's Republic became the second state to follow the example of the Soviet Union and embark on a programme of socialist construction. Her experience proves that a direct transition from feudalism to socialism is possible today, without an intermediate capitalist stage of development.



Students in the physiological laboratory of the Mongolian university

During the Second World War the Mongolian people, under the leadership of the People's Revolutionary Party headed by Choibalsan, made their contribution to the struggle against the fascist aggressors. Fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union, Mongolian troops helped crush Japan's Kwantung army.

In the post-war period the Republic achieved continued success in its political, economic and cultural development, notably in the field of state and co-operative industry.

Numerous industrial enterprises were built in the sixties, with Soviet assistance, and equipped with modern machinery; and industry, completely non-existent before the revolution, now accounted for 40 per cent of the gross national output. It should be noted that the industrial output of 1964 was ten times higher than of 1940. In 1967 the overall industrial output rose by 7.7 per cent.

New branches of industry including mining (coal and ores), petroleum and construction were built. A large hide- and wool-processing plant was built at Ulan Bator, the nation's capital; and a wood-working plant was commissioned.

Numerous settlements appeared in the formerly uninhabited steppes. Highways and railways now traversed the country where anything like a road had once been a rarity. The Gobi desert was being explored for petroleum.

By 1960 most of the cattle-breeders joined socialist-type co-operatives, and this led to an increase of the stock of cattle. State farms and numerous mechanised hay-mowing stations gave the co-operatives valuable aid. A veterinary network served to cut drastically loss of cattle due to disease. Special plants at Songi and Arahangae produced biological preparations for treating cattle, horses, camels and sheep.

The government encouraged the shift from nomadism to a sedentary way of life, which implied the development of agriculture. Lamaism, the religion formerly dominant in Mongolia, forbade tilling the soil in order not to "disturb the peace of the earth". Now, however, state and co-operative farms were ploughing up extensive tracts of virgin land to grow wheat, barley, oats and corn.

Over one-third of the country's rural population was engaged in farming. Some 8,000 tractors were at work in the fields in 1964.

Most Mongols still lived in their old-style felt-covered transportable *yurts*; but fashions changed: the *yurts* were now furnished with modern furniture; and open fires in the middle of the *yurts* were replaced with iron stoves formerly seen only in the *yurts* of princes and lamas.

In towns and workers' settlements housing construction was along modern lines.

Much was achieved in the cultural sphere after the revolution. Hundreds of general and technical schools, institutes and a university were opened. While the country now had a university of its own, many young men and women were enrolled in higher educational institutions in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In 1961 a Mongolian Academy of Sciences was created, comprising five research institutes devoted to the basic branches of modern science. National arts flourished. Theatrical repertoires included plays by Mongolian playwrights as well as Russian and Western classics.

Mongolian women, formerly resigned and treated as inferiors, now enjoyed a standing in the society on a par with the men and took an active part in building a new way of life. Women now constituted one-fifth of the membership of the Great People's Khural, the country's supreme organ of state power.

Under the People's Revolutionary Party headed by Y. Tsedenbal, and with the aid of the socialist countries, the Mongolian people laid the base of socialism in the country.

Albanian People's Republic

Following Lenin's path the peoples of Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, the GDR and the MPR have built the foundations of socialism and entered the period of completing socialist construction.

The development of the Albanian People's Republic has been marked by very specific features. The Albanian people may be said to have skipped the capitalist stage, having achieved a transition from a state of semi-feudal backwardness direct to socialist construction. Pre-war Albania was extremely backward both economically and politically. The country was governed by the feudal landed gentry and the king, who owned most of the land under cultivation. The greater part of the population were engaged in agriculture, conducted on a primitive level. Large industrial plants were non-existent. Capitalist relations were rudimentary. Relics of the tribal system were still to be found in some of the mountain fastnesses.

The war and the Italo-German occupation left Albania in a state of prostration: many towns and villages lay in ruins, one-third of the stock of cattle had been killed off, the few industrial plants and home-industries had shut down. The First Congress of the Albanian Communist Party, meeting in November of 1948, drew up a programme of industrialisation and electrification; and adopted the name of the Albanian Party of Labour.

Substantial aid in the country's economic and cultural reconstruction and development was given Albania by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Moved by a feeling of due sympathy for the Albanian people, the Soviet Union extended credits to the Albanian Government and supplied machinery and equipment for the industrial plants, power stations and petroleum-extracting installations under construction. Among the many industrial plants constructed with Soviet aid may be mentioned the hydropower stations on the Mat and at Tirana, the country's capital city, a woodworking plant at Elbasani, a rice-processing plant and a cement works at Vlona, and a petroleum refinery at Tserrik.

A fish cannery at Vlona was built with the aid of the German Democratic Republic, and fruit and vegetable processing plants were constructed with the aid of Hungarian experts at Korrcë, Shkodër and elsewhere. Socialist Czechoslovakia was instrumental in expanding Albania's iron-mining industry.

The development of industry and transport raised the share of the one and the other in the national output, by 1959, to around 50 per cent, as compared with hardly 10 per cent prior to the war. And by 1964 the country's industrial production had surpassed the pre-war level by a factor of 30.

There were considerable changes in agriculture, too, though the rate of development here was slower. Shown the advantages of co-operative farming as compared with individual farming, most of the peasantry formed co-operative economies. These co-operatives received aid from the state, which granted them loans and supplied them with tractors and various farm machinery and implements. Extensive work was done in the field of irrigation and ploughing up virgin lands.

There were also considerable gains in the cultural sphere. Under the people's democracy women were emancipated and given the same rights as men. Under the monarchy only one Albanian out of five was literate, whereas now the vast majority of school-age youngsters and adults can read and write. The number of secondary (11-year) schools increased several times. There were no higher educational institutions in the country under the monarchy and therefore no chance of acquiring higher education for the Albanian youth. Here, too, there were significant changes. The capital now had a university with an enrolment of 5,000 young men and women. There were two teacher's colleges and one agricultural institute.

However, socialist construction in Albania has run into serious difficulties. For the country's government and Party leadership have been drifting away from the socialist commonwealth and the world communist movement. The new political line has slowed down the rate of economic development and Albania found itself in a precarious situation.

Chinese People's Republic

In China, the long war of liberation that her people were forced to fight had caused a complete dislocation of the national economy. And the working people of China found themselves facing the mighty task of economic reconstruction. Aid, however, came from the Soviet Union. That was at a time when the Soviet Union had just emerged, victorious, from the most disastrous war the world had ever known and itself stood in dire need of means and equipment. Nevertheless, true to its duty of proletarian internationalism, the Soviet people launched upon an extensive programme of aid to China, even at the cost of great self-denial. The aid programme included credits, equipment, construction-project blueprints, and the services of experts; in short, everything that could help the Chinese People's Republic forge ahead. During the reconstruction period and the years that followed the Soviet Union helped China build some 200 industrial plants and supply them with modern equipment.

On February 14, 1950, the Chinese People's Republic and the Soviet Union signed a Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance, which was to serve the Chinese people as a mighty shield and which, in fact, broke up the plans of the international reaction to overthrow the people's government by direct intervention in China's domestic affairs.

The heroic all-out effort of the Chinese people and the aid of the entire socialist commonwealth worked important changes in China. By the end of 1952 an agrarian reform had been implemented over the greater part of the country, bringing to a term the oppression of the peasants by the landed gentry. Over 47 million hectares of landed estates were distributed among the landless and land-poor peasants.

Foreign capitalists in China were shorn of all the privileges they enjoyed. Stringent measures were enforced against "bureaucratic capital", or the comprador bourgeoisie, which had been closely linked with foreign capital, chiefly American, and with the feudal landed gentry. Most of the "bureaucratic capital" had been held by the Kuomintang clique. The government expropriated their capital and enterprises, including those belonging to Chiang Kai-shek, Kung Hsiang-hsi, Sung Tze-wen and the Chen brothers, that is to say, to China's wealthiest "four families". The banks, industrial plants, shipping, and commercial business thus expropriated were constituted as the state sector of the national economy, which accounted, as early as 1952, for around 56 per cent of the aggregate industrial output. Thus ended the despoliation and exploitation of the Chinese people by the imperialists and their immediate local factors.

By 1952 the output of industry and agriculture had surpassed that of the best years before the war with Japan; and in 1953 China initiated its First Five-Year Plan, thereby launching the country on a course of socialist industrialisation. With the aid of the Soviet Union entire new industries were created, such as aircraft, automobile, tractor, energetics, heavy and precision engineering, instrument-making, radio-technical, and a diversified chemical industry. Some 500 industrial plants were built, including the Anshan Metallurgical Works which constitutes the nucleus of the country's metallurgical industry. October 1957 saw the completion of the railway bridge across the Yangtze at Wuhan, the biggest in Asia. In 1956 the volume of industrial production was nearly six times that of 1949.

The declared policy of the Chinese Government was a peaceful transition from private to socialist industry and trade.

Changes came into the lives of the many-millioned Chinese peasantry since the victory of the revolution. There was a large-scale shift in favour of collective methods of farming. By mid-1957

over 97 per cent of the peasant households had joined agricultural productive co-operatives. Former landlords and kulaks were admitted to these co-operatives, who like the urban bourgeoisie were subject to re-education by labour.

There were changes in the cultural sphere as well. Schooling was inaccessible to the working people in the old China, and 90 out of 100 were illiterate in the rural areas. With the advent of the new system of government a drive to end illiteracy was begun.

However, already at the end of the fifties the building of a socialist society in China ran into serious difficulties. Policy errors caused a lag in industrial and agricultural development in comparison with the planned rates, and even a net loss in gains.

The "great leap forward" economic policy announced in 1958, implying a manifold increase of industrial and agricultural production within a brief time-span, failed to take into sufficient account the country's actual possibilities. While announcing that China would rely on her own resources in her economic development, her leadership made no effort to secure the maximum utilisation of these resources. At the same time the Chinese leaders started to restrict economic relations with the socialist countries. This policy caused a sharp drop in industrial production and serious dislocation in the national economy. Thus the attempt to achieve a "great leap forward" ended in failure.

Mistakes were made in effecting the transition from agricultural production co-operatives to the so-called "people's communes", for socialisation was unjustifiably applied to minor equipment, down to the personal effects of the peasants. Members of the "people's communes" were deprived of all economic incentives to higher productivity. By setting up these communes the Chinese leaders sought to effect a direct transition to communism without bothering to lay in advance an adequate material and spiritual foundation. As a consequence, the output of farm produce dropped sharply, causing difficulties in meeting consumer demand for food products and the requirements of industry in agricultural raw materials. In 1961 and 1962 food shortages brought about the re-settlement of tens of millions of urban dwellers in rural areas.

In addition to their leftist experiments in the economic sphere, the Chinese leaders proclaimed, in 1966, a "great proletarian cultural revolution", one manifestation of which was the destruction of the country's immensely rich cultural legacy and the liquidation of all those who did not subscribe to the policies of the leadership of the CPC and the government. The chosen tool of this profoundly anti-Marxist-Leninist "revolution" was secondary school and university students, who were frequently incited to attack the

Party cadres. The Mao personality cult assumed unprecedented forms and proportions; Mao's ideas were proclaimed to be the apex of modern Marxist thought. The "great cultural revolution" was accompanied by an anti-Soviet campaign that had been gathering force over a number of years. Relations with other socialist countries also deteriorated. The Chinese leaders started to speak out against the agreed action of socialist states which was aimed at rendering the Vietnamese people assistance in their just struggle.

Korean People's Democratic Republic

In June 1950, the troops of the South Korean dictator Syngman Rhee, supported by the land and naval forces of the USA, invaded North Korea, unleashing a bloody war.

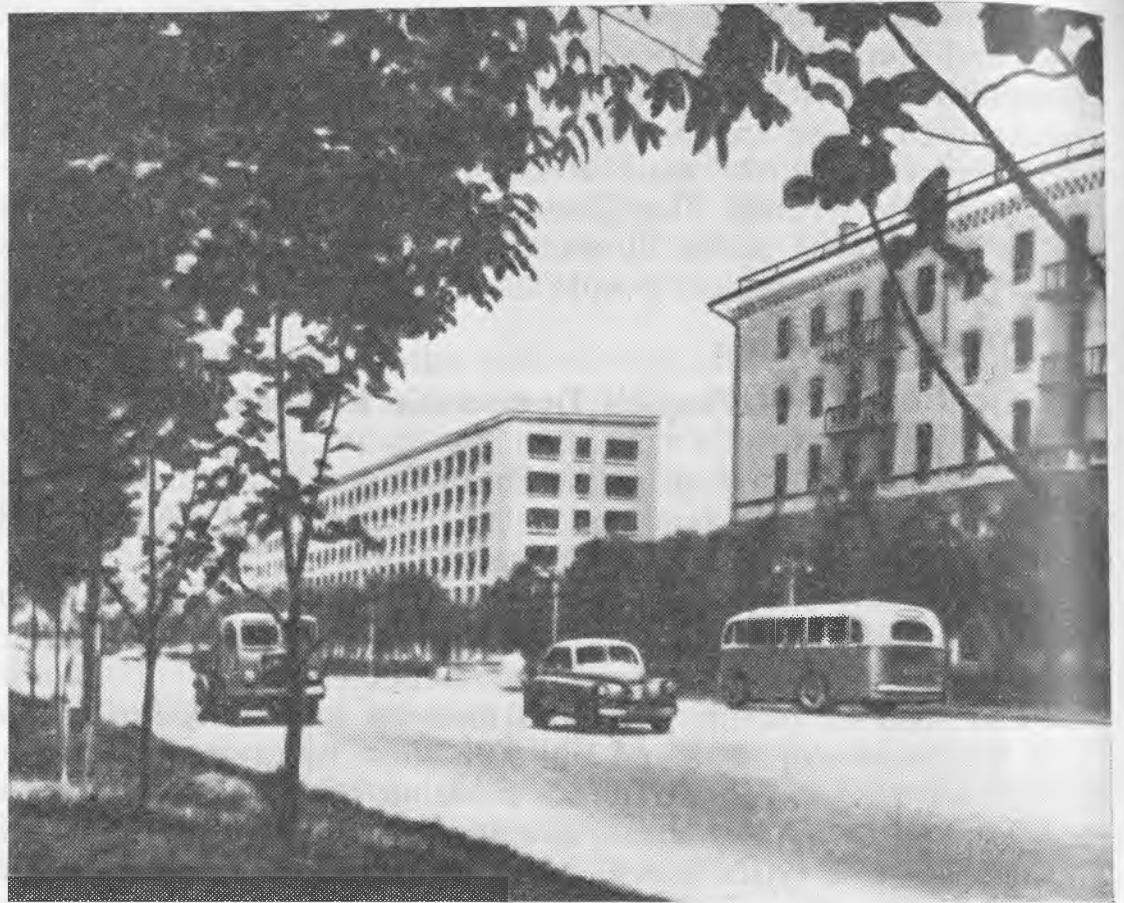
When in October 1950 the American invaders broke through to the Chinese frontier, the Chinese people's volunteers came to the aid of the Korean People's Democratic Republic.

It had been the intention of the American imperialists to intimidate the peoples of Asia and the Far East by a demonstration of military power. Moreover, the invasion of Korea served as a safety-valve for the American economy, which, at the time, stood on the brink of a crisis. For increased military appropriations and growing armaments purchases were helpful to American business. Incidentally, the imperialist American war in Korea was being waged under the flag of the United Nations.

The attack on North Korea incensed peaceful nations the world over, and the aggressive plans of the US imperialists fell through. With the support of all the socialist countries, the Korean People's Army succeeded in expelling the invaders, their napalm bombs and bacteriological and chemical weapons notwithstanding. In July 1953, the armistice was signed and with it came an ignominious end to the American intervention in Korea. Meanwhile, the mass heroism displayed by the Koreans served to inspire many colonial and dependent peoples to carry on their struggle for national liberation.

The three years of war inflicted heavy damage on the North Korean economy. Many cities had been reduced to rubble; dams, dikes and other irrigation installations lay in ruins; transport facilities had been wrecked. With the aid of the socialist countries, notably the Soviet Union, and by dint of inspired and dedicated effort on the part of the people of the Korean People's Democratic Republic, the reconstruction of the country's industrial and agricultural plant was accomplished in record time.

In the course of reconstruction and the years that followed, industry and trade were reorganised entirely on socialist lines. New



P'yongyang, capital of Korean People's Democratic Republic

industries were established, as, for instance, engineering and automobile. North Korean industry now produces tractors, bulldozers, metal-working machine-tools, measuring and precision instruments, etc.

Industrial development was proceeding at a rapid rate. In 1964 the volume of industrial output showed a ten-fold increase over that of the pre-war year 1949. In 1966 the volume of industrial output was twice as large as in 1960.

Socialist production relations became predominant in the rural areas. By the summer of 1958 all of the North Korean peasantry had joined production co-operatives; land, cattle and important farm machinery were socialised; and income was being distributed according to individual labour contribution in terms of work-day units. Irrigation, an important feature of Korean agriculture, was being developed by the co-operatives with government aid.

The face of the countryside changed, what with an extensive housing programme and the electrification of many villages. And village clubs or community houses became a feature.

Much was done by the government in the cultural field. Universal compulsory seven-year schooling was introduced for the first

time in Korean history, making education available to the children of workers and peasants and one out of every four Koreans went to school.

The North Koreans were working for a final peaceful settlement of the Korean problem and national unification. In this they were supported by the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community.

Democratic Republic of Vietnam

During the first three years after the end of the war in 1954 the efforts of the Vietnamese people were directed mainly towards the reconstruction of the country's war-ravaged economy.

Its most urgent task was to complete the agrarian reform that had been initiated during the "dirty" war, when the Government of the DRV confiscated the estates and property of the French colonialists and those Vietnamese who had betrayed their country by throwing in their lot with the French. Such estates had been distributed among the landless and land-poor peasants. Now, after the country achieved its independence, a campaign was launched against the landed gentry. In the course of 1956 and 1957 the landlords, as a class, were liquidated in the DRV, all of their lands, cattle and buildings being turned over to the working peasants. As a result, the latter now held 98 per cent of all the arable land. This act of transferring land to those who tilled it produced a regular explosion of enthusiasm among millions of peasants. In 1956 the rice fields yielded a crop of 4,135,600 tons, as against 2,407,000 tons in 1939, which had been a record year under the old regime.

The agrarian reform was followed by the nationalisation of mines, waters, forests and virgin lands, as well as the industrial enterprises expropriated from the French colonialists and the Vietnamese turncoats; all of which, together with the plants built by the working people and the People's Army during the war, came to constitute the state socialist sector of the national economy.

The people's government facilitated the enrolment of working peasants and artisans in a variety of production co-operatives, or, rather, mutual-assistance labour-brigades initially, which only subsequently developed into production co-operatives.

In parallel with economic reconstruction, the Republic made an important move to solve the problem of national minorities. For the population of North Vietnam is multinational, composed of several dozen minor peoples besides the Vietnamese proper who form the largest segment. Territories inhabited by these minorities have been constituted into autonomous areas, of which the



Vietnamese peasants use every opportunity to study

Thai-Meo and Viet-Bac are the most important. These national minorities are represented in the highest organs of state power. Every consideration is given to the languages and scripts of the national minorities, and those who have no script are being aided in developing one. The just policy of the government and the Working People's Party of Vietnam in respect of the national minorities has served to wipe out former enmities, and the various tribes and peoples now live and work together in perfect accord.

By the end of 1957 the reconstruction of the national economy was virtually completed. In terms of value, the aggregate output of agriculture, industry and handicrafts approached the level of 1939.

In 1958 the Working People's Party of Vietnam and the DRV Government undertook further socialist reforms. A wide movement in favour of co-operative farming developed, which resulted in the enrolment of the great majority of peasants into co-operatives of different kinds. By 1963 one-third of the population had joined co-operatives of the highest socialist type, in which the basic means of production, including land and cattle, were socialised and income was distributed according to work-days contributed. Where poverty and hunger had been the lot of the North Vietnamese peasants before the revolution, people now lived in good conditions and faced the future with confidence. Rice crops in North

Vietnam now surpassed anything the rice-growing lands of Southeast Asia had ever known.

The state sector in industry, which became the leading sector of the national economy, was developed and strengthened. Practically all privately owned industrial, commercial and transport enterprises were reorganised into mixed state-private enterprises, and this led to a restriction of worker exploitation. The economy of North Vietnam was no longer the backward, lop-sided economy of colonial days. In 1964 the volume of industrial production was eight times greater than in 1955, and this rapid rate of industrial development was very justly a source of pride for the working people of the DRV.

A nation-wide competitive movement to spur production was started on the initiative of the workers of the Xuen Hai repair workshop at Haiphong. Thousands of suggestions were received from participants in the movement, dealing with methods of increasing industrial output and improving product quality.

Higher levels of industrial and agricultural production brought considerable improvement in living standards. Peasant incomes had doubled by 1959, as compared with colonial times. Hunger and unemployment, which stalked the land under the colonial system, were all but forgotten. People were no longer clothed in rags and tatters. The government had worked hard to solve the difficult housing problem; and rents in workers' districts and industrial settlements were now not more than 2 or 3 per cent of a worker's earnings, instead of around 33 per cent as in former days.

There were signal achievements in the spheres of public health, education and culture. Dozens of new medical institutions had been opened since the revolution. Much attention had been given to maternity and child health. As a result infant mortality dropped to approximately one-tenth of the rate prevailing under the colonial regime.

Illiteracy had been as high as 90 per cent among the Vietnamese under French colonial rule. A wide movement for general literacy developed after the formation of people's democracy; and the results surpassed all expectations: by the end of 1958 all the population in the 12 to 50 age brackets could read, write and count.

Elementary, secondary and higher education was being rapidly developed. Fifteen higher educational institutions and dozens of technical schools now operated in a country which used to boast but one university with an enrolment of a few hundred. Numerous libraries, clubs, etc., were opened.

While pressing the development of its industry and agriculture, as well as the cultural sphere, in its advance towards socialism, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam consistently worked for the liberation of South Vietnam from foreign domination and



Vietnamese AA gun crew firing on US air pirates in Nghe An Province

its unification with North Vietnam to form a united independent democratic state, in accordance with the decisions of the Geneva Conference. The demands for a cessation of imperialist interference in the affairs of the Vietnamese people acquired particular urgency in 1962, when the ruling circles of the United States launched their armed intervention in South Vietnam, intending to suppress the powerful patriotic movement against the sanguinary dictatorship which terrorised that part of the country, and for the unification of the latter with the North.

The American war of aggression in South Vietnam continued to expand month after month as more and more American troops were thrown into a battle that was being fought to achieve aims entirely alien to their interests. The National Liberation Army struck back effectively, and guerilla forces harassed the invaders on an ever greater scale. In August 1964, the United States, while continuing its effort to subdue the people of South Vietnam, carried the war into North Vietnam. Applying the principle of escalation, the American air force carried out increasingly heavy air-raids against urban centres and rural areas alike, inflicting great damage and taking a heavy toll of lives.

Backed by the whole of progressive mankind, the heroic people of Vietnam fought back with increasing vigour, exacting a high price from the US aggressors.

The war demanded an entire change of life in the DRV. Scores of thousands of men and women joined the armed forces and the special detachments formed to service transport and work on reconstruction. A considerable part of the population of those urban areas which came in for particularly vicious bombing and shelling by the American air force and warships was evacuated to rural regions. And local industries were chiefly emphasised in the country's economic development with a view to making every province economically self-sufficient.

Between January 1965 and November 1967 alone the US invaders unloaded over 1,600,000 tons of bombs on Vietnam, more than half of them on the DRV.

However, the hopes of the US imperialists to bring the republic to its knees were blasted. One proof was the successful fulfilment of the two-year economic development plan, 1966-67, which was even exceeded for certain targets. Though the area of irrigated lands shrank, the total yield of rice remained the same.

The aid given by the Soviet Union to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was of the greatest importance for its resistance to US aggression. This aid included the most sophisticated types of weapons: aircraft, anti-aircraft artillery and rockets, munitions, etc., as well as industrial equipment, vehicles, petroleum products, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, chemical fertilisers, food products, and so on. In rendering this aid, entirely free, incidentally, the Soviet Union was motivated by a feeling of international solidarity. Other socialist countries, too, rendered the fighting people of Vietnam effective aid. The peoples of the socialist community were in the van of the campaign to put an end to the American war of aggression and to bring about the complete withdrawal of US and satellite forces from Vietnamese soil.

Revolutionary Reforms in Cuba

After the cruel Batista dictatorship was toppled in Cuba, the reactionaries at home, and even more so abroad, had hoped to see the Cuban working people fail in their attempt to defend the revolution and crushed in the vice of economic difficulties. These hopes were not to come true, however. For the revolutionary government not only held out, but was able, in a relatively brief span of time, to work profound changes in Cuba's economy, as also in the cultural sphere.

Most important among these changes was the agrarian reform, land being Cuba's greatest asset. Before the revolution the best lands were owned by a small clique of landlords and by foreign (chiefly North American) petroleum, mining and stock-breeding



Cuban peasants, rid of landlords, work with enthusiasm in the fields

concerns. The latifundia were the foundation on which the corrupt anti-democratic regimes mainly rested. Offsetting these vast estates was a multitude of small and infinitesimal peasant holdings; though most of the peasantry were landless.

In May 1950, the revolutionary government passed a law expropriating large tracts of land belonging to big landlords and North American concerns, thereby putting a term, once and for all, to the power exercised by the local and foreign latifundists in all spheres of Cuban life. Over 100,000 landless and land-poor peasants received plots of up to 27 hectares each, as their personal property, free of charge.

Important stock-breeding and rice-growing economies were converted into people's estates. Many farm hands and small tenant-farmers joined to form co-operatives.

In 1960 and 1961 there followed the nationalisation of industrial enterprises belonging to the big and middle Cuban bourgeoisie. Many private urban residences were expropriated and turned over to the working people. Thus did the age-old dream of the Cuban people come true: they had at last inherited all the wealth the Pearl of the Antilles had to offer. And having made an end of feudalism and imperialist domination and cut the ground from under the local bourgeoisie, the people of Cuba applied themselves to the task of socialist construction.

Planned, balanced development was programmed for Cuba's economy. The revolutionary government took steps to end Cuba's dependence on the cultivation and processing of a single crop—sugar-cane in the given case—to the exclusion of all others. However, it is precisely in an expansion of the sugar industry that the Cuban leaders saw the solution of the problem; for the increased production and sale of sugar would furnish the government with additional revenue, which could be used to set up those industries that Cuba needed to assure a balanced development of its economy.

A chemical industry was developing. Agricultural machinery plants were going up. The presence of rich polymetallic ore deposits was of great significance for Cuba's industrial development. Two nickel-producing plants were already functioning. The republic's merchant shipping was rapidly expanding, and its merchant marine was already five times and more the size of its pre-revolutionary fleet. And a new fishing fleet was built.

Hundreds of thousands of Cuban factory workers and peasants on people's estates participated in labour competition in an effort to increase production. In the spring of 1963 the name of Reynaldo Castro, a *machetero*, became famous overnight for having set a world record in cane-cutting. Over the period 1959-61 the rate of increase of sugar production was practically double that which prevailed in the decade preceding the revolution.

In the autumn of 1963 a law was passed on the nationalisation of privately owned landed estates larger than 67 hectares, which accounted for roughly 22 per cent of the land under cultivation. This strengthened the socialist sector of agriculture, to the serious detriment of the rural bourgeoisie. This was followed by preliminary measures to expand the cultivation of food and industrial crops, such as cotton, rice, beans and corn.

A number of revolutionary measures were introduced by the government, calculated to end certain old institutions and establish new social relations. These included the organisation of a civil service drafted from the ranks of the revolutionary army, workers, peasants and progressive intelligentsia; the creation of a people's militia; and the reorganisation of the judicial system. A body of labour laws was enacted to protect the rights of the working people, urban and rural; and a comprehensive social security system was set up. Important advances were achieved in the sphere of public health.

The revolution gave a powerful impetus to progress in the educational and cultural sphere. Half the island's population could neither read nor write before the revolution. The year 1961 was designated by the government as "Literacy Year": those who were literate were urged to teach those who were not, and those who were illiterate—to learn reading and writing. Ten thousand young

teachers, trained for the job during the preceding two years, scattered through the countryside to teach. Study groups were organised all over the country. Many of these young teachers went even further and took up quarters with peasant families, to move only after all the members had been taught to read and write. By the end of 1961 illiteracy was a thing of the past.

Although handicapped by having to fight off counter-revolutionary attempts by local and foreign reactionaries, the Cuban Government was continuously concerned with the expansion of elementary, secondary and higher education. Several thousand schoolhouses were built, for instance, in somewhat less than two years. "Rifle, school-book and work" was a current motto in Cuba.

Substantial was the aid given to Cuba by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. A number of trade and credit agreements concluded by Cuba and the Soviet Union guaranteed Cuba the marketing of its traditional lines of goods in exchange for the manufactured goods it requires. The USSR supplied Cuba with petroleum products, machinery, equipment, ferrous rolled goods, fertilisers, and foods. In the sixties the Soviet Union advanced a 77,000,000 peso loan to Cuba to finance the reconstruction of its sugar industry and undertook to help it re-equip 114 sugar refineries. Cuban exports to the USSR included sugar, tobacco, and nickeliferous products.

Czechoslovakia helped Cuba build tractor, motor-lorry and motor-cycle works. Poland furnished equipment for shipyards and ship-repair facilities, a battery plant, and a harbour grain elevator. A radio-equipment plant was built with help from the German Democratic Republic. Cuba's participation in inter-state specialisation as practised by the members of the socialist community was contributing to its economic development.

The aid thus extended to Cuba by the peoples of the socialist states made a major contribution to strengthening its freedom and independence.

No sooner the government of Fidel Castro came to power than the American imperialists determined to throttle the Cuban revolution. The American monopolies had no intention to put up with the loss of their Cuban assets and, what is more important, they feared lest the Cuban example should inspire other Latin American peoples to throw off the American yoke.

Initially, it was proposed to bring Cuba to heel through economic pressure. In July 1960, the US companies refused to take delivery of Cuban sugar as provided for in the USA-Cuban trade agreement. Deliveries of petroleum products to Cuba were next suspended, while American-owned refineries were instructed to refrain from processing crude petroleum supplied to Cuba by the

Soviet Union. These measures were calculated to place Cuba in a very difficult situation.

By way of retaliation the Cuban Government nationalised all American-owned sugar and petroleum refineries, mines and metallurgical works. The sugar which the United States refused to buy was purchased by the Soviet Union. In the event, the American monopolies were to suffer by losing Cuba as a market for their goods.

Now that they became convinced that Cuba could not be bullied into obedience by economic pressure, the US aggressive circles decided to resort to arms. Supporters of the Batista regime who had fled from Cuba to Florida and Guatemala were hastily organised into mercenary bands, supplied with American instructors and financed by American money. This counter-revolutionary rabble itched to overthrow the Cuban Government.

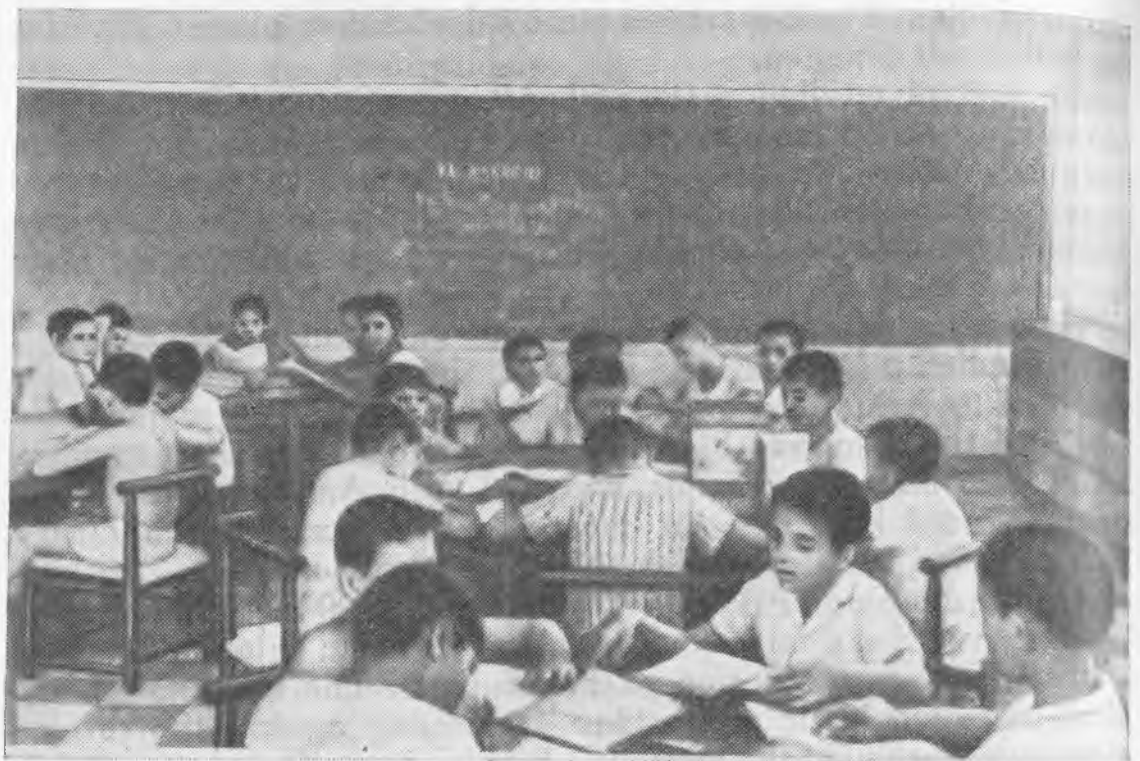
On the morning of April 17, 1961, some 2,000 mercenaries, supported by US air force and naval units, made a landing on the Cuban coast in the region of Playa Jiron. The expectation was that there would be a spontaneous uprising against the revolutionary government the moment a landing was effected.

These hopes were destined to be shattered, however, for the working people of Cuba rose to a man in defence of the revolution. The invading force was crushed at the end of three days' fighting. And this total failure of the Playa Jiron invasion showed the world that the Cuban people were united in their determination to hold what they had won.

The position of the USSR during the invasion was that of solidarity with the heroic people of Cuba. The Soviet Government declared that the Soviet Union, like the other peaceable nations, would stand by the Cuban people in its hour of trial. The Soviet Government reserved the right to come to Cuba's aid, together with other nations, unless the armed intervention was called off.

Their defeat at Playa Jiron failed, however, to cool the ardour of the American imperialists. The aggressive circles in the USA went about preparations for fresh attacks against Cuba, in which US armed forces were to take part. Considerations of security forced the Cuban Government, in these circumstances, to acquire an adequate stock of weapons from the Soviet Union. This infuriated the US imperialists; especially the more reckless ones, who came to be known as the "rabids"; these called for immediate armed intervention and the destruction of the "Castro regime". In short, the US military had drawn a bead on Cuba.

To meet the threat, Cuba and the Soviet Union concluded an agreement on the dislocation of powerful defence weapons on Cuban territory, including rockets. Bourgeois propaganda lost no



Camillo Cienfuegos Memorial School class room, Cuba

time in warning that these rockets were allegedly a threat to the United States. And in the autumn of 1962 the American military machine was all set for a strike against Cuba.

The Caribbean crisis of October-November 1962, was the gravest international crisis of the post-war period. Mankind stood on the very brink of a nuclear war, and the situation was saved only through the exercise of reason and the will to peace. Faced with the determination of the Cuban people to defend their revolutionary causes and in view of the wave of protests in other countries against the aggressive moves of the US military, the US imperialists did not dare to attack Cuba.

Revolutionary Cuba came out of the trial stronger and more determined than ever and, rallied around their government and their Communist Party, the Cuban people is successfully building socialism.

The significance of the Cuban revolution is to be found in the fact that the Cuban people was the first in the Western Hemisphere to carry on the cause of the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917. The socialist revolution in Cuba signalled to the world that the ideas of socialism had crossed the ocean and established a beachhead in the Western Hemisphere.

THE WORLD SOCIALIST COMMUNITY

Transition to Socialism: Common Laws and Distinctive Features

A study of the road travelled by the countries belonging to the world socialist community reveals that the process of transition from capitalism to socialism is everywhere governed by common laws. In every country, however, the process of socialist construction manifests certain distinctive features.

The road travelled by the Soviet Union and all the People's Democracies shows that the basic prerequisite of socialist construction is a socialist revolution and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship. Revolutions do not happen spontaneously: they are effected by the masses. Nor can any people effect a socialist revolution and achieve socialism spontaneously, without the leadership of the most progressive social class, that is to say, the proletariat. Neither, however, can the working class stir the masses to revolution and inspire them to build socialism unless it is guided by a Marxist-Leninist party.

States building socialism may differ in respect of their political structure, which may assume the form of a republic of Soviets or a people's democracy. But the essential feature of these states is that they are proletarian dictatorships. A proletarian dictatorship is needed to suppress the resistance of the exploiting classes, overthrown but not destroyed, to gradually liquidate them as an organised social force, and to prepare the ground for socialist construction. A proletarian dictatorship means restriction of the rights and activities of the exploiting classes and of any individuals who oppose socialism. Yet that is not the most important function of a proletarian dictatorship. The most important point is that it maintains organisation and discipline within the vanguard of the working people, whose task is to put an end to the exploitation of man by man in whatever form.

While exercising coercion in respect of the foes of socialism, a proletarian dictatorship guarantees true freedom and democracy for all strata of the working people. It means democracy in the fullest sense of the word for the majority, that is to say, for the people as a whole.

That is the objective law which is common to all the countries that have rejected capitalism and set out to build socialism. The ways by which the working class wins power, however, differ from case to case, as a look at historic events will show. The proletariat of Russia had to win its way to power in violent armed struggle with the capitalists and landlords. The working class of the

European People's Democracies, on the other hand, came to power without having to fight a bloody civil war.

Within the system of proletarian dictatorship the leading role is played by the Communist or the Workers' Parties. Sometimes they are the only existing parties in the country, as in the USSR, Hungary, Rumania and Mongolia. Or they may co-exist, as in Poland, Bulgaria, the GDR, etc., with other democratic parties, which recognise the leading role of the working-class party and take an active part in socialist construction.

An indispensable requirement in socialist construction is an alliance of the working class with the main mass of the peasantry and other strata of working people. The essential nature of such an alliance will vary with the successive stages of socialist construction, in line with the changing tasks faced at such stages. There may be substantial differences in the strength of such alliances between proletariat and peasantry, owing to differences in the alignment of class forces.

It is further essential to abolish private ownership of the basic means of production and to replace it with social ownership. This necessity has been confirmed by the experience of the socialist countries. It stems from the irreconcilable contradiction between capitalist ownership and the interests of socialism. No capitalist, no banker, no entrepreneur will voluntarily refuse to pocket the proceeds of the labour performed by his employees. Hence it becomes necessary to take the basic means of production away from private owners and put them under social ownership.

Socialism cannot be built without a preliminary gradual socialist reorganisation of agriculture. The transition to collective farming, though based in all cases on the same fundamental principles, differs in certain other respects. Thus, for instance, in the USSR and the Mongolian People's Republic land was nationalised after the revolution, whereas in most of the other socialist countries the peasants joined to form production co-operatives while private ownership of land was allowed to remain. Here the age-long peasant tradition of private ownership prevailed, though there is now a gradual trend away from this form of ownership in favour of social ownership.

Another common law of socialist construction is planned development of the national economy; and this is a very real advantage of socialism over capitalism. Common, socialist ownership of the means of production means that the workers and peasants at the helm of the state can develop the national economy in a planned manner, in accordance with the needs of the society as a whole, rather than in a haphazard way as is the case under capitalism.

An important aspect of socialist construction is the revolution in the educational and cultural spheres, essential for all countries embarking on socialist construction inasmuch as no socialist society can be built without radically changing man's ideology and psychology, his attitude towards the society and his evaluation of his own function therein. No claim to being a builder of socialism in the fullest sense is valid without a broad education, a high cultural level, a knowledge of the laws governing the development of physical nature and society, and the ability to turn these laws to the advantage of the society and, consequently, of oneself as a member thereof.

National oppression must go, and cordial relations must be established between peoples if socialist construction is to be successful. Communists regard the nationalities problem as a part and parcel of the question of the proletarian revolution and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship, or, in other words, of the victory of socialism. The working class of the metropolitan states are fighting not only for the freedom of their own peoples but also for the freedom of the nations under imperialist oppression, fully conscious of the principle, enunciated by Marx and Engels, that no people can be free if it oppresses other peoples. A just solution of the nationalities problem can be found only under the socialist system. Only government by the workers and peasants can create genuinely equal and fraternal relations among nations, capable of providing a powerful stimulus for the development of a socialist society.

The solution of the nationalities problem in the Soviet Union offers a remarkable example. In Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and other socialist countries, too, national minorities enjoy full political equality and every opportunity for rapid development, economic as well as cultural. The example set by the socialist countries is a source of inspiration for the proletariat and oppressed peoples the world over in their struggle to throw off the imperialist yoke.

Those countries which have chosen socialism are determined to safeguard their socialist gains from all foes, internal and external. The socialist system rejects war as a means of solving internal or international contradictions. Eager to build a new way of life, the working people of the socialist countries want peace on earth more than anything else, for only peace will allow them to put all their effort and means into the work of improving their condition. Meantime they watch closely the doings of the imperialists and stand ready to smash any attempt to despoil them of the fruits of their victory.

Standing thus on guard against foreign and domestic enemies and guided by the principle of proletarian internationalism, the

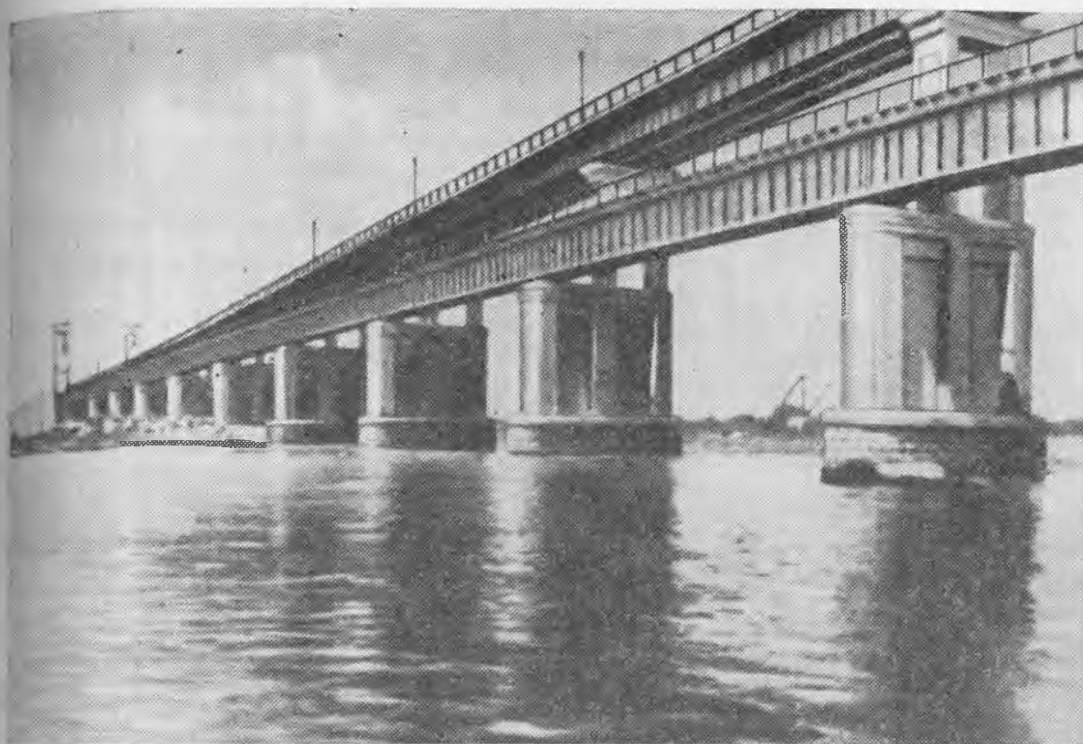
peoples of the socialist countries support each other and the working people of all lands. This proletarian internationalism, that is to say, class solidarity and international co-operation among the working class, is one of the laws that govern the process of development and a basic prerequisite of success in the people's struggle to overthrow capitalism and build socialism in its stead. Proletarian internationalism stems from the fact that the proletariat of every country finds itself pitted, in its fight for freedom, not only against its own, domestic bourgeoisie but also against the capitalists of other countries. If this resistance is to be overcome the working class must confront them with the solidarity of the proletariat of all countries.

Co-operation and Mutual Assistance Among Socialist Countries

The development of the world socialist community can best be served by cordial co-operation and mutual assistance among the socialist countries. Their unity of interests is determined by the identity of their economies, systems of state government, ideologies and aims. In all of the socialist countries state power is held by the people headed by the working class; industrial plants are owned by the society as a whole; and the same ideology prevails, that is to say, Marxism-Leninism. The common aim of the peoples of the socialist community is to defend their revolutionary gains and build socialism and, eventually, communism. This unity of interests lays the groundwork for close and cordial relations among these countries, based on full equality, mutual respect of independence and sovereignty, fraternal mutual assistance, and co-operation.

Mutual assistance is practised continuously by the socialist countries in the field of industrial, agricultural and cultural development. This is the purpose of the Council for Mutual Economic Aid (CMEA), set up in 1949 by the USSR and the European People's Democracies. The CMEA is called upon to co-ordinate the economic development of the member-states in line with the national interests and possibilities of each and also in the interests of the socialist community as a whole.

The emergence of a world socialist community made it unnecessary for the states that opted for socialism to develop all the various branches of their economies, as the USSR had been forced to do at a time when it was ringed about with capitalist countries. Socialist international division of labour became possible, each country emphasising those branches of its economy which it is best equipped to develop, as well as the co-ordination of national economic plans.

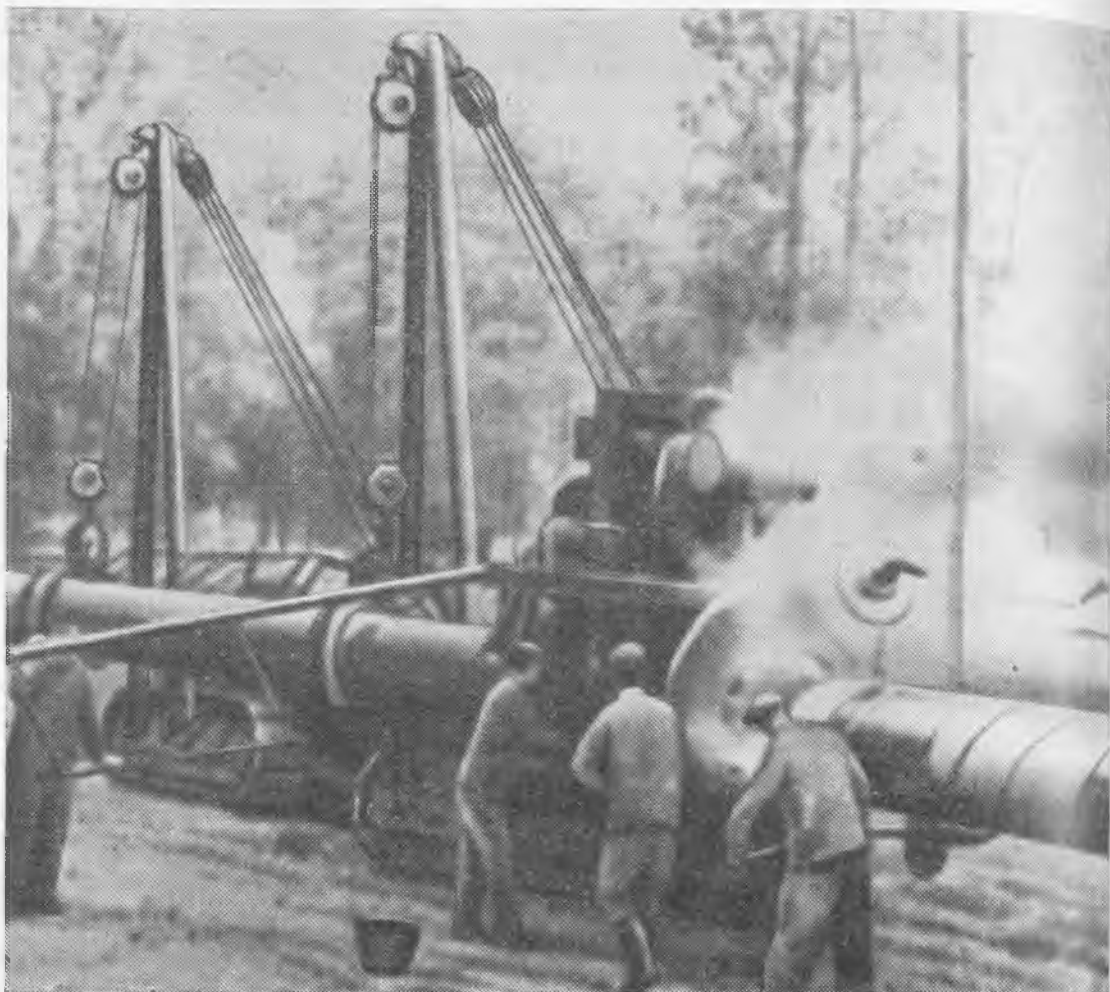


Friendship Bridge across the Danube, built in 1954, links Rumania and Bulgaria

A multilateral pattern of commodity exchange promotes a rapid and rational economic development of all the member-countries. Specialisation in the production of this or that line of goods follows the Council's recommendations. Thus, blast-furnace equipment is produced in the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia; equipment for the aluminium industry in the Soviet Union and Hungary; artificial-fibre manufacturing machinery in the GDR and the Soviet Union. Bulgaria specialises in fruit and vegetable growing and in the production of agricultural machinery. This socialist international division of labour is conducive to a more rational utilisation of the means and resources of each member-country and, in addition, to a more rapid economic development of the entire socialist community.

Close co-operation and mutual assistance enable the socialist community to undertake projects which would be beyond the power of individual countries to handle. Thus the longest oil pipeline in the world, Friendship, some 5,000 kilometres long, has been built jointly by the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and the GDR to deliver oil from the Volga valley to the banks of the Oder, Vistula, Vltava and Danube. And a common power grid, Peace, is used by the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania.

The peaceful uses of atomic energy constitute a field in which the scientists of the socialist countries are currently co-operating.



Druzhba oil pipe-line in construction

And there is a continuous extensive exchange of information on current scientific and technological achievements and production techniques.

Under the socialist system the economically more advanced states aid those that still tend to lag, so that there is a gradual levelling of the economic development of the member-states of the socialist community.

While thus joining forces to promote its economic development, the socialist community does not hold aloof from the world capitalist market, favouring, rather, the development of mutually advantageous trade with the capitalist countries.

Some of the socialist countries are parties to treaties of friendship, alliance and mutual assistance. Moreover, the emergence of the aggressive military NATO bloc of Western states has made it necessary for the socialist states to take counter-measures in the interests of security.

Accordingly, in May 1955, the USSR, Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Rumania and

Czechoslovakia concluded, at Warsaw, a treaty of mutual assistance in the event of aggression against any one of the parties thereto, and formed a joint military command of their armed forces.

In the meantime, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are consistently working for general and complete disarmament, for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons, and for the dismantling of foreign military bases.

World Socialist System as Decisive Factor in Development of the Human Society

In the late 1950s and early 1960s the world socialist system entered a new phase of development. The Soviet Union launched a broad programme of communist construction, while the peoples of Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania and Mongolia laid the foundations of socialism. Most other People's Democracies were close to the achievement of this aim. Elimination of social and economic possibilities of restoring capitalism in these countries signified that the new social system had won the final victory on the scale of the whole world system of socialism, and that the relation of forces in the world arena had changed radically in favour of socialism.

The growing might of the forces of socialism and the concurrent decline and disintegration of the capitalist system indicate that the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of the human society. The main content and main trend of world history will hence depend on the continued development of the socialist system.

One of the basic prerequisites of victory of socialism over capitalism on a universal scale is a consistently high rate of economic development in the socialist countries. Over the period 1950-67 the volume of industrial production has increased in the socialist countries by a factor of 5.4 and in the capitalist countries by a factor of 2.5. In other words the economy of the former is developing more than twice as fast as that of the latter.

The more sober-minded among the capitalist ideologists appear to realise the strength and magnetism of the world socialist community. Thus William Randolph Hearst, Jr., the American newspaper chain owner, who has visited several socialist countries in Europe, has had to admit that the working people in these countries have much higher living standards than they had ever before, that socialism was there forever and no talk could change the fact.

Events have shown that the expansion of the socialist doctrine cannot be halted. Its advance over the face of our planet continues, hastening the day of its eventual triumph.

Chapter Nine

THE USA AND THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES OF EUROPE AFTER THE WAR. AGGRESSIVE BLOCS EMERGE

Beginning of the Nuclear Era

Those closing days of history's bloodiest war saw a new era dawning over mankind: the nuclear era. The vast power that lay dormant in the nucleus of the atom could have given people an abundance of heat, light, food and other goods. But it so happened that first to come into possession of atomic energy was a capitalist country—the United States of America. And the energy that could have been a source of new hope for millions made its debut—in the hands of the leaders of the imperialist world—as an instrument of suffering and death.

On August 6, 1945, an American flier, acting on orders from H. Truman, president of the United States, pushed a button, and a minute later Hiroshima, one of Japan's biggest cities, lay in ruins. "The city," according to Japanese accounts, "was a mass of rubble. The scene everywhere was one of unparalleled horror. Charred and burnt bodies lay in heaps, in the very attitudes and postures in which the blast had overtaken them. The skeleton of a tramcar was crammed with corpses hanging on to the straps. Of those who remained alive many were in pain from burns that covered most of their bodies. Wherever one looked one encountered sights remindful of hell." Two days later a similar tragedy was visited on Nagasaki.

Nothing can ever justify the calculated cruelty of the American leaders. There was no question of military necessity, for the fate of the war in the Pacific theatre had already been decided: at that precise time, by mutual agreement among the Allies, the Soviet Union was to join in the war with Japan. It has been admitted by General Chennault, in command of the American air force in China, that the Soviet Union's entry into the war was the decisive factor that hastened the end of the war in the Pacific and would have been such even if the atom bombs had never been dropped.

One may well ask what made the American Government decide to use the atom bombs and thus turn the remarkable achievement of human genius into a lasting threat to the world. The answer is that its sole aim had been to put pressure on the Soviet Union at the critical moment when the foundation of a post-war world system was being laid.

The American bourgeoisie had suffered no tangible losses in the war. Mushrooming defence orders had expanded US industrial production by 2.5 times. The United States accounted for over 60 per cent of the industrial output of the capitalist world, 33 per cent of its exports, over 50 per cent of its merchant marine tonnage, and 70 per cent of its gold reserves. The defeat of Germany and Japan had removed, at any rate for a long time to come, the American bourgeoisie's keenest competitors in the world markets.

Its allies, notably Great Britain and France, had exhausted their resources and were forced to look to the United States for financial aid.

The economic and, later, the political and military imperialist centre of gravity had once again shifted from Europe to the United States. In this situation the idea of undisputed world domination which had first been hatched in the United States several decades ago now appeared to American politicians as capable of relatively effortless realisation.

Serious obstacles, however, did stand in the way of its realisation. These were the Soviet Union, now a great socialist state, and the People's Democracies that had emerged in the 1940s. The hopes for a weakened USSR had not come true: on the contrary, the USSR had come out of the war stronger than ever before. At the time when the first shots rang out in 1939 on the German-Polish frontier the socialist system comprised only two states: the USSR and Mongolia. By the end of the war the working class and the peasantry had taken over in seven European countries, namely, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania and Albania. In addition, progressive elements in Eastern Germany had begun, with the active aid of the Soviet Government, to reorganise their country along democratic lines. Popular revolutions were making good headway in a number of Asian countries. In China, the Communist Party controlled by the end of the war an area with a population of 100,000,000.

The exhaustion or possibly even the collapse of the Soviet Union and the concomitant suppression of the workers' movement as a whole, which the reactionary circles had counted upon, had thus failed to materialise; and the forces that stood for progress, democracy and socialism, headed by the USSR, had become a powerful factor in international relations.

When he made his plea for the use of the atom bomb against Japan, US Secretary of State Byrnes argued that that would induce the Soviet Union to be more tractable. According to an American radio broadcast in the autumn of 1945, the point of view of the Anglo-American leadership was that Russia would be destroyed if she didn't "behave".

The blasts of the first atom bombs ushered in a new period in the foreign policies of the imperialist states, which came to be known as atom diplomacy or the cold war. The essence of this new policy was to bring continuous pressure to bear upon the Soviet Union and the fledgeling People's Democracies. The United States took upon itself to tell the East European countries how they were to solve the problems of their internal development. In China, the United States intervened in the civil war on the side of the Kuomintang government.

The temper of public opinion, however, and the political climate in the early post-war months, reflecting as they did the recent victory won by the Allied nations in a ruthless war against the fascist countries, kept the governments of the United States and Great Britain from adopting an overt anti-Soviet policy so soon after the end of the war. The victory over the fascist coalition had bolstered the forces of democracy in all countries. In the United States, Left-wing trade-union organisations now wielded greater influence, and since 1946 the Progressive Party had stepped into the picture. In Britain a Labour Party government stood at the helm. Communist Parties were enjoying growing prestige. In 1943 the Communist International decided for a number of reasons to disband.¹ With the new stage of development of the world communist movement new tasks had arisen before it and, moreover, the Communist Parties themselves had accumulated a wealth of experience and learnt to solve difficult problems engendered by class warfare.

In France, the first post-war elections (1946) gave the Communists 5,500,000 votes, i.e., 28.6 per cent of the total. In Italy the Communists received 4,400,000 or 20 per cent of all votes, and nearly 25 per cent in Finland. In 1945, 1946 and 1947 Communists were members of the governments of nine European countries, namely, France, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Austria, Finland and Luxemburg.

In 1947 Communist Parties existed in 76 countries as against 61 in 1939. The number of Communists had more than tripled in the bourgeois countries during the war to reach 4,800,000. With the

¹ The Communist International was dissolved in the interests of closer union of the broader masses in the fight against fascism.

war over, important steps were taken to assure working class solidarity on an international plane. A World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) was formed at a World Trade Union Congress held in Paris in September 1945. The trade unions of 56 countries joined the WFTU, including the USSR, the USA, Great Britain, France, Italy, Poland, China, India and Indonesia. Two more international organisations were established towards the close of 1945. These were the Women's International Democratic Federation and the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

The Cold War

During 1945, and to some extent during 1946 and 1947, representatives of the USSR and the Western powers were generally still able to reach agreement on many important international political problems. This was manifested at the creation of the United Nations Organisation, the Potsdam Conference, and the drafting and adoption of the peace treaties with Italy, Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Finland, the countries which participated in the Second World War on the side of nazi Germany.

In the spring of 1946, however, there occurred an event which many historians and journalists viewed as a turning-point in post-war international relations. On March 5, 1946, W. Churchill, former British prime minister and outstanding Western political figure, made a speech at the American town of Fulton (Missouri), in the presence of President H. Truman, which declared relentless political war against the Soviet Union. Churchill called for a show of strength for the benefit of the Russians, which was to be achieved through a union of all Anglo-Saxon countries against socialism. The speech became a programme of action for the imperialist camp in the international arena. There ensued the long-drawn-out cold war period, which involved an armaments race, the setting up of American bases around the perimeter of the USSR and the People's Democracies, and the formation of aggressive military blocs.

Thoroughly alarmed by the growing strength of socialism and by the scale of the revolutionary movement, the American monopoly bourgeoisie wanted the armed forces of the United States, now in possession of the atom bomb, to take upon themselves the role of a world policeman, a sort of fire brigade ready to rush to any part of the globe in order to extinguish any fires of popular unrest. General Taylor, who became later chief of staff of the American army and US ambassador in South Vietnam, claimed that the United States was capable of policing the world and establishing a world-wide "pax Americana".

An early embodiment of this policy was the proclamation, in March 1947, of the Truman Doctrine. In a special message to Congress, the American president claimed for the United States the right to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries. By virtue of this doctrine the American Government gave financial and military aid to the reactionary monarchist regime of Greece and to the Government of Turkey, whose policy at the time was violently anti-Soviet. The true motives of that aid were revealed by Walter Lippmann, a leading American publicist, when he wrote that the choice had fallen upon Turkey and Greece not because they were shining examples of democracy but because they were strategic gateways to the Black Sea and the heart of the Soviet Union. In exchange for this aid, which would only enrich the ruling circles of the two countries, the United States obtained the right to establish important military bases on the territory of both.

Shortly after the Truman Doctrine was proclaimed the US governing circles elaborated a programme of economic aid intended to salvage bourgeois Europe, weaker now as the result of the war and the successes of the Left-wing, democratic forces. Called the Marshall Plan, after the secretary of state of the United States, it was intended to rally the capitalists of various countries behind the United States to combat the Soviet Union and the international workers' and national liberation movements. The American imperialists wanted to take advantage of the economic difficulties encountered by the newly-emerged People's Democracies in order to lure them away from the socialist camp and into the orbit of their own influence, as in the case of Czechoslovakia, which they tried to enlist in the Marshall Plan.

The bourgeois politicians in the key posts in the various West European countries willingly fell in with the American programme in spite of the fact that it involved serious infringement of their countries' sovereignty and considerable strengthening of the economic positions of US monopolies in Europe. American executives began to control the finances and foreign trade of the countries receiving US "aid". As a sequel of the Marshall Plan measures were initiated by the governing classes of the West European countries to curb the Communist Parties and other progressive organisations.

In regard to some of its aspects the Marshall Plan was a failure. Thus, its authors failed in their attempt to breach the unity of the socialist countries and draw them into participation in the plan. Nor were they able to cause any visible abatement of class warfare or any decrease of communist influence in Western Europe. On the whole, however, the Marshall Plan did help bring a measure of stabilisation into the capitalist system. Its greatest contribution was to the recovery of the West German economic poten-

tial, which was one of the main aims of the American plan. This was entirely in line with the policies of the Western powers in respect of the German problem.

The German Problem

The Potsdam Agreements were violated by the United States, Great Britain and France in the early post-war years. The occupation authorities of the Western powers looked to the moneyed classes and reactionary politicians in West Germany for support, and not infrequently to former active nazis. Neither an agrarian reform nor the liquidation of West German monopolies were effected, so that a nutrient medium was left by the United States, British and French governments to nourish German militarism back to life again. As early as 1945, when the subject of anti-Soviet military blocs was first broached in the Western press, discussion began of the possible inclusion of West Germany in such blocs. General Eisenhower, speaking at a later date, argued that it was in the interests of the United States to have the German army ready to attack in any direction the United States might indicate.

Associated with such plans for using West Germany as an important member of anti-Soviet military blocs was the policy of ending the four-power control and partitioning of the country. During 1946-47 the American and British zones became associated under a bi-zonal arrangement; and when the French zone joined with them, in 1948, the partitioning of Germany had become an accomplished fact.

During the first half of 1948 representatives of the four occupying powers were engaged in working out a currency reform for the whole of Germany. On June 20, there came unexpectedly the announcement of a currency reform for the three western zones. There followed an influx of the devalued currency into East Germany, where it still retained its purchasing power. To protect East German economy and to keep out currency speculators the Soviet authorities established a check on all road vehicles arriving from West Germany. The United States, British and French governments refused to submit to this checking system and began an air-lift of passengers and freight into West Berlin. J. F. Dulles, General Marshall's advisor at the time and later United States secretary of state, recognised that the situation in Berlin could be normalised without much difficulty, but neither he nor his colleagues were in a hurry to do so. In May 1949, the conflict was settled through the initiative of the Soviet Government.

Meanwhile, however, the Western powers continued to work for a final partition of Germany. On September 7, 1949, the first West German Parliament (Bundestag) proclaimed a Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Its early acts in the international arena gave clear evidence that the new state was given to militarism and dedicated to the idea of revenge, and that it had been put, as a Soviet Government statement very rightly pointed out, in the hands of those who had but recently collaborated with the nazi regime. And, indeed, the FRG was at that time the only European country to call for a revision of the state frontiers established jointly by the victorious powers after the Second World War. FRG leaders frequently issued statements reminiscent of the old "Drang nach Osten" and "Lebensraum" and other similar slogans. In 1951 the rebuilding of the West German military machine was begun, and many nazi generals were once again invited into service. In 1955, finally, the FRG was admitted into the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and became the closest supporter of the United States.

Military Blocs

That aggressive bloc had been set up back in 1949 by the United States and included, beside that country, Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg,¹ Italy, Canada, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Portugal. Turkey and Greece gained admission in 1952, and the FRG in 1955. This North Atlantic Bloc became the most important military alliance of the imperialist states. Regular NATO sessions adopted decisions on intensification of military preparations, expansion of the military bases network, etc. The NATO was aimed against the USSR, against the entire socialist community of states, as also against the national liberation and democratic movements in general.

In the early 1950s the United States started setting up military blocs in other regions. The first "fringe" area military alliance was the ANZUS, a Pacific bloc comprising Australia, New Zealand and the USA, set up in 1951. In 1954 the NATO leadership were able to organise an Asiatic branch of the North Atlantic Alliance. This was the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), whose task was ostensibly to combat subversive activities, but which was really intended to suppress national liberation movements. Organised by the United States, Great Britain and France, the SEATO comprised in addition Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan.

¹ These five European states had joined to form, in March 1948, the first post-war military bloc, the so-called Western European Union.

Then, in 1955, came the organisation of the Bagdad Pact, comprising Great Britain, Turkey, Pakistan, Iran and Iraq. Iraq withdrew from the pact following the revolution of 1958, and the seat of the pact was moved from Bagdad to Ankara; and in 1959 the name of the organisation was changed to Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO). The United States, while formally not a member of CENTO, was represented in its various important bodies and exercised decisive influence on its activities. Air and rocket bases aimed at the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries were set up by the United States on the territory of practically all the states participating in these military blocs.

Hand in hand with the reactionary foreign policy of the imperialist governments went suppression of democratic forces at home. For Communists and all "dissenters" a long period of persecution set in in the United States. To voice progressive views was to invite possible loss of job and indictment. In Great Britain many perfectly innocent civil servants were dismissed as a consequence of a "loyalty test". Members of peace movements became the target of bitter persecution. An atmosphere of unbridled anti-communism prevailed, in which repressions and terrorism thrived.

Between 1948 and 1951 several prominent leaders of the working class were murdered in cold blood or seriously injured by paid assassins hired for the purpose by reactionary elements. Those murdered were Jorge Calvo, a leader of the Communist Party of Argentina, and Julien Lahaut, head of the Belgian Communist Party. Palmiro Togliatti, the Italian Communist leader, was seriously wounded.

An unheard-of wave of war hysteria now swept over the countries of the North Atlantic Bloc. It was drummed into the ears of the population that the Soviet Union was about to attack Western Europe and the United States. Sharp businessmen advertised atom-bomb-proof shelters, underground hotel accommodations, etc. Imperialist governments used the imaginary Soviet menace to speed up the arms race. During the period between the fiscal year 1938/39 and the early 1950s, United States arms expenditures, per caput of population, had shown several tenfold increases.

Power Balance Shifts

As visualised by its American authors, the North Atlantic Bloc was to help strengthen the dominant military and political role of the United States in Western Europe. As more and more time lapsed since the end of the war, however, the American monopolies ran into increasing resistance on the part of their European business partners.

The most consistent resistance to US efforts to entrench itself in Western Europe was offered by France, which, in 1966, declared its decision to pull out of the NATO military organisation, thereby bringing to light the crisis that had been festering for the past few years within that aggressive body. The United States and its allies in the governing circles of the NATO member-states, were finding it more and more difficult with each passing year to justify the existence of that organisation by pointing to an alleged "Soviet menace" to counter which it had been created. More and more voices were raised in Denmark and Norway, in Canada and Iceland, and in the rest of the NATO member-states in favour of ending their membership upon the expiration, in 1969, of the stipulated twenty-year term.

This desire to throw off the American dictate was to a large extent attributed to economic factors. During the post-war years shifts were continuous in the "balance of power" within the bourgeois camp, indicating a decline of the importance of the United States in the world economy.

When the war ended the share of the United States in the industrial output of the capitalist world amounted to 60 per cent; but by 1948 it had dropped to 56.4 per cent, the vanquished countries, that is, West Germany, Italy and Japan, accounting at that time for 7.9 per cent. By the end of the first five post-war years the United States' share in the global capitalist output had dropped to 53.3 per cent, while that of West Germany, Italy and Japan had jumped to 11 per cent. The shares of Great Britain and France remained unchanged over the period 1948-50. Thus we see the but recently vanquished rivals of the United States, Britain and France, recovering once again and rapidly strengthening their position in the capitalist system. By 1958 West Germany had forged ahead of France in industrial production, and by 1960 she ranked second in the capitalist world.

There were, however, even more striking changes in the world capitalist market. Immediately after the defeat of the fascist bloc West German, Italian and Japanese exports stood at zero. Even two years later their exports accounted for only slightly over 2 per cent of the aggregate capitalist exports; while the United States still accounted for about 33 per cent of that aggregate. But by 1962 the share of the United States had dropped to 17.3 per cent, while that of the three defeated countries had jumped to 18.5 per cent. Moreover, while in the early post-war years the United States monopolies were paramount in the economy and foreign trade of the capitalist camp, the rapid recovery of their competitors cleared the way for keen rivalry within that camp.

Proof of the intensification of this process was seen in the appearance of various plans for amalgamating and integrating

the economy of European bourgeois countries. The European Coal and Steel Community, set up in 1950, was the first state-monopoly association designed largely to assure joint counter-action against the expansion of United States fuel and metal monopolies in the world markets.

European Integration

In March 1957, the representatives of France, Italy, the FRG, Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg, meeting in Rome, signed a treaty providing for the formation of a European Economic Community, also known as the Common Market or the Six. The treaty envisaged a gradual reduction and eventually the complete abolition of customs tariffs among the six Common Market countries and the establishment of common tariffs in respect of trade with all other states.

The Treaty of Rome drew a bead on the United States and Great Britain, for the Common Market was called upon to help its members to compete primarily with the monopolies of those two countries. The United States adopted a dual attitude towards European integration. On the one hand the American monopolists realised that the emergence of the Common Market meant fresh and very considerable difficulties for them in respect of marketing and raw materials supply. On the other hand, however, the American imperialists, being responsible for the organisation and leadership of all anti-socialist forces, were bound to support integration in the name of a common stand of the West against the East.

The formation of an economic union of bourgeois European states gave rise to a great many sharp contradictions among them. Great Britain was left outside the Common Market, and her bourgeoisie still vacillated between the very questionable benefits of joining the Six and the very real weakening of economic ties within the British Commonwealth. Serious contradictions existed within the Common Market as well. The problems of "agrarian integration" offered a good example. All six member-countries differed in respect of prices on agricultural produce, mechanisation level, climatic conditions, etc. Some of them, namely, France, Italy and Holland, were exporters of agricultural produce; while Belgium, Luxemburg and the FRG were importers thereof. It follows, naturally, that the unification of prices provided for by the 1962 agreement meant a serious change in the entire agricultural structure. The Common Market might mean certain gains for the ones and losses for the others. France would be among the latter, inasmuch as her interests clashed with those of the FRG not only within the framework of the Common Market. The dominance of

monopolies, the wholesale purchase of farm produce system, etc., threatened to shift the losses resulting from integration onto the shoulders of the small producers and the consumers. Even the Right-wing journals wrote of "human suffering" among the peasants whom the creation of a common market for farm produce would literally uproot from their holdings. Higher prices on food products, a direct result of agricultural integration, led to the aggravation of class warfare in the capitalist countries of Europe. The hard-fought strikes in Italy, Belgium, the FRG and other Common Market countries and the peasant demonstrations in France were proof enough.

Capitalist integration was a menace to the new, economically underdeveloped states. With the collapse of the colonial system and the failure of the European colonial powers to cope with the rising tide of the liberation movement, the emergence of the Common Market offered them a chance to pursue a policy of collective colonialism in Asia and Africa. The authors of the Common Market had provided for the "association" or partial adherence of a number of underdeveloped countries, which were to remain producers of raw material for European industry, that is, to be forever an agrarian appendage of the industrialised states. Cunningly planned propaganda of this sort of "association" sought to convince these fledgeling states that they would benefit from the abolition of customs duties on the minerals, ores and other raw material which they exported to Europe. But "association" meant the abolition of customs duties on manufactured commodities imported by Asiatic and African countries, and the extremely limited home markets of the underdeveloped countries would become glutted with goods imported from the industrialised states. Their own industries, which had just started developing, would be hard pressed in trying to meet this competition. A number of prominent African leaders very rightly sounded a warning against any support of the Common Market by African countries.

New Stage of the General Crisis of Capitalism

Throughout the two post-war decades the development of the imperialist system as a whole underwent important changes. This was especially true of its position *vis-à-vis* the non-imperialist camp. Such factors as the growing economic and military strength of the socialist countries, the successes registered by the anti-colonial revolution, and the world-wide struggle of peoples for peace set a limit to the opportunities still open to the imperialist states and restricted their ability to determine the course of world

events. These factors, as well as the aggravation of class war and the contradictions among the bourgeois countries, and the instability of the economic situation, ushered in, in the second half of the 1950s, the third phase of the general crisis of capitalism.

Unlike the first two stages, which were associated with the two world wars, this new, third stage was ushered in in times of peace. Once more it has been proved that the progressive development of mankind and the success of the forces of democracy stand in no need of war.

The world is currently in the midst of a very real scientific and technological revolution, as a consequence of scientific achievements in the spheres of atomic energy, electronics, cybernetics, etc. Where capitalism is dominant, however, this revolution runs riot and leads to painful changes in the pattern of industry, with the discharge of large numbers of industrial workers. Automation of production means not only growing unemployment in capitalist countries, but also greater intensification of labour and greater exploitation of those who retain their jobs.

Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that any further development of productive forces in the capitalist world is ruled out. There were serious shifts within the imperialist economic system in the post-war years. The process of concentration or monopolisation of the national economy went on in all of the economically developed capitalist countries. There was increasing government interference in the national economy in behalf of the monopolies; and state-monopoly capitalism was growing stronger and stronger in the bourgeois states. In some countries, such as France, Italy, Japan and the FRG, economic development proceeded at one time at a rather rapid rate; but it lacked the element of stability and was mainly of a broken nature accompanied now and then by rather steep recessions. Thus in 1967 the overall rate of increase in industrial production in the capitalist states showed a sharp decline by comparison with 1960-66, dropping to only 2.4 per cent (as against 6.9 per cent in 1966). The gross national product of the capitalist countries increased by only 3 per cent (as against 5 per cent in 1966). Yet most typical manifestation of the difficulties encountered by the capitalist economy in the second half of the sixties was the currency complication experienced by all of the leading imperialist states. Urgent measures taken by the governments concerned, such as the devaluation of the sterling and other sterling area currencies or the raising of the price of gold in the USA, served merely to cushion temporarily the impact of the currency crisis that again and again shook the capitalist world.

Shifts in the social structure and regrouping of social forces were apparent currently in all bourgeois states. These changes

meant, essentially, polarisation of populations, thinning out of the middle strata. Real power within the state became increasingly concentrated in the hands of the leading monopolies, which virtually laid down government policy.

Late in 1963 Averell Harriman, US assistance secretary of state, sought to prevent implementation of the decision of the president of Argentina to annul certain onerous agreements with American firms. Asked by the Argentine Minister Alconada whether he represented the government or the petroleum companies, Harriman replied that he found the question difficult to answer because the companies in question were American companies.

The increasingly bitter class warfare in the bourgeois countries, however, had a definite effect on the development of state-monopoly capitalism. Where the revolutionary and democratic movement laid a foundation on which a broad anti-monopoly coalition could be built up, for instance, the state enjoyed a measure of independence *vis-à-vis* the monopolies. In such countries (as in Italy, for example) the governing circles were compelled to adapt themselves to the situation and to implement, under the pressure of the working people, certain measures designed to curb the dominance of the monopolies.

During the past few decades there had developed in the bourgeois countries a trend towards placing in key positions representatives of military circles associated with the monopolies. This trend had grown stronger since the Second World War. Even General Eisenhower felt it necessary, on leaving the White House early in 1961, to warn the people of the unprecedented growth of the "military-industrial complex" on the American scene. In addition to the reactionary high military circles, the monopolies looked for support to all sorts of neo-nazi parties and "ultra", racist, "rabid" and other organisations, which fomented the anti-communist hysteria in their respective countries, hunted down all those who did not share their ideas, staged race riots, and so on. The American "ultras" and the leading reactionary monopolies that backed them must be held responsible for the assassination, in November 1963, of the American president, J. Kennedy.

There was a growing conviction among wide sections of the US population that the reactionary activity of the monopolies and militarists was not in their vital interests and simply aggravated the internal problems of the country. This contributed to the formation of new conditions for unity among the population at large in their stand against the domination of the monopolies and their efforts to bring about democratic reforms and achieve peace and security for all nations.

The USA in the Post-War Period

Reconversion, or the return to business on a peace-time basis, presented a great many difficulties for the United States. Production facilities had expanded tremendously during the war years and were quite out of proportion to the demands of the home market. American industry thus faced the problem of overproduction as well as that of marketing its output.

The big corporations, anxious to prevent any sharp drop in their profits, sought a solution at the expense of the workers and farmers. Scores of anti-labour bills were submitted to the United States Congress in 1945 and 1946. All of them were designed to restrict to the greatest possible extent the rights of the workers and labour organisations. Many became acts of Congress. One of the most reactionary acts in the history of the United States was the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, which provided for the expulsion of Communists from the trade unions; restricted trade unions in respect of fighting for their political rights; outlawed the "closed shop", established on a nation-wide scale back in 1935 (leaving this problem to be resolved by the states); and empowered the president to defer strikes for prolonged periods of time.

An unbridled campaign against all liberal-minded Americans was unloosed, and in 1948 the leaders of the Communist Party of the United States were committed for trial. They were convicted under the Smith Act on espionage in favour of a foreign state and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. All civil service employees were compelled to submit to a special check, and many were dismissed.

Liberal-minded intellectuals (mainly adherents of the Democratic Party) enlisted the aid of certain trade unions and attempted to fight against this campaign by organising a Progressive Party. In the presidential elections of 1948 the new party lost to the Democratic Party, whose candidate, H. Truman, who had assumed the presidency on Roosevelt's death in 1945, was re-elected. The economic situation in the United States, meanwhile, was unfavourable. A crisis set in during the election year, which resulted in an 8 per cent drop in the country's industrial production.

American intervention in Korea checked any further development of the crisis; and mounting military expenditures breathed new life into some branches of the American economy. Not that the governing party gained anything thereby, for the scope of US intervention (an army of 450,000, an air force and fleet were dispatched to Korea) and the heavy losses sustained by the expeditionary corps had caused a wave of discontent in the United States. In the 1952 elections the victory went to General D. Eisenhow-



Youth demonstrating against segregation in schools in the USA

er, candidate of the Republican Party, who promised to end the war in Korea.

The new Administration had even stronger links with the monopolies and business interests in general. Key posts in the Administration went to company owners and managers. All internal government acts, such as the tax reform of 1954, the cut in agricultural production, the new stern measures against Communists, etc., were implemented in the interests of the Two Hundred Families, the true masters of America. The odious witch-hunt went on, headed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities under senator McCarthy. The years 1950-55 were a period of unbridled McCarthyism: vicious persecution of all progressive forces fighting for a peaceful foreign and progressive domestic policies. More than 100 leaders of the Communist Party were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Special acts passed in the 1950s (such as the McCarran Act, the Humphrey-Butler Act, etc.) were aimed essentially at outlawing the Communist Party. These trials, so called, of the Communist Party lasted into the 1960s; there were twenty in all. Communists were bullied into registering as "agents of a foreign power", but not a single Party member fell into the

snare. Though hard pressed, the Communists carried on their work with the masses, taking an active interest in the various progressive movements and fighting as best they could against the all-pervading influence of the monopolies.

Yet another development characterised the post-war years: new monopoly groups were gaining strength, those that had made money on arms deliveries between 1941 and 1945 and during the war in Korea. Alongside the New-York-based groups (the Morgans, Rockefellers, du Ponts and others), important influence was now wielded by the Middlewestern group with centres in Chicago, Detroit and Cleveland, the Southwestern group based chiefly on San Francisco and Los Angeles, and the Southern group, centred at Dallas. Each group had its own regional interests and strove to influence government policies. A trend towards a bloc of the Southwestern and Southern groups, which became apparent in the 1960s, meant an even stronger position of the reactionary forces on the American political scene.

There was no nation-wide economic crisis in the post-war period to match the one that overtook the country in 1929, but significant business recessions did occur in 1948-49, 1953-54, 1957-58 and in the early 1960s, when industrial production fell off by 10 per cent and more. These recessions, together with modernisation of plant and automation of production, accounted for a levelling-out of the unemployment figure at from three to four millions.

As business conditions grew worse class warfare became more and more intense and strikes gained in scope, involving up to 2,000,000 in certain years. The strikes were bitterly contested, one of the biggest, involving 500,000 metal workers, lasting around four months, in 1959, and ending in victory for the workers. The trade union split was overcome in 1955, when the American Federation of Labor with a membership of around 10,000,000 and the Congress of Industrial Organizations with its 4,000,000 members joined to form one organisation, the AFL-CIO. The leadership remained reactionary, but the amalgamation did improve the outlook for the working class struggle.

The 1960 presidential elections returned the Democratic Party to the White House. The USA was then busy planning a lightning stroke that would do away with revolutionary Cuba and dissuade any other Latin American country that might want to follow its example. To this end a reckless invasion of Cuba was launched from US territory in April 1961. It ended in failure, for the Cuban people completely defeated the invading force in a matter of three days. Further US attempts to crush the Cuban revolution in the autumn of 1962 brought about a serious international crisis, as we have already seen elsewhere in this study. Constrained to give up the idea of restoring capitalism in Cuba by force of arms, the US

changed to tactics of economic and political pressure to try to achieve the same purpose.

President Kennedy, taking account of the real power ratio on the international scene, planned to put the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union on a normal footing. Thus, the US governing circles agreed to join the USSR and Great Britain in a treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the air, in outer space and under water (many other states were to adhere to the treaty later).

Difficult internal problems, however, took up most of the attention of President Kennedy's Administration. In order to check declining production in the early 1960s the government introduced a tax reform designed to stimulate business. It meant, essentially, a cut in taxes on capital, that is to say, the transfer of the burden of the worsened economic situation onto the shoulders of the masses. This led to an expansion of the strike movement and increased racial tensions, in the 1960s, to a degree never before witnessed in the country. The Negro population, 20 million strong, rose to wage a determined struggle against racial discrimination, demanding full equality of rights, economic included. Supported by all progressively-minded citizens, irrespective of colour, this movement became one of the most important factors of the nation's political life.

Characteristic of the modern stage of the struggle against racial discrimination in the United States is the fact that the South is no longer the main (still less the only) area of Negro revolt. No less than 2 million Negroes moved into the northern states in the sixties, where, however, they have encountered the same colour bar at every turn. Negro workers get less pay than Whites, as a rule, for the same kind of work; and unemployment among Negroes is considerably higher. Large-scale Negro riots have now spread to the country's important industrial centres and the capital. Demonstrations involving thousands, picketing of racist organisations, anti-discrimination marches to cities particularly notorious for racist rule have swept the country. In an effort to appease the movement the government has introduced a civic-rights-for-the-Negroes bill in Congress, thereby stirring to wrath the racists, who want to see the anti-discrimination struggle crushed by force.

President Kennedy's policy found no favour with the extreme right. A sizable segment of the press, financed by big business, started a campaign against him; and in November 1963, President Kennedy was shot and killed. The circumstances of his assassination have not yet been entirely cleared up; the official version lays the crime to a single individual, but there is much evidence to show that the president had been removed from the political scene

as the result of a plot. Lyndon Johnson, the new president, showed himself considerably more acceptable to the American monopolies as a statesman. Although the civic rights bill was passed by Congress in 1964, its implementation was frustrated on every step. The anti-discrimination struggle therefore subsequently grew even more bitter, often resulting in armed clashes provoked by racist terrorism against the Negro population. In the second half of the 1960s many American towns became the scene of pitched battles between Negroes roused to anger by terrorist acts and police usually reinforced by army units.

In the beginning of April 1968, Martin Luther King, a prominent fighter for Negro rights and holder of the Nobel Peace Prize, was killed by an assassin, and this new crime of the American racists caused another explosion of wrath. A wave of unrest swept more than 100 towns, including Washington, where a state of siege was proclaimed. Fires flared in many places throughout the capital, as well as in such great cities as Chicago, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, etc. Towards the end of April a vast march of the poor was started on Washington. The purpose of the marchers was to make the government and Congress take steps to improve the lot of those 30 million whom even official statistics classed as impoverished. Mass demonstrations were held on Capitol Hill, in the course of which the crowds were addressed by the leaders of the march. Although these leaders called for peaceful methods in the conduct of the struggle, the authorities, fearing possible outbreaks, ordered the marchers cleared out of the capital. The tent city pitched on the capital's outskirts was razed by the police, who made a number of arrests, notably among the leaders.

That was not to be the end of the "hot summer" of 1968, however. High-handed racist acts brought mass outbreaks in various parts of the United States: in Detroit, New York, Birmingham, Toledo and many other towns.

Sharpened racial contradictions were not the only cause of the heavily charged political atmosphere: a related and equally important cause was the growing struggle of the American people against the US war in Vietnam and its escalation. This war began with the landing of a modest expeditionary force in South Vietnam; in August 1964, the USA went over to a savage air bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam; and year by year thereafter the invasion grew in scope as the US forces on the Vietnamese soil continued to be increased. Despite their substantial superiority in weapons the American invaders failed to break the will and determination of the Vietnamese people to fight and win. They suffered heavy casualties and lost a great deal of military equipment. North Vietnamese anti-aircraft guns and rockets shot down several thousand American aircraft.

The US aggression caused great indignation throughout the world, and a powerful movement in support of fighting Vietnam developed in the United States itself. The high cost of the war—\$25,000 million were spent in 1967/68—cut a big slice out of the American family's budget, and this was only a part of the country's unprecedented total military outlay, which amounted to over \$75,000 million for the same fiscal year. Money taken out of the taxpayer's pocket was generously spent on the maintenance of American troops and military bases all over the globe; on modern weapons supplied to the numerous partners of the US in such aggressive organisations as the NATO, SEATO, etc. All this while appropriations for social needs, education, and help for the needy, etc., were cut year after year.

That explains why the movement for civic rights was closely linked with the struggle to end the American war of aggression in Vietnam. Martin Luther King was hated by the reactionaries not only because he waged a spirited fight for equal rights for Negroes, but also because he was resolutely opposed to the war against Vietnam. One aspect of the struggle to end that war of aggression were the many meetings and demonstrations that attracted more participants than any ever seen in the United States. In April 1967, for instance, roughly 400,000 men and women took part in the anti-war demonstrations in New York and San Francisco. Thousands of American youngsters refused to serve in the armed forces in protest against the Vietnam venture; and many servicemen sought political asylum abroad. No amount of repression was able to check the anti-war movement, which was gathering force with every passing day.¹

Post-War Great Britain

The leading capitalist countries of Europe, that is Great Britain, France and the FRG, also experienced important changes in the post-war period. The disintegration of the colonial system in the years that followed the Second World War ended Britain's status as the centre of a huge empire with a population until recently constituting one-fourth of the human race. The English bourgeoisie succeeded, it is true, in largely maintaining their economic

¹ When the book was about to go to press, news arrived of an event of great political importance. On January 27, 1973, the four-party agreement on ceasefire and restoration of peace in Vietnam was signed in Paris. This was a brilliant victory for the Vietnamese people, as well as for the socialist countries and all peace forces supporting the people of Vietnam in their struggle against the US imperialist aggression. The agreement will undoubtedly contribute to the restoration of peace throughout Indo-China.

positions in their former possessions; but their role and influence in the sphere of international politics were seriously damaged. American loans and participation in the Marshall Plan (while the United States retained its monopoly on atomic weapons) in the early post-war years considerably enhanced Britain's dependence on the United States.

No sooner was the war over than Britain was dealt a telling blow by the working class and other elements of the British working people. The Conservative Party lost the July 1945 parliamentary elections, for all the popularity of its leader, W. Churchill. The Labour Party that stepped into its shoes stood for outright nationalisation of the key branches of the national economy, a number of social reforms, and continued relations of alliance with the USSR. The Party leadership, headed by C. Attlee, who had replaced Churchill as prime minister, were in a very moderate mood, it is true, but they had to reckon with the wishes of millions of workingmen and white-collar workers and were compelled to live up to some of their promises. So it came that, in 1948, coal mines, gas plants, iron and steel works, railways, river shipping and freight motor transport were all nationalised; but most important of all was the nationalisation of the Bank of England.

All these were progressive measures, and, as such, received the approval of the British workers. But the Labour government went no farther, and when it was defeated, in 1951, and the Conservatives once more stood at the helm, it turned out that four-fifths of Britain's industry was still in the hands of private owners. Nationalisation had been applied primarily to the older, obsolescent branches of the national economy, where the owners were unable to finance the much-needed reconstruction. The modernisation of these industries at public expense was in line with the interests of a considerable segment of the capitalist class, inasmuch as the British industries' ability to meet competition in the world markets depended in large measures on the physical state of the coal mines, power plants and transportation facilities. Moreover, the owners of nationalised enterprises had been paid a more than handsome indemnity of £2,500 million.

The inconsistent policies of the Labour government at home and the anti-Soviet and anti-socialist colouring of its foreign policy, which in reality tagged along in the wake of the aggressive foreign policy of the imperialists in the United States (even as far as participating in the American venture in Korea), produced bit by bit a feeling of disappointment among the Labour Party membership. The 1950 elections resulted in the loss of many Labour seats. In 1951 Attlee decided to risk re-elections and the Labour Party suffered a resounding defeat. Economic difficulties were largely

responsible for this, such as the fuel crises of 1947 and 1951, the adverse balance of payments, and repeated recesses in industrial production. The Conservatives returned to power again, to form a government headed by W. Churchill (who would be replaced in 1955 by A. Eden).

The Conservatives could not, of course, put the government's domestic policy in reverse, that is to say, denationalise industry or abolish the social insurance system set up by the Labourists. But the bourgeoisie could now count on full government support in their attack on the living standards of the people at large. Churchill and his successors made adroit use of the current international tension to advance their aim at home, which was to make the working class shoulder the burden of the costs associated with the country's economic difficulties, militarisation of production, etc.

Around £20,000 million were spent on armament by the Conservatives over the period 1951-63. A lot of money was invested in the development of atomic weapons.

In 1956 the Eden government, acting in concert with the governments of France and Israel, staged an attack on the Egyptian Republic in an attempt to regain Great Britain's position in the Suez Canal zone.¹ The attack failed completely, thanks, in a measure, to the firm stand taken by the British working class against the aggressive policy of the Conservatives. In the beginning of 1957 H. Macmillan was appointed Prime Minister (owner of an important publishing firm, he was distantly related to the royal family).

The policies of the Conservative government continued to favour the interests of the big capitalists, and it was hardly surprising, therefore, that class warfare grew more and more intense in England. Nation-wide strikes followed, such as in the engineering industry (1953), the railways (1955), the shipbuilding and once again the engineering industries (1957), showing that the workers were determined to defend their social gains. Local elections and elections to trade union bodies, on the other hand, where the Communists achieved signal success, gave evidence of a swing of the working class to the left.

Repeated shifts were made within the government, by which the Conservatives hoped to appease the working class. The wide publicity given to a case of corruption involving the Secretary of State for Defence forced Macmillan's resignation towards the close of 1963, when A. Douglas-Home took over as head of the Conservative government. In the parliamentary elections of October 1964, however, the Labourists won by a majority of votes and

¹ This important link in overseas communications had been nationalised by Egypt a few months earlier.

returned to power after an interval of thirteen years. The post of Prime Minister was given to J. H. Wilson. The new government had only a small margin of votes in the House, which was the reason it gave for rejecting the policy that Harold Wilson, who had supported the Left wing of the Labour Party while in the opposition, and other party leaders had promised to follow if elected. Some eighteen months later the Labour leadership decided to hold mid-term elections in order to bolster its position in Parliament. A number of preliminary social reforms were introduced, which were in fact just so much window-dressing and were intended to win for the Labour Party the favour of the masses: a slight increase in pensions, partial rent control, etc.

In the parliamentary elections of 1966 the Labourists achieved considerable success: their majority in the House now amounted to 97 votes. There was nothing to prevent them now from carrying out the programme they had presented during the election campaign, for which millions of Englishmen had voted. That, however, they did not do. The Labour government came in for growing criticism throughout the country, especially after the mid-term elections. This criticism was aimed above all at measures designed to bolster the national economy and based mainly on freezing wages but including also restriction of the right to strike, inasmuch as strikes were now bound to follow: a special law provided for legal action against trade unions having recourse to strikes.

The Labour government's policies merely increased the serious economic difficulties besetting Britain. Industrial production was either marking time or dropping. Unemployment went up 70 per cent between the close of 1965 and the close of 1967. The gravity of these difficulties was brought home with particular force by the acute currency crisis that had hit the country. While this could be attributed to such objective factors as the liquidation of Britain's colonial empire, diminishing revenue from colonial exploitation, and the increasing difficulty of meeting competition in foreign markets as a consequence of Britain's relative industrial backwardness, an important contributing factor was the political line followed by Britain's governing circles, which remained essentially unchanged since the Labour Party had taken over from the Tories. This was particularly true in regard to Britain's active participation in various aggressive military blocs, associated with military expenditures far in excess of her ability to bear (£2,115 million in the fiscal year 1966/67). In the international arena Britain's rulers firmly tied their own policies to those of the aggressive circles in the United States.

Britain's vast military expenditure was a heavy burden on its economy, for which it was vitally important to preserve the balance of payments to other countries in a state of equilibrium. The

pound sterling suffered a grievous blow when the Suez Canal became inoperable as a result of Israel's aggression against the Arab countries in the summer of 1967; British losses resulting from this and other consequences of the war ran to \$1,000,000 daily. Late in November 1967, Britain announced a devaluation of the pound sterling by 14.3 per cent in respect of the dollar. This measure was preceded by a fresh attempt of the British ruling circles to ease the situation by joining the Common Market. This action encountered a firm French veto based on the "special relations" existing between Britain and the United States and on the fear lest Britain's economic instability and excessive dependence on the import of foods and raw materials might affect unfavourably the national economies of the Common Market countries. While the devaluation of the pound benefited Britain to some extent by increasing her exports, it did not solve her financial difficulties, and she had to keep borrowing heavily from international banks to keep these difficulties from getting out of control.

The Wilson government's internal and foreign policies produced sharp dissension within the Labour Party membership. Thus, 62 members of the ruling party voted against the government when the military budget came before Parliament in February 1967. The British Trades Union Congress of September 1967 repudiated—for the first time in the history of the British labour movement—the main lines of the Labour government's internal and foreign policies. The Labour Party suffered impressive defeats in various elections, local and parliamentary by-elections, which spoke of a considerable loss of popularity. Much prestige was lost by the Labour Party leadership through the attitude taken by Wilson and his followers toward the Rhodesian racists, who had proclaimed Rhodesia's independence in order to keep the native Negro population from any participation in governing the country. Their absolute refusal to use force in regard to the racist Smith regime settled any doubt as to where the sympathies of the rulers of Britain lay.

Wilson was trying to manoeuvre. In an effort to strengthen again its influence with the people the government decreed, in the same year, the nationalisation of the steel industry, giving the state control over 14 important steel companies, on the same basis, of course, as when the former Labour government was in power. These manoeuvres, however, could not compensate for the great harm done to the Labour Party's prestige by the Wilson government's policy. A reflection of the serious discontent may be seen in the active movement of democratic Britons on behalf of peace in Vietnam and against the support given by the British ruling circles to the US intervention in Vietnam.

France in the Post-War World

The end of the Second World War found France in an extremely complicated political situation after four years of Nazi occupation and the rule of the traitorous Vichi government. Those who had fought in the ranks of the Resistance Movement were calling for serious social and economic reforms and above all for the nationalisation of banks, iron and steel works, power plants and coal mines. The Communist Party and a considerable part of the Socialist Party membership were fighting, moreover, for the formation of a democratic government capable of conducting progressive domestic and foreign policies. The Communists strove to achieve greater unity of action with the Socialists.

Another strong political force were former Resistance members from among the bourgeoisie, associated with General de Gaulle, the Catholic bourgeois party formed in 1944, known as the Popular-Republican Movement (MRP), and the old Radical and Radical-Socialist Party, now active again. Their respective leaders feared any at all radical changes and fostered anti-communist sentiments.

A bitter clash developed, to begin with, over the future state structure in France and the new constitution. Two constituent assemblies had to be elected successively and three nation-wide referendums conducted, all within a year, before a new constitution was finally adopted, in October 1946, which recognised the more important democratic gains of the French people. The political struggle reflected the powerful influence of the Communist Party over the various strata of the working people. In the 1946 elections the Communist Party received 5,500,000 votes or over one-fourth of all, more, in other words, than any other party.

For three years (i.e., 1944-47) Communists were represented in the government—for the first time in the history of France. They took an active part in the nationalisation of the big banks, the coal mining industry, several automobile and aircraft companies, big and medium-sized power stations and gas companies. Both through the government and by other means the Communists worked energetically to reconstruct the country's economy and raise living standards. They were able to secure longer vacations for young workers, larger pensions for the old, and larger disablement allowances. Meanwhile, the bourgeoisie was bending its efforts to eliminate Communists from the government; and in May 1947, the reactionary elements got what they wanted, through the "good offices", incidentally, of P. Ramadier, the Socialist premier.

With the Communists no longer represented in the government, many of the gains made by the democratic forces went by the board. Thus, some of the nationalised industrial plants were



Workers of Renault Automobile Works striking against dismissal of 3,000 workers

returned to their owners; and workers' representatives were removed from the administrative bodies of nationalised enterprises. In 1948 France adhered to the American Marshall Plan, which increased her dependence on the United States. Another factor contributing to the growth of this dependence was the colonial war started in December 1946, in Indo-China, where the French monopolies tried to re-establish their dominance by force of arms.

Industrial production continued to grow, surpassing, in 1951, the level of 1929, largely as a result of the increasing exploitation of the workers. Moreover, German firms, who had been the chief rivals of the French trusts in pre-war times, had temporarily disappeared from the world markets, and this, too, contributed substantially to the relatively rapid growth of industrial production in France. However, France was unable to avoid on several occasions considerable recesses in production.

Defeated in Indo-China, the French imperialists unleashed, in the same year 1954, another colonial war, this time in Algeria. This war lasted over seven years, took a toll of thousands and thousands of lives, and cost billions of francs. Meantime the French working class waged a vigorous fight over both economic and political issues. One demand was to raise wages, which lagged increasingly behind the soaring prices. Another was to end

colonial wars and the armaments race. Strikes increased in number, and they were better organised than before and prosecuted with unparalleled stubbornness. The efforts of the working class and other strata of the working people were rewarded with substantial gains. Wages were increased by 5-15 per cent for various strata of the proletariat. And the French Government's decision to call off the war in Indo-China came as the result not only of military reverses, but also of the unceasing anti-war campaign carried on by the French people and particularly the Communist Party.

Membership in the governments, which replaced one another, in the 1950s, in fairly rapid succession, generally included representatives of the MRP, which was quite closely linked with clerical circles, and the Radical-Socialist and Socialist parties. General de Gaulle, who had headed the French Government after the liberation, had officially kept clear of the political struggle since 1946, remaining, however, a kind of focal point for his followers, now united in the Assembly of the French People (Rassemblement du Peuple Français — RPF), a party which maintained contact with certain important moneyed circles.

Discontent was rife among the Right-wing political groups over French military reverses in the war in Algeria and the failure of the intervention against the Egyptian Republic in the autumn of 1956. In May 1958, this discontent took visible shape in a revolt staged by officers of the expeditionary force and a segment of the French settlers in Algeria.

The Communist Party, meanwhile, sought to build up a united front of the country's democratic forces, with which to counter the reactionary insurgent elements. At this crucial point the leaders of the Socialist and bourgeois parties started a drive to impose General de Gaulle above all parties, and on June 1, 1958, the National Assembly confirmed his appointment as president of the Council of Ministers. That was the end of the Fourth Republic: the new regime came to be known in the press as the Fifth Republic. A new constitution was drafted and promulgated that same year, turning France into a republic with exceptionally broad presidential prerogatives and curtailed powers of Parliament. The election law promulgated simultaneously with the new constitution provided for two rounds in elections (except in cases when the first ballot gave a candidate more than one half of all votes) and party alliances in the second ballot. This facilitated the formation of electoral blocs of Right-wing parties against the Communists. In the very first elections carried out under the new law the Communist Party, which had collected nearly 4,000,000 votes, won only ten seats in the National Assembly.

In December 1958, de Gaulle was elected president of the French Republic. In 1966 he was re-elected to that post. In the economic sphere, the efforts of his government were directed toward promoting the export operations of the French monopolies, to which end everything possible was done to stimulate continued concentration of production and capital, which was expected to raise the economic potential of these monopolies to the level of the leading monopolies of the capitalist world. Concentration of agricultural production was similarly promoted, resulting in a more than 30 per cent decrease in the country's rural population over the period 1954-67.

During the second half of the 1960s the class struggle in France grew more and more acute, partly owing to rising prices, which employers refused to compensate by corresponding wage raises. Co-ordinated action on the part of all of the leading trade unions put into the hands of the workers a powerful weapon with which to combat arbitrary action by the monopolies: lightning general strikes like the 24-hour strikes that took place in May and October of 1966. There was a sharp upswing of the strike movement over the year, more than 3 million man-days being lost in 1966 as against 980,000 in 1965.

Lack of unity among the forces struggling against the personal power regime, so characteristic of the first five years of the Fifth Republic, had diminished with time. In 1965 the non-Communist Left-wing parties, such as the Socialist, the Radical-Socialist, the Democratic and Socialist Resistance Union and others, joined to form a bloc which was named the Left Democrat and Socialist Federation (or Left Federation). Negotiations were begun between the French Communist Party and the Left Federation, which revealed an identity of views on a number of important political issues. In December 1966, the FCP and the Federation reached an agreement concerning common tactics to be used in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies scheduled for March 1967. The two sides agreed to support, in the second round of the elections, those of their candidates who would gather, in the first round, the most votes in the related constituency.

This gave the Left-wing forces a resounding victory. The biggest number of votes was collected by the FCP, which offered a programme designed to curb the power of the monopolies (including nationalisation of leading branches of industry and the big banks and insurance companies) and give broad sovereignty to the people. The FCP gathered 1,000,000 more votes than in the last elections, winning 32 more seats. The government's majority in the Chamber dwindled to a minimum. Nevertheless the government succeeded in obtaining from the Chamber special powers for itself, namely, the right to issue, over a specified

period of time, decrees having the force of laws. Invoking this right, the government put through, in 1967, a reform in the sphere of social insurance which introduced harsher insurance terms by reducing rates, retarding pensionable age, etc. The total loss to the working people resulting from this reform amounted to 3,000 million francs.

The Fifth Republic's foreign policy was quite tortuous. The fruitless and unjust war against the Algerian people begun some time past lasted a few years longer to end in 1962 with the signing of a treaty recognising Algeria's independence.

At the same time the French Government considerably strengthened the country's independence on the international scene by ending the economic and political dependence on the United States typical of the Fourth Republic. This was most forcibly demonstrated by her withdrawal from the NATO military organisation, announced by the French Government in 1966. By April 1, 1967, all American and Canadian armed forces as well as all NATO headquarters, bases and stockpiles on French territory had been evacuated, in compliance with the French Government's request. Her new independent approach to important international issues was revealed also in the stand she took on the American war of aggression in Vietnam, which she condemned, just as she condemned Israel's aggression against the Arab countries. France insisted on the withdrawal of the American troops from Vietnam and those of Israel from the occupied Arab territories.

The French Government followed a consistent policy aimed at strengthening relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and at the dissolution of military blocs in Europe. It repeatedly declared that it considered the frontier between Poland and the German Democratic Republic final.

The serious internal contradictions that had been growing sharper and sharper for months exploded, in the spring and summer of 1968, into class conflict of such gravity as France had not known for years. The events began when students at Sorbonne demonstrated in early May in protest against their low living standards, and against inadequate facilities, obsolete equipment, etc. The police took over the university premises, and this added fuel to the demonstrations; barricades went up; and more than a thousand were injured. On May 13, labour demonstrated its solidarity with the students by staging a 24-hour strike in demand for democratic reforms in higher education and an end of repressions against the students.

Simultaneously, the workers came out with their own demands. On May 16, the Renault Automobile Works were struck, the strike quickly spreading to hundreds of other plants, to turn into a general strike of unprecedented scope: 10 million workers went

on strike at the summons of the CGT and other trade union federations. There were many instances when workers occupied factories, where strict order was maintained. The workers' demands included: repeal of government measures in the sphere of social insurance; higher wages and pensions; a shorter working day; and full recognition of the trade unions' rights in industry. Political aims directed against the personal power regime in France were stressed more and more as the strike continued. Political consciousness of a high order, and discipline and unity were displayed by the strikers; anarchistic elements that attempted to provoke riots were thwarted in their efforts.

As the general strike developed, paralysing all life in the country, the atmosphere grew increasingly tense. The government appeared confused: de Gaulle's first act was to announce that certain reforms would be introduced, which would be put to a referendum in the middle of June; but he then rejected this plan, dissolved the Chamber after consultation with top-rank military leaders, and announced that new elections would be held on June 23. Tank and mechanised army units were drawn up in a circle around Paris. Former OAS leaders were amnestied and released from prison, and leaders of the extreme Right (Bidault and others), currently in emigration, were allowed to return to France in the hope of securing the votes of their supporters. At the same time de Gaulle made several changes within the government, expelling members least acceptable to the masses and replacing them with members of his own party's Left.

A violent anti-communist campaign was unleashed by the bourgeois parties during the election campaign in an effort to put on the Communists the blame for the bloody clashes that had taken place during the student demonstrations, whereas the ultra-Left, pro-Chinese elements had been the ones actually responsible. The hardships were also played up which had resulted from the general strike prolonged by the obstinacy of the employers, who refused to discuss the workers' demands with representatives of the trade union federations. To parry the onslaught of the big bourgeoisie the French Communist Party and the Left Federation rallied jointly to the support of their candidates in the second round of the elections. But the undemocratic majoritarian balloting system, the "communist menace" campaign waged to frighten the middle classes, and the short duration of the election campaign had done their work: the ruling party, *en bloc* with the "independent republicans", gained many more votes than before; and the FCP gathered 4,433,000 votes in the first round and largely held its own, but was able to win only 34 seats in the new Chamber, as against 73 in the elections of 1967. The Left Federation suffered even heavier reverses, winning only 57 seats instead

of 118. The position of de Gaulle and his supporters in the Chamber had grown stronger. The monopolies, however, had been forced to make certain concessions as a result of the vigorous activity developed by the masses: French labour was given an average wage increase of 12 per cent, following the events of May 1968. That, however, did not solve the urgent internal political issues that France had to face.

Revival of Reaction in West Germany

We have already seen that the defeat of the nazi Reich failed to bring true democracy to the western part of Germany. Since its creation in September 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was ruled in the course of twenty years by the Christian-Democratic Union (CDU), representing the big bourgeoisie. Closely linked with clerical circles, this Party succeeded in winning the support of the masses, though its leadership was reactionary. K. Adenauer, the Party leader, filled the post of chancellor of the FRG for fourteen years. In the sphere of internal policy (as, indeed, in that of foreign policy) the Christian Democrats actively co-operated with the Western occupational authorities.

The government coalition included also the Free Democratic Party (FDP), which reflects the interests of that segment of the bourgeoisie, which is associated mainly with light and manufacturing industry, trade and the merchant marine. The Social Democratic Party (SDP), which is very influential among the working people and a segment of the intelligentsia, belonged to the opposition.

Allied decisions regarding the abolition of the monopolies were never carried out in the western part of the country. On the contrary, the share of the big monopolies (with a capital of over 50 million marks) nearly doubled by comparison with the pre-war figure: in 1961 they held 70 per cent of the total capital stock. 150 big businessmen controlled three-fourths of the country's economy. Characteristic of the rural areas was the gradual impoverishment of the small peasants.

The refusal of the FRG Government and the occupational authorities to democratise the country was manifested particularly convincingly in the impunity actually enjoyed by many active nazis, and in the persecution of the German Communist Party (GCP), which was banned in 1956. Thousands of former nazis held responsible government jobs. The formation of the West German army, the Bundeswehr, started with the re-enlistment of 104 former generals and several thousand former officers of the nazi Wehrmacht. Former nazis were especially numerous

in the diplomatic service, where they made up 85 per cent of the entire personnel, and in the judiciary.

Economic development in the Federal Republic of Germany proceeded at a relatively faster pace than in the other countries of Europe (except Italy) and in the United States so that it ranked second in the capitalist world in respect of industrial production. This was due to the fact that Germany's defeat and the ensuing dislocation offered the German bourgeoisie a convenient pretext for keeping labour wages at a comparatively low level, which increased the profits of the monopolies, their subsequent industrial investments, and the increased ability of German industry to meet competition in foreign markets. Keeping wages at a relatively low level was made all the more easy by the influx of more than 10,000,000 Germans from lands returned to other countries. Homeless and unemployed, these people were willing to work for whatever they could get.

Substantial financial aid provided by the United States was another factor contributing to the rapid development of the West German economy, for the United States regarded the FRG as a bulwark of its policies in Europe. A final advantage of the West German economy over its rivals was that prior to 1955 the FRG had no military expenses to speak of, saw to it, in other words, that money wasn't wasted.

The country's intensified militarisation, which began in 1955, caused a lag in the rate of development of those industries, which were not directly concerned with building up the war machine. The militarisation drive inaugurated by the FRG adherence to the North Atlantic bloc affected literally all aspects of West German life. Compulsory military service was introduced in 1956, and by 1965 the FRG had completed the formation of an army of 500,000, which, while formally under NATO command, could be used by the West German militarists at their discretion.

Branches of the Imperial Soldiers' Union, Expatriates' Union and other similar organisations functioned throughout the country; their aims included propaganda of a war of revenge, revision of Germany's post-war frontiers with adjacent states, and a general revision of all the consequences of the Second World War. When L. Erhard, former minister of the national economy and vice-chancellor, replaced K. Adenauer as chancellor, in October 1963, it was hoped both in West Germany and abroad that there might be a shift in the government's policy. But the new chancellor's activities soon showed that he would follow the old policy, embracing such aims as protection of the interests of the big capitalists, suppression of democratic freedoms, revision of certain decisions stemming from Germany's defeat, and possession of nuclear weapons.

Erhardt, who had come to power on the crest of a high business activity, sought to establish a theoretic foundation for this activity and claimed that the FRG had attained "social stability" in the interests of the "common good". The actual situation, however, exploded this concept at every turn.

The rate of growth of industrial production began to decline in 1965, dropping 1.3 per cent in 1966; and in 1967 a serious recession set in. In February 1967, unemployment reached the figure of 700,000. Class contradictions sharpened. And the governing CDU/CSP coalition began to lose its supporters, which resulted in growing dissatisfaction with Erhardt among the party leadership. He was also held responsible for setbacks in the sphere of foreign policy. Thus, the government was charged with pursuing an unsound policy in regard to the German problem; with failure to obtain nuclear weapons (strong opposition to this had developed even within the NATO); with the deterioration of relations with France, which had come out for the recognition of the Oder-Neisse frontiers; and so on.

The crisis came to a head on December 1, 1966, when a coalition government was formed of members of the CDU/CSP and the Social-Democratic Party (SDP), headed by G. Kiesinger of the CDU Right wing. W. Brandt, SDP chairman, was given the post of vice-chancellor and foreign minister. Among the members of the government was also J. Strauss, chairman of the CSP, whose activities as minister of war in the Adenauer government had produced a big political scandal a few years ago.

The coalition government was forced to face squarely the growing economic difficulties (1967 saw a 2.5 per cent decline in industrial production). National economic development was feeling the consequences of the government's policy of militarisation. In 1967 direct military expenditures alone totalled 19,700 million marks or roughly 25 per cent of the country's budgetary appropriations. Over 5,000 million marks were additionally appropriated yearly for the maintenance of NATO foreign military contingents dislocated in the FRG and the reserve frontier defence forces (which the country's ruling circles wanted to reconstitute as an integral part of the army). Heavy investments were being made in building up a domestic atomic and rocket industry that could be quickly switched to the production of nuclear weapons.

Within the "grand" coalition, predominance passed, as might have been expected, into the hands of the Christian Democrats, who succeeded in adopting the sort of decisions that least suited the masses. Of these, the most extreme was the so-called emergency powers act, which had become the subject of controversy already under the Erhardt government. The crux of the matter

was that the ruling circles were intent on nullifying the significance of the Bundestag (Parliament), just as the nazis had done soon after seizing power, so as to have a free hand in taking any internal political measures they might find expedient should the situation take a turn for the worse, however slight. The emergency powers act provided for a possible complete cancellation of the people's democratic rights and the assumption of dictatorial powers by the government, with the latter deciding whether or not there were sufficient grounds for the action.

There was a truly mass movement to oppose the passage of the act, headed by the West German trade unions, which are among the leading sections of the FRG's progressive camp. The May 1966 trade union congress endorsed the working people's resolution to stand fast in defence of the rights conferred upon them by the constitution of the FRG. Many liberal-minded intellectuals and prominent scientists and scholars (such as M. Born, the physicist, and K. Jaspers, the philosopher) joined the movement to prevent the passage of the emergency powers act.

Nevertheless, in May 1968 it was passed by the Bundestag.

The democratic segments of the population were particularly incensed by the government's attitude toward the menace of neo-nazism, which had grown sharply during the late 1960s. Minor existing neo-nazi organisations joined, in 1964, to form the so-called National Democratic Party (NDP), which launched a regular nazi-style virulent chauvinistic propaganda campaign accompanied by increasingly frequent anti-semitic outrages, cases of desecration of graves and memorials to the victims of nazism, and by terroristic acts against progressive public figures.

That the struggle against the government's anti-democratic measures and preparations for war was expanding may be seen by the so-called Easter Marches, which were bringing together men and women from all walks of life. Roughly 130,000 took part in the Easter March of 1966, and 150,000 in that of 1967. Their slogans were: "Cut Military Expenditures!", "Repeal Emergency Powers Act!", "Stop Vietnam War!" (in which the FRG ruling circles were giving the American aggressor substantial aid), "Ban the NDP!", etc.

Italy in the Post-War Years

Italy has travelled a complicated way during the post-war period. When the war came to an end, her economy lay in ruins. Unemployment and misery were continuous for a large segment of the country's population. The eradication of the fascist regime,

conducted while Italy was occupied by Anglo-American troops, failed to produce any substantial shifts in the country's socio-economic pattern.

The forces of democracy waged a determined campaign for progressive reforms. These democratic forces comprised members of the Resistance, which meant first of all Italy's working class with its two parties, Communist and Socialist. In this atmosphere the wealthy classes pinned their hopes on the Christian Democratic Party (CDP) formed in 1944. Backed by the Catholic clergy, this organisation acquired great political power, and its leader, de Gasperi, headed the government for eight consecutive years. The Christian Democrats were nevertheless compelled, in the early post-war era, to invite Communist and Socialist participation in the government. The representatives of these two parties succeeded in bringing about the implementation of several important decisions, such, for instance, as the decree on the farming of unused landed estates by landless peasants; the decree establishing a sliding wage scale; and the prohibition of job dismissal without trade union approval.

In June 1946, a nation-wide referendum resulted in the proclamation of a republic in Italy; and this successful conclusion of the Italian people's struggle to end the monarchy was largely due to the fact that the Italian Communist Party and the Italian Socialist Party had worked in complete mutual accord to achieve that purpose.

As for the role of the imperialists in the United States, they made systematic use of Italy's post-war economic difficulties to interfere in that country's domestic affairs. An all-important precondition of American "aid" was the removal of working class representatives from the government. De Gasperi's machinations resulted in the formation, in May 1947, of a one-party Christian Democratic cabinet. Republicans and Right-wing Socialists who had broken with the Socialist Party to form, in 1952, a party of their own, known as the Italian Social-Democratic Party, were later admitted to partnership.

Even in these conditions, however, the Italian constitution adopted in December 1947 became, thanks to the efforts of the people at large, one of the most progressive among the bourgeois states. The new constitution not only confirmed the normal democratic freedoms, but also proclaimed the right to work, to social security and to education. It forbade any revival of the fascist party; offered autonomy to the various regions; and provided for the nationalisation of important industries as well as for workers' participation in their administration. A peace treaty was signed in February 1947, and became a favourable factor in Italy's post-war history. The participation of the Soviet Union in its drafting

ensured the inclusion of provisions favouring the country's peaceful development along democratic lines.

Italy's first post-war parliamentary elections were held in April 1948. They were won by the Christian Democratic Party, which received 12,000,000 votes, while the Communists and Socialists received 8,100,000 votes in all. Class warfare was on the increase at the time, strike followed strike, and hordes of peasants, thousands strong, were seizing landed estates. In July 1948, P. Togliatti, eminent leader of Italy's workers, was attacked and seriously wounded by an agent of neo-fascist organisations. The attack prompted mass action on the part of the working people. A three-day strike of protest followed, in which 7,000,000 took part. Here and there frightened officials surrendered their rule to representatives of the workers.

When the panic subsided, however, the Right-wing forces opened a counter-offensive, backed by the military and economic might of the United States. In the summer of 1948 the government brought Italy into the Marshall Plan system and in April 1949, signed a treaty bringing the country into the North Atlantic alliance. Laws were made, designed to restrict democratic rights of the working people. Class feeling was still at flood tide, however, and the governing circles were compelled to make some concessions. One such concession was the agrarian reform of 1950-51, which turned over to the peasants 1,500,000 hectares of land.

The 1953 elections showed a definite swing to the Left, Communists and Socialists getting 10,000,000 votes or almost as many as the Christian Democrats, who remained at the helm of state power. In the meantime changes were taking place in the country, which were to become manifest in its political life.

To begin with, economic development had been picking up speed during the 1950s, and by 1961 industrial production was 2.5 times that of the pre-war level. The Italian bourgeoisie had grown stronger, but during the years that the national economy was on the upswing it had lost a traditional ally: the landed proprietors of the South, who would never forgive the Christian Democrats their agrarian reform. The lower and middle strata of the bourgeoisie, victimised by the all-powerful trusts, developed growing anti-monopoly sentiments. Flexible tactics and strategy on the part of the Communists, in addition, not only prevented any recession of the workers' movement in the conditions of an industrial boom, but actually helped it gain in vigour and scope.

The Communist Party drew up a programme of "the Italian way to socialism", based on close co-ordination of the fight for socialism and the efforts to democratise the society. The Com-

munists called for the formation of a new democratic majority in the country, that is, a majority comprising Communists, Socialists and Catholic workers; and for radical structural reforms in the interests of the people. They offered to come to an understanding with the Left-wing Catholic elements. This policy proved very fruitful for the Italian Communist Party, as may be seen from the results of the 1958 and 1963 parliamentary elections, in which it received, respectively, 6,700,000 and 8,000,000 votes.

The leftist trend that had become apparent in the early 1950s was influential in determining the attitude of the Christian Democratic Party leadership, in which new political figures gained prominence, such as Gronchi, who held the post of president of the Republic from 1955 to 1961, Fanfani, Moro, etc., who felt that the Party's political course required some modification. It was a question of reaching an understanding with the workers' movement in order to weaken Communist influence and divert the workers' attention from genuinely revolutionary aims. This policy came to be known as the Left-Centrist line. It was backed by the leadership of the Italian Socialist Party, whose leader P. Nenni, who had renounced in the late 1950s the traditional co-operation between Socialists and Communists, entered the "Left Centre" government formed by A. Moro. The anti-communist character of the government and the support lent by the Moro-Nenni cabinet to the North Atlantic military bloc evoked discontent among the Left-wing Socialists. In January 1964, they withdrew from the Socialist Party to form the Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity.

The economic development of Italy in the 1960s offered evidence of numerous contradictions. Industrial production as a whole showed a high rate of growth. Italian capitalism greatly increased its ability to meet competition in the world markets; and there was a considerable increase, thanks to the solicitude of the government, in the monopolies' share in production and in the power of the monopolist associations, which consistently introduced the discoveries and inventions of the current scientific and technological revolution.

This industrial upswing was not nation-wide, however. It affected solely the industrial North and thereby made even more striking the difference between the highly developed areas of Northern Italy and the perpetually stagnating agrarian South. Agricultural production was growing at a snail's pace. Such meagre industry as existed in the South tended to shut down, with truly tragic consequences, as in the case of Battipaglia, where the closing of the local factory aroused a storm of indignation which ended in the police opening fire on the workers. High rates of industrial

development notwithstanding, hundreds of thousands of Italians were forced to leave the country every year in search of work.

A law on economic programming was passed in 1967 in an effort to mitigate the glaring disproportions characteristic of the Italian economy. But the action of the Left Centre government did not affect the real causes of the country's contradictory economic development.

The admission of the Italian Socialists into the government served to bring closer the positions of that party's leaders to those of the leaders of the Social-Democrats (Saragat, head of the SDP, was then president of the Republic). Both leaderships expected that a union of their parties would strengthen their position *vis-à-vis* their Left Centre allies, the Christian Democrats, who often forced them to support decisions that were extremely unpopular among the masses. The autumn of 1966 saw the fusion of the two organisations into a United Socialist Party of Italy (USP). While its leadership backed the idea of a Left Centre coalition, there was a Left wing within the new party, which opposed the idea of a bloc with the Christian Democrats and wanted a closer understanding with the Communist Party.

Rank-and-file Socialists were highly critical of Left Centre foreign policies, which were essentially much the same as the policies of the old purely bourgeois governments. The main issue here was that of membership in the NATO and the deployment of US military bases in Italy. The government chose to ignore the wide movement for Italian withdrawal from the NATO, which gathered momentum particularly in connection with the expiration of the 20-year term of the pact. Despite the truly massive demonstrations of the Italian people against the war in Vietnam the country's ruling circles refused to condemn the American aggression or to join in the demand for the cessation of the savage air bombardment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Exposures regarding the reactionary *coup d'état* planned in the summer of 1964 by the Italian military intelligence service (with the connivance of the American Central Intelligence Agency) were a damaging blow to the prestige of the Left Centre coalition. The Italian intelligence service had many politicians shadowed, chiefly those of leftist leanings, including members of the government. Several prominent members of the Christian Democratic Party, including the then president Segni, were implicated in these unseemly activities. All of which compromised the Socialists, too, and could not but affect the results of the general elections of May 1968.

The Italian Communist Party's struggle for the adoption of a democratic policy in lieu of that pursued by the ruling circles in infringement of the people's vital interests, and its consistent

efforts on behalf of the people's political and social rights, for an independent foreign policy, and peace for Vietnam—all gained the party many new supporters. The Communist Party proposed a broad programme of social and national regeneration, which included such objectives as drastic steps to deal with the backwardness of the South; a new and much more comprehensive agrarian reform; jobs for all Italian citizens in need of work; wider trade union rights in industrial enterprises; democratisation in the field of education; etc. The parliamentary elections of 1968 gave the Communist Party 11 new seats in the chamber of deputies. In the elections to the Senate, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity, presenting a common list of candidates, gathered 8,500,000 votes.

The United Socialist Party, on the other hand, was badly defeated in the parliamentary elections, thus paying for coming to the elections *en bloc* with the forces of reaction. In the elections to the Senate, for instance, it lost 1,200,000 votes by comparison with the votes gathered by both the Socialist parties in 1963. This lamentable consequence of its participation in the Left Centre coalition served to sharpen dissension within the United Socialist Party. Shortly after the elections, pressure exerted by the advocates of an independent policy caused the Socialist ministers to withdraw from the government. A one-party government was formed by the Christian Democrats; its instability, however, became evident from the very start, and it lasted only a few months. Despite the fact, however, that the crisis of the Left Centre concept was clearly demonstrated by the results of the elections and many other signs, the Socialists' penchant for ministerial chairs prevailed once again. In the new Left Centre government headed by Rumor of the Christian Democratic Party P. Nenni accepted the foreign minister's portfolio.

Chapter Ten

INTENSIFICATION OF THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLES OF ASIA, AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA. DISINTEGRATION OF THE COLONIAL SYSTEM

Consequences of the Second World War and the Colonial Countries

There were several factors or developments which served to create an international situation favouring the success of national liberation revolutions in the countries of Asia and Africa. These were: the determining role of the Soviet Union in the defeat of the fascist bloc powers in the West and in the Far East; the formation of a world socialist system; and the support given by the socialist camp and the international workers' movement to the struggle waged by the oppressed nations.

The contradictions between the forces of independent national development for colonial and dependent countries, on the one hand, and foreign monopoly capital, on the other, had become increasingly acute during the Second World War. The aggravated situation affected directly not only the people at large, but also a segment of the landed gentry, who came to lose their income and found themselves forced to sell their estates.

A new factor had been the menace of a Japanese attack, which had subsequently become for many Asiatic lands more than just a menace. Progressive elements in the countries of the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia had been ready to join with the colonial powers to fight the fascist aggressors, but only provided substantial concessions were promised to satisfy their national democratic demands. The British and French governing classes, however, both on the eve of the Second World War and after it had begun, had refused to meet even the minimum requirements of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. This had made it all the easier for the fascist countries to practise their discreet and judicious forms of propaganda. Japan advanced such ideas as "a common co-prosperity sphere", "Asia for the Asians" and so on, making skilful use of racial prejudices.

The hard-headed policy of the Western colonial powers had played into Japan's hands, for it prevented many statesmen in the lands of Asia and Africa to realise the indubitable fact that only a victory of the democratic forces over the fascist coalition could bring national independence within their grasp. In Asia, many true patriots had let themselves be deluded by Japan's specious propaganda in the hope of casting off the imperialist yoke with her help. It was this attitude that had helped Japan seize the colonies of the European powers and the United States in Southeast Asia and create the menace of an invasion of India.

As it turned out, however, the Japanese invaders practised a policy of even greater exploitation of the population, destruction of the export branches of the national economy, confiscation of food products and forcible mobilisation of the population; and all illusions had soon been shattered. Resistance to the new colonial oppression had appeared, then spread, assuming a diversity of forms. Sometimes patriotic statesmen, who officially continued to collaborate with the Japanese military and succeeded in extracting various concessions from Japan, would turn out to be closely associated with an underground movement and even armed resistance.

As the end of the fascist coalition loomed closer, and especially after Germany's surrender, the Japanese, in their efforts to strengthen their position in the occupied lands, would find it expedient to resort to all sorts of manoeuvres. Local people would be allowed to occupy posts in the army or administration formerly unattainable (under Japanese control, of course), or formal independence would be proclaimed, or else a constitution would be promulgated, etc. All these subterfuges were useless, however. Peoples had learned to resist the invaders by force of arms, without the aid of their European masters, and this had fostered national self-consciousness and proved valuable later in the development of independent states.

The situation that evolved in the colonial countries during the war was such that the formation of a broad national front was now fully possible. In some countries such a front acquired an organised form; in others it existed merely *de facto*. All classes of the colonial population were interested in winning national independence, with the sole exception of a narrow stratum of reactionaries who feared the prospect of losing the economic benefits and privileges accruing to them in the service of their colonial masters.

The nature of the anti-imperialist struggle and the forms of the national liberation revolutions depended above all on which social class assumed their leadership. Wherever propitious conditions had been created before or during the war (as in China, North Korea and North Vietnam) leadership of the national liberation move-

ment was in the hands of the working class, and the anti-colonial struggle took the shape of popular-democratic revolutions, assuring the winning of national independence and preparing conditions for further development along socialist lines.

In most of the colonial countries, where leadership of the liberation movement belonged to the national bourgeoisie, the formation of a single national front was generally a considerably longer process. In such cases organisation lagged behind the expanding liberation struggle, and was never achieved while the Second World War was being fought, or, as a matter of fact, sometimes even after it was over.

When, with the ending of the Second World War, a number of former colonies became independent states, the crisis of the colonial system may be said to have entered a new phase: that of disintegration.

COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA WIN INDEPENDENCE

Indonesian Republic Formed

Occupation by the Japanese imperialists did not put an end to the national liberation war in Indonesia. Underground organisations of various political tendencies continued their work among the populace, the students and soldiers of the Indonesian armed forces which Japan had created for her own purposes. Yet until the very end of the war there existed in Indonesia neither a single resistance movement centre nor a programme to guide a nationwide armed uprising. The Japanese dealt summarily with members of the underground organisations. But as the German defeat drew nearer and anti-Japanese activities in the occupied countries increased, Japan was forced to change her tactics.

On January 1, 1945, a commission was created to study the problem of Indonesian independence. Its opening session was addressed by Sukarno, who demanded immediate complete independence. Developing the theses he had advanced back in the 1930s, Sukarno dwelt at length on the five principles, or "Pantja Sila", on which the Indonesian Republic should be founded, namely, nationalism, internationalism, democracy, prosperity of the people, and religious tolerance. He wound up with the slogan "Liberty or Death!", and this speech of his was accepted by the Indonesian fighters for independence as their programme.

On August 17, 1945, with Japan's defeat an accomplished fact, Sukarno, acting on behalf of the people, declared Indonesia's independence. He and Hatta were elected president and vice-president, respectively. The constitution of the August revolution

was adopted, the basic part of which had been worked out while the country was still under Japanese occupation.

The moment chosen for the declaration of independence was fully propitious, for, on the one hand, the Japanese occupation force was no longer in a position to offer resistance now that the act of unconditional surrender had been signed, and, on the other hand, the armed forces of Indonesia's former masters and their allies were gone. The promulgation of the republic was thus effected without any interference. A central government and a provisional parliament were set up. The new government received support throughout the country; and local government agencies were organised. The partisan detachments and units of the regular volunteer forces came to form the nucleus of a national army.

Neither Holland nor any of the other colonial powers, however, had any intention of recognising Indonesia's independence, and towards the end of September 1945, British troops began to land in Java, under the pretext of disarming the Japanese. With them came van Mook, the Dutch governor-general *pro tem*.

On November 10, armed resistance began in Surabaya, provoked by high-handed action on the part of the British military command (the day is celebrated annually in Indonesia as Heroes' Day). Thus the fledgling Republic found itself forced to fight its former colonial masters. The government moved to Jogjakarta in the interior of Java, which became the temporary capital. All patriotic elements joined forces to repel the imperialist aggression. Moreover, progressive forces everywhere backed the Indonesian Republic. In the spring of 1946, D. Z. Manuilsky, delegate of the Ukraine, speaking for the Soviet Union, bluntly put before the United Nations the question of the imperialist aggression against Indonesia and the consequent threat to national security and world peace. In Holland, Australia and elsewhere workers refused to load arms and equipment for the Dutch forces and came out openly in support of the just cause of the Indonesian people. The Indonesian revolution re-echoed in other Asiatic countries that were fighting for their independence. In India, where the national liberation struggle was on the upswing, a movement began to gather force for the immediate recall of Indian soldiers, who formed a considerable part of the British expeditionary corps in Indonesia.

While fighting a war against heavy odds, the Republic carried on its organisational work. In November the first cabinet responsible to parliament was formed, headed by Sutan Sjahrir, a Right-wing Socialist. New deputies representing various parties and mass organisations were admitted to parliament membership. Trade unions were gradually re-established and a trade union centre was soon set up. Peasant organisations began to appear. Political parties emerged from underground or were re-established.

The Indonesian Communist Party was few in numbers, many Communists who had fought the Japanese invaders having perished before the country's independence was proclaimed. The Party's Central Committee decided that it should remain underground, carrying on its work through the Socialist Party headed by Amir Sjarifuddin and the Indonesian Labour Party headed by the Communist Setiadjit, just back from abroad, where he had sought refuge. The membership of both these parties grew rapidly. But the Communists, who had waged a steadfast struggle in defence of the Republic, in the interests of the people and to bolster the country's internal strength, now operated largely under an assumed name, so to speak, and this made it impossible for them to make full use of the results of that struggle in order to extend the Party's influence. Amir Sjarifuddin's Socialist Party, moreover, made the mistake of joining with the Socialist Party formed late in 1946 by Sjahrir. Sjarifuddin's great popularity, resulting from his pre-war patriotic activities and his participation in the struggle against the Japanese, enabled Sjahrir, whose anti-national and pro-imperialist sentiments were growing stronger and stronger, and his followers to strengthen their own influence.

Towards the close of 1945 a National Party was formed, which appropriated to itself the prestige of the pre-revolutionary party of the same name and, using this prestige and supporting the five "Pantja Sila" principles, soon became one of the most influential parties in the land. Its leadership stood generally for the interests of the progressive national bourgeoisie, though its Right wing sought first to strengthen the class supremacy of the bourgeoisie. One of the numerically strongest parties during the early post-revolution period was the Mashumi, which had gathered in all organisations founded on the religious tenets of Islam. It was also the most heterogenous of all in respect of leadership and general membership. Its Right-wing leadership supported the big comprador and money-lending bourgeoisie and landlords, opposed all radical democratic reforms, and preached outright anti-communism. Its Left wing was associated with various strata of the bourgeoisie, as well as with the peasantry and the lower strata of the patriotically-minded Moslem priesthood, which helped the party win over important segments of the populace. The national unity achieved in the course of the struggle against Dutch intervention was to bring success in the unequal armed encounter with the powerful imperialist foe; but it could not prevent contradictions and collisions in the sphere of domestic and foreign policy.

The heroic resistance put up by the Indonesian people and the weight of progressive public opinion all over the world compelled the Dutch to agree to negotiations with the Republic. Opened in 1946 at Linggadjati, through the good offices of a representative

of Great Britain, these negotiations culminated in the signing of an agreement in November of the same year which was given the form of a treaty in March 1947, in the teeth of violent opposition on the part of the reactionary extremists in Holland and the Right-wing forces in Indonesia.

In accordance with the Linggadjati agreement Holland accorded *de facto* recognition to the Indonesian Republic, comprising the islands of Java, Madoera and Sumatra; and the territories occupied by the Dutch and British troops were subject to inclusion therein. The Republic undertook to co-operate with Holland in the creation of the United States of Indonesia, a federated democratic sovereign state, which, together with Holland, would form the Netherlands-Indonesian Union, with the queen as head of state. The Dutch imperialists immediately proceeded to break the terms of the treaty. Thus, they sent fresh troops and equipment to Indonesia and did not withdraw from the occupied areas. With the support of the country's extreme reactionary elements they proceeded to create puppet states headed by figureheads of their own choosing.

The ready acquiescence of Sjahrir's government in Dutch demands brought its downfall, in June 1947, when a new cabinet was formed, headed by Sjarifuddin and with a preponderance of democratic elements. On July 20, the Dutch resumed large-scale military operations. Employing modern weapons, they were able to penetrate deep into the territory of the Republic, though the Indonesian people put up a heroic resistance and the enemy rear was harassed by the partisans and national army units. Democratic elements the world over voiced their indignation, and the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries once again tabled the Indonesian issue before the United Nations.

Blockaded, and with a considerable part of its territory held by the interventionists, the Republic found it difficult to carry on its resistance. Moreover, many in Indonesia still fostered hopes and illusions of forthcoming American aid in winning independence and strengthening the national economy, as well as of help from the Good Offices Committee comprising the representatives of Australia, Belgium and the United States, set up by the United Nations. Biased actually in favour of the Dutch, the Good Offices Committee initiated talks, which ended in the signing, on January 17, 1948, of an agreement, on board the American warship *Renville*. This agreement confirmed the provisions of the Linggadjati agreement and established a demarcation line between the Republic and the Dutch-held territory, which coincided with a line drawn through the farthest points of Dutch advance.

This served to substantially reduce the area controlled by the Republic, which was precisely the aim of the Dutch, who were

interested in bolstering the puppet states they had set up in Indonesia. Soon after the signing of the Renville Agreement the Mashumi and other reactionary parties succeeded in forcing the government of Amir Sjarifuddin to resign, and a new, "presidential" cabinet was formed under vice-president Hatta, in which the Mashumi Party played a prominent role while the Left-wing parties were not represented. This was followed by a split within the united Socialist Party, Sutan Sjahrir forming an independent Socialist Party of Indonesia, which gradually became one of the leading anti-national forces. Yet even the Hatta government, for all its willingness to make a deal with the imperialists and its anti-democratic and above all anti-communist internal policy, could not comply with the Dutch demands. And the Dutch went ahead setting up a provisional government of the United States of Indonesia without the Republic, hoping with its help to do away with Indonesian independence.

Such were the conditions when the Communist Party of Indonesia held a conference, in August 1948, which carried a resolution entitled "New Road for the Republic of Indonesia", providing for the merging of the Communist Party, the Socialist Party under Amir Sjarifuddin and the Labour Party into a single Communist Party of Indonesia. The Conference met under the chairmanship of M. Musso, one of the oldest members of the Communist Party, recently back after many years of self-imposed exile. Musso was made secretary-general of the new party. The above-mentioned resolution set before the party the task of fighting for a united national front led by the working class; yet it was not without certain sectarian errors. In September reactionary elements provoked an armed clash in Madioen, and this clash, as well as a campaign of terror unleashed against progressive organisations, brought death to Musso, Sjarifuddin, Setiadjit and other leaders of the Communist Party. As to the party itself, it carried on on a semi-legal basis.

This outbreak of civil war weakened the Republic, and the Dutch were quick to profit by the occasion: they resumed military operations without a warning and in December took Jogjakarta. Sukarno and most of the members of his government were arrested and deported from Java. Nevertheless, powerful support given Indonesia by the socialist countries, India and other states prevented Holland from re-establishing its colonial rule over the country.

In the long run Holland was compelled to free the Indonesian leaders and consent to a Round-Table Conference at the Hague, with the participation of a representative of the Good Offices Committee. The Conference resulted in the signing, on November 2, 1949, of an agreement whereby Holland recognised the United States of Indonesia as a sovereign state. It included numerous

reservations, however, affecting the Republic's status as an independent state and providing for the re-establishment of Dutch capital in its former rights and infringing, through the Netherlands-Indonesian Union, upon the political sovereignty of the United States of Indonesia. The problem of West Irian remained open in view of Holland's refusal to have it incorporated with the new state and it was assumed that it would be settled through subsequent negotiations.

The Dutch did not seem to realise that the post-war balance of power, as between the forces of reaction and those of democracy, and the existence of a world socialist system, would present unpredictable opportunities once independence was accorded, provided there was unity among the national forces and a national-democratic government was in power. In future, the Indonesian people's struggle to abrogate the onerous treaties concluded at the Round-Table Conference, to achieve the liberation of West Irian, develop the national economy, and end the dominance of foreign monopolies would be closely associated with the struggle of democracy against reaction in Indonesia itself.

One after another the Indonesian states voted in favour of adherence to the Republic and the hopes of the Dutch that Indonesia might be partitioned faded accordingly. By the fifth anniversary of independence, that is, by August 1950, a union republic had been re-established and a provisional constitution adopted in lieu of the constitution of the United States of Indonesia. The democratic forces enjoyed greater prestige again. The Communist Party went about the re-establishment of its various organisations; trade unions and peasant associations were growing stronger. The bourgeoisie and the bourgeois-landlord parties were in process of differentiation. The Right wing of the Mashumi Party became the centre of overt reaction associated with counter-revolutionary plots and separatist revolts, while its Left wing became an independent organisation known as Nahdatul Ulama.

In 1953 the sequence of reactionary cabinets ceded place to a government headed by Ali Sastroamidjojo, Leftist leader of the National Party. Indonesia established diplomatic relations with the USSR and the other socialist countries. On August 10, 1954, an agreement with Holland was signed, dissolving the Netherlands-Indonesian Union; but it took two more years to annul the rest of the onerous treaties resulting from the Round-Table Conference, and a law abrogating these agreements, passed by parliament, was signed by Sukarno only in May 1956. The forces of reaction within the country were not yet broken and the positions of the progressive elements were not yet sufficiently strong.

On September 30, 1965, several army units under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Untung staged a *coup d'état*, set up a

Revolutionary Council, seized the radio broadcasting station at Djakarta, and announced that their action had been undertaken in order to prevent the seizure of power by rightist military elements headed by General Nasution. By the evening of October 1, however, the insurrection had been put down. Using the incident as a pretext, the Indonesian reactionaries unleashed a brutal campaign of anti-communist terror throughout the land, which brought death to several hundred thousand Indonesians, members of the Communist Party and other leftist organisations. Resorting to vicious mass reprisals, arrests, and intimidation, the reactionary elements of the Indonesian bourgeoisie, big landowners and the military gained control of the entire archipelago. General Soeharto, who had "distinguished" himself in the suppression of the "movement of September 30", was granted extraordinary powers to conduct mass repressions and to form a new government. President Sukarno was gradually shorn of power and subsequently even judicial proceedings were begun against him. The workers and the working peasantry, who constitute the main mass of the country's population, lost all they had gained with the aid of the Communists. Lands turned over to landless and land-poor peasants by virtue of the agrarian reform reverted to the landlords and kulaks, and exploitation of the workers was back again in all its cruelty. Foreign monopolies were back in operation, and native enterprises, unable to compete, were being strangled. The Indonesian intellectuals, particularly the scores of thousands of school-teachers who lost their jobs, found themselves in a difficult position.

Indonesia's foreign policy also undergone a change: it was gradually abandoning the principles of anti-imperialist struggle and neutralism.

Burma Wins Independence

In Burma, as in Indonesia, armed resistance to the Japanese invaders went hand in hand with efforts to use all legal means to win independence. Despite the fact that it was included in the so-called Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and a treaty of alliance with Japan had been signed, actual power remained in the hands of the Japanese. Dissent was on the increase among the Burmese people, and so was the desire to unite all the national forces. In August 1944, an illegal Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) was formed, constituting *de facto* such a national front and comprising the Communist and other revolutionary parties. Aung San and Than Tun, a Communist, were elected chairman and secretary, respectively.

Operating in deep conspiracy, the AFPFL steadily gained greater and greater influence, and by the end of 1944 had a mem-

bership of 50,000. The so-called Defence Army, created by the Japanese in the expectation that it could be used in support of their own forces, was looked upon by the patriotic elements as a fighting force that would play an important part in the coming armed uprising. Every effort was made to co-ordinate the struggle against the Japanese invaders with the military operations of the Allied forces. The revolt of the Burmese garrison at Mandalay, in March 1945, greatly aided the advance begun by British troops from across the Indian frontier. Yet the British Government refused to come to terms with the national liberation movement even while Burma was under Japanese occupation.

The National Army (as the Defence Army was now known) and the partisan forces, which had started a national uprising, were the decisive factor in driving the Japanese out of Burma. As new areas were liberated legal AFPFL organisations were set up, frequently functioning as local government bodies.

As compared with Indonesia, Burma had the advantage of having a national front with a centralised leadership by the time the Second World War came to an end. Offsetting this advantage, however, was the presence of important British forces in Burma when the Japanese occupational regime was terminated; for the work of re-establishing the British administration was begun as soon as the country was liberated. A kind of diarchy came to exist then, a situation which, of course, could not last long.

In September 1945, an agreement was reached between the British authorities and the AFPFL, whereby the Burmese National Army was to be disbanded and its officer personnel and rank and file were to be incorporated in the regular army. It was not long, however, before the Burmese came to realise the need of having armed forces of their own that could resist the British encroachments. A mass para-military People's Volunteer Organisation was set up, composed chiefly of semi-proletarian rural elements and headed by Aung San. It was this organisation that became the support of the AFPFL and the Communist Party.

In October 1945, the British Headquarters solemnly turned the state power over to a civil administration headed by the governor-general who had held that post before the war. This act served merely to give a stronger impetus to the anti-imperialist movement. A determined strike movement developed in 1946, involving rice mill and lumber mill workers, dockers and personnel of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company, etc. Nor were the peasants willing to put up with the return of the landowners and the old oppression.

The First All-Burma Congress of the AFPFL, meeting early in 1946, condemned colonialism, and demanded a provisional national government and elections to a constituent assembly with powers to make decisions regarding the country's future. In April it was

announced that a constituent assembly would be convened in a year hence to work out a constitution for Burma as a self-governing state within the framework of the British empire. This was unacceptable to the country's patriotic elements, and a warning was voiced by Aung San at a mass meeting that if the British Government didn't transfer state power to the Burmese people the latter would seize it by force of arms. It must be said here that the AFPFL still remained an embodiment of the national front, but within it a process of re-alignment of forces and consolidation of the rightist elements was going on.

The anti-imperialist movement, meanwhile, gathered momentum among the masses. A wave of strikes and peasant actions swept the country in the late summer. Even the police force of Rangoon, the country's capital, went on strike. When the general political strike was at its height, talks with rightist leaders and the AFPFL leadership resulted in the formation of a coalition Executive Council, which included five AFPFL representatives, Aung San taking the post of vice-chairman.

Differences of opinion regarding membership in the Executive Council led to a split within the AFPFL and the withdrawal of the Communists from that body. But the anti-imperialist struggle went on notwithstanding the split in the national front. The League presented an ultimatum to Great Britain, demanding acceptance of Burmese independence, recognition of the Executive Council as the Provisional National Government, and elections to a Constituent Assembly. In January 1947, a Burmese delegation headed by Aung San departed for London to conduct negotiations, leaving Burma with the independence movement gaining momentum. There were mass demonstrations in the streets and the People's Volunteer Organisation was preparing for armed struggle. The political crisis had reached its peak.

Such was the situation when an agreement was signed in London, on January 27, 1947, by Attlee, prime minister of the Labour government, and Aung San. Under the terms of the agreement Great Britain consented to hold, in April, elections to a constituent assembly which would decide whether or not Burma would remain a member of the British Commonwealth. Britain hoped for a decision in the affirmative, taking into account the existing national contradictions and separatist tendencies of the leaders of the various national minorities.

Despite all the efforts of the reactionary elements to the contrary, the elections proved the popularity of the League, which gained 194 seats out of 210. An AFPFL conference, convened in May under the chairmanship of Aung San, discussed the draft constitution and carried a resolution to proclaim the country an independent sovereign republic to be known as the Union of Burma,

which would also include the areas peopled by the various national minorities.

The draft constitution was incorporated in the resolution on independence submitted by Aung San and unanimously approved by the Constituent Assembly convened in June 1947. Aung San proposed that negotiations should be begun with Great Britain regarding the transfer of state power in accordance with the decisions of the Constituent Assembly. A goodwill mission headed by U Nu left for London accordingly, but the British governing circles dragged out the settlement in the hope of making a deal with the Burmese reactionaries.

On July 19, 1947, Rangoon became the scene of a terrorist attack without precedent: an armed band burst into the conference hall where the Executive Council was in session and, firing point-blank, killed Aung San and seven Council members. The death of the most popular leader of the Burmese patriots at the hands of assassins hired by the reactionaries dealt the country's patriotic forces a heavy blow.

This act of terrorism served merely to fan the flames of anti-imperialist feeling, however. Great Britain was eventually compelled to recognise the Constituent Assembly's right to rule on the future of Burma without waiting for the end of the Executive Council's session and to regard the Council as constituting a national government as from August 2, 1947, which meant the granting to Burma of a dominion status. U Nu became independent Burma's first prime minister.

On September 24 the new constitution of the Union of Burma was unanimously approved by the Constituent Assembly. Besides proclaiming the democratic freedoms the constitution made provision for the demands of the people in the social sphere, as in regard to the agrarian problem and the protection of workers' rights. The constitution received the approval of all the patriotic forces of Burma.

On January 4, 1948, Burma's independence was proclaimed and state power transferred to the new government in a solemn ceremony at Rangoon. The British flag was hauled down and the colours of the Union of Burma run up in its stead.

End of British Rule in India

When India was declared a belligerent—without being asked her consent—and the governor-general was given broad powers by the British Government in the matter of dealing with organisations and persons who might be "defence risks", indignation ran high throughout the country. In the autumn of 1939 the executive

committee of the National Congress Party declared that British consent to full self-government for India was a *sine qua* condition for her support of Great Britain in the war. When the war began the National Congress Party had the greatest and most representative membership of all, including not only Hindus, but also numerous members of various other religious communities. The Communist Party, driven underground, worked through the Congress in the interests of a united national front.

Anti-war demonstrations, strikes and other action swept the country from end to end. Resorting to measures of repression, the British made efforts at the same time to gain the support of the propertied classes. The British Government, however, and the various missions arriving in India did not go beyond promising to grant India the status of a dominion "in the shortest possible time" after the end of the war. The National Congress countered with a demand for the immediate creation of a responsible national government. There were efforts to organise a non-violent disobedience campaign under the leadership of Gandhi so as to bring pressure to bear on Great Britain, and these led to mass arrests and prohibition of any activities on the part of the National Congress. Many Congress leaders found themselves in prison most of the time.

As the war progressed, the Indian Communist Party issued a call for all-out support of the war effort of the anti-Hitler coalition, considering that India's prospects of independence were closely linked to the victory of the democratic forces, which now rested mainly with the Soviet Union. The National Congress stood for non-cooperation with Britain all through the war. Subhas Chandra Bose, one of its former leftist leaders, formed and headed a National Indian Liberation Army in Japanese-occupied Burma, which was made up of Indians living in Indo-China and Indian war prisoners. The Indian bourgeoisie saw a chance to make money out of the war. Leading Indian capitalists and particularly the upper monopolist strata were able to improve their economic position to some extent, but there was no spurt of industrial development comparable to that of the First World War.

The people at large were worse off during the war. Agriculture, with its vestiges of the feudal system, continued to deteriorate, and the peasants faced impoverishment. The working class, now increasingly exploited, suffered from rising prices, as did the other strata of urban dwellers. Towards the end of the war South and Central India were seriously threatened by famine. In this situation India was ripe for a vigorous upsurge of the movement for national liberation and social rights.

The imminent defeat of nazi Germany and her European satellites, assured by the victories of the Soviet Army, spurred Indian

bourgeois political leaders to renewed activity as early as 1944. In line with its efforts on behalf of the creation of a national government as a step towards independence, the National Congress leadership attempted to reach an agreement with the Moslem League, which demanded a separate Moslem Pakistan. Gandhi, recently liberated from imprisonment on account of ill health, discussed the problem in September 1944, with M. Jinnah, the leader of the Moslem League, but no agreement was reached. Mutual desire for united action did, however, lead to an agreement between the president of the Congress and the secretary-general of the League, early in 1945, under which Congress and League were to have 40 per cent of the seats each in the national government, the remaining 20 per cent going to the other organisations.

The consequences of the victory over the fascist coalition, such as the greatly increased prestige of the USSR, the emergence of People's Democracies in Europe, and the growing liberation struggle in Asia, caused Great Britain serious alarm. A conference was convened on May 14, 1945, by A. Wavell, viceroy of India, at Simla, with the National Congress represented by Gandhi and also J. Nehru and V. Patel, both released from prison for the occasion, and with the participation of the leaders of the Moslem League and other religious communities. Great Britain offered to give the Moslems (represented by the League) and the Hindus (represented by the Congress) 40 per cent each of the seats in a government that would be an expanded Executive Committee responsible to the viceroy, and the remaining 20 per cent to the religious minorities. In insisting on representation for religious communities, rather than for political parties as agreed by the secretary-general of the League and the president of the Congress, the British imperialists sought to aggravate relations between Congress and League, foster Hindu-Moslem disunity, and then hold the Indian organisations responsible for the failure of efforts to form a provisional government.

The Simla Conference coincided in point of time with parliamentary elections in England, which brought the Labourists to power. There were many in India who hoped that this event would lead to important concessions. But the Labour government followed essentially the policy of their predecessors in regard to India. It announced elections, between November 1945 and April 1946, to the central and provincial legislative assemblies, from among whose members it was proposed later to set up a body for the purpose of drafting a new constitution. Great Britain thus hoped to decoy the masses into a peaceful parliamentary campaign and use the elections to increase the discord between Hindus and Moslems.

During the second half of 1945 India became the scene of numerous strikes, which often assumed a political colouring and produced clashes with the police. The declaration of independence in Vietnam and Indonesia and the growing anti-imperialist struggle in East and Southeast Asia gave a new impetus to the anti-imperialist movement in India. Two events highly incensed the country: the sending of Indian soldiers to quell the liberation revolutions in Vietnam and Indonesia and the British-organised trial of captured officers of the army formed by S. C. Bose (killed in an air crash in 1945).

Members of that army were held by most Indians to be fighters for the country's independence, not traitors, and the trial, conducted in Calcutta, produced mass demonstrations, street fighting, bloody clashes with the police. The movement spread to Bombay and other cities, and in spite of the efforts of National Congress leaders to restrict it to peaceful protests it developed into a campaign against British domination.

There was unrest in the armed forces as well. A strike of air force flyers began in January 1946; and in February navy personnel went on strike at Bombay. Starting on board one ship, it was supported by all twenty vessels then in Bombay harbour. Demonstrating seamen carried such slogans as "Long Live the Revolution!", "Hindus and Moslems, Unite!", "Down with British Imperialism!", etc. Dockers and harbour shop workers joined the strikers. Hindu and Moslem delegates worked side by side in the strike committee. And it was necessary for the leaders of both Congress and League, alarmed at the scale and aims of the strike, to intervene, before it was called off by the strike committee.

Towards the close of 1945 and early in 1946 anti-imperialist and anti-feudal actions of the peasants grew in number. The growing revolutionary crisis and the prospect of the nation as a whole being drawn into the struggle were clear enough evidence that Great Britain was no longer able to exercise complete sway over India. The partitioning of India into two states seemed to the British to be the only way of controlling the anti-imperialist movement and maintaining their status. Efforts to set up a provisional government with limited powers based on equal Moslem and Hindu representation were made in the spring of 1946 but came to nothing: the National Congress refused to participate and the Moslem League soon announced that it would not send its representatives either to a provisional government or to a Constituent Assembly.

In the legislative assemblies elections the League campaigned under the slogan of a separate Pakistan state, but it was able to win a majority only in the Moslem electorate and in areas with a

predominant Moslem population. All told, the Congress gained 930 seats in all of the provinces and the League 497. In June 1946, elections were held to the Constituent Assembly, which consisted of 296 deputies representing the various provincial legislative assemblies, the Congress winning 192 seats, the League 70, while 10 went to the other parties. 93 members of the Constituent Assembly represented the princely states. Despite the Congress's refusal to take part in the provisional government, the viceroy asked J. Nehru (who had been elected by the June session of the Executive Committee of the Congress as its chairman) to form a government in accordance with the conditions specified by the British authorities during the past spring and providing for the following distribution of seats: Congress—6, League—5, the "minorities"—3. The National Congress accepted, but the Moslem League claimed that the interests of the Moslem population would not be sufficiently fully taken into account, refused to join in the government, and declared that it would henceforth campaign openly for a partitioning of the subcontinent.

August 16 was proclaimed a Pakistan Campaign Day. At Calcutta a demonstration was staged in protest against the formation of a provisional government. Several Hindu shops were pillaged by *agents provocateurs* in the employ of the British, and this led to bloody clashes between Hindus and Moslems. Moslem League extremists and bands formed by a reactionary Hindu organisation pillaged homes and killed each other. In a few workers' districts mixed Hindu-Moslem self-defence units were formed through the efforts of the Communists, and these were able to stave off any further pillaging. Nevertheless, Hindu-Moslem massacres spread through Bengal and Bihar, and reached Bombay.

The plan to turn the anti-imperialist movement into an interne-cine massacre fell through, however. A strike movement swept the land, and the anti-feudal struggle of the peasantry spread, especially since early in 1947. The struggle against British oppression engulfed many of the princely states as well. The British authorities found themselves unable to deal with the situation. In this atmosphere the actual authority and power of the provisional government headed by Nehru proved greater than Great Britain had expected. In a statement on international policy Nehru declared that India would seek to establish friendly relations with all states, including the USSR; support the national liberation movement; and fight colonialism.

On February 27, 1947, the head of the British Labour government stated that Great Britain would transfer state power in India to the Indians not later than July 1948. Should no co-ordinated constitution be worked out by that time, state power would be transferred to the provincial governments. Meantime, in

an effort to bar any understanding between Congress and League, the British provoked a Hindu-Moslem massacre in the Punjab. Attlee's statement and the bloody clash in the Punjab, which the League was determined to include in the future Moslem state, induced Congress to give its consent to the creation of Pakistan, though with the provision that it should include only such districts that had a preponderant Moslem population.

In the beginning of June 1947, the British Government made up its mind to divide the subcontinent into two states. The legislative assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab were to establish the boundaries of the two provinces. Both the new states were to be granted dominion status. As to the princely states, these were to decide independently whether to join with one of the dominions or to continue their present relationship with Great Britain.

The boundary dispute between Bengal and Pakistan¹ culminated in massacre and destruction on religious grounds unprecedented in scale. It is estimated that over 500,000 lost their lives, while the number of those who suffered one way or another during the strife and the shifting of populations reached 12,000,000. Hundreds of thousands of Hindus abandoned home and property to fly from the areas to be given to Pakistan; and, conversely, as many Moslem refugees fled from the areas to be ceded to India. The problem of homeless and destitute refugees assumed enormous proportions.

Progressive elements, notably the Communists, strove to avert bloodshed and to achieve Hindu-Moslem unity. Gandhi was especially active in this respect, arguing that Moslems and Hindus need not be enemies and that their enmity played into the hands of a third party. His campaign for unity earned him the hatred of the extreme reactionaries, and he was assassinated in 1948. His death was viewed as a calamity by the peoples of the subcontinent.

Thus, as a result of a common struggle of the people against imperialist rule Great Britain had been forced, for the first time in her history, to grant dominion status to a colony with a "coloured" population. This spoke of the growing crisis of the colonial system. The British monopolists were disappointed in their expectations of maintaining their political and economic domination on the subcontinent, as in their hopes of holding on at least to the larger princely states that remained outside the new dominions. Even Hyderabad, one of the largest of these, whose efforts to stay out of the Indian Union had been seconded by the British, ended by joining with it in 1948. By 1949 all the princely states except Kashmir had been admitted into the Union.

¹ The liberation struggle of the Bengali people led to the formation in 1971 of a new state, Bangladesh, in the former East Pakistan.

The Indian Independence Act went into effect on August 15, 1947. Throughout 1948 and 1949 work was carried on on the new constitution and preparations for its implementation.

The constitution was finally adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949, and on January 26, 1950, India became a sovereign democratic republic, without, however, rupturing its ties with the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Independent States of Southeast Asia

After the Second World War the political map of Southeast Asia was radically revised.

Thailand, which had taken part in the war on the side of Japan and had been to all intents and purposes under Japanese occupation, found itself freed of Japanese rule. Yet the insignificance of the democratic forces in the country led to the establishment of a landlord-comprador dictatorship which helped subjugate it to American capital.

In view of the patriotic movement against the Japanese that had developed in the Philippines and in an atmosphere of a growing liberation movement throughout Asia, the United States was constrained to proclaim the formal independence of the Philippines. On July 4, 1946, the Philippine Republic was proclaimed a sovereign state, though the United States kept its military bases in the islands and retained its other prerogatives, and American capital could continue exploiting the country.

In February 1948, that is, soon after the emergence of the dominions of India and Pakistan the British were compelled to grant dominion status to the island of Ceylon. And during the 1950s the people of Ceylon got the British to relinquish their military bases on the island, which contributed to its political independence.¹

In Malaya, the national liberation movement that swept the country after the Second World War developed, in 1948, into an armed struggle. Dragging on and on, this colonial war made the British realise their inability to cope with the situation. Resorting to devious manoeuvres, Great Britain finally made a deal with the Malayan propertied classes, and in August 1957, recognised the country's independence.

When India became an independent state an end was put to the isolation of the Himalayan state of Nepal from the rest of the world, which had been artificially fostered by Great Britain. In 1951 Nepal was proclaimed a constitutional monarchy and, in

¹ Since May 22, 1972, Ceylon bears the official name of Sri Lanka.

its capacity as a sovereign state, proceeded to establish diplomatic relations with other countries.

The reader is already aware of the particularly strenuous struggle against colonial rule on the peninsula of Indo-China. It should be added that by virtue of the Geneva Agreements of 1954 the French imperialists were forced not only to withdraw from Vietnam, but also to recognise the independence of Laos and Cambodia.

PEOPLES OF MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA WAGE WINNING NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE

In the 1950s, the disintegration process in the imperialist colonial system entered a new phase. The national liberation struggle waged by the peoples of the colonies and dependencies was greatly influenced by the achievements of the Soviet Union, which in a short space of time had completed its post-war programme of reconstruction and scored important gains in the economic, scientific and cultural fields. Thanks to the efforts of the Soviet people the American monopoly on the possession of atomic weapons had been broken. The achievement of independence by India and other countries in Southeast Asia had dealt the cause of imperialism and colonialism a very heavy blow; and the military defeats of the colonial powers in Korea and Indo-China clearly showed that any attempts to maintain the regime of colonial subjugation by armed force would be doomed to failure.

Upsurge of Liberation Movement in Arab Lands

Unlike the second half of the 1940s, when Southeast Asia was the principal theatre of the national liberation movement, in the 1950s the centre of the movement shifted to the Middle East and North Africa. Here the struggle for independence began close upon the end of the Second World War. Thus, the peoples of Syria and the Lebanon demanded outright withdrawal of all foreign troops. On May 17, 1945, a general anti-imperialist strike began in both countries. In the cities, clashes took place between the patriotic elements and French troops. French warplanes bombed Damascus. In February 1946, the question of Syria and the Lebanon was debated in the UN Security Council, where the Soviet Union strongly supported the demands of both. The French were finally forced to beat a retreat, and on April 17, 1946, withdrew their troops from Syria. The withdrawal of the forces of occupation from the Lebanon was completed by December 31 of the same year. Syria and the Lebanon thus became independent states.

In March 1946, Great Britain granted independence to Transjordan. Yemen, too, adopted an independent policy. A strong tide of national liberation activity mounted in Egypt and Iraq. Thus we see that already in the immediate post-war years the positions of the colony-owning states in the Middle East were seriously weakened. Yet the imperialists still thought that they would be able to maintain their control over the region.

The War in Palestine

The population of Palestine, Arab and Jewish alike, was determined on ousting the British colonialists. In 1947, the problem of Palestine was discussed in the UN, where the Soviet representatives urged a withdrawal of the British "trustees" and the creation in Palestine of a democratic Arab-Jewish state. The formation of such a state, however, was rendered impossible by imperialist subterfuges and the chauvinistic intransigence of the Zionist leaders, as well as by the policy followed by the reactionary feudal elements in the Arab countries.

In November 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution providing for the division of Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish states and the constitution of Jerusalem as an international city. In May 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed at Tel-Aviv.

Warfare between Israel and the Arab countries, namely Egypt, Iraq, Syria, the Lebanon, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Transjordan, broke out right away. The Israeli rulers claimed all of Palestine for themselves, while the Arab states claimed the country for the Arabs. British and American imperialism hoped that the war would divert the peoples of the Middle East from their struggle against imperialism.

It was not long before the Arab countries began to suffer reverses. The reason must be sought both in the sharp contradictions that rent them and in the inability of their venal pro-imperialist rulers, such as King Farouk of Egypt, King Abdullah of Transjordan, and others, to wage war in an efficient manner. The Israeli army occupied a considerable stretch of the area which it was proposed to incorporate into the new Arab state. During the period February-July 1949, armistice agreements were signed by Israel and its opponents, and in April 1950, Israel and Transjordan reached an agreement, with the tacit approval of the United States and Great Britain, on the partitioning of the territory of the projected Arab state of Palestine, whereby Transjordan encompassed territory both east and west of the river Jordan and took the name of Jordan.

More than 900,000 Palestine Arabs were forced to leave their homeland and there thus arose the knotty problem of the Palestinian refugees, while Arab-Israel enmity became a permanent source of international tension.

1952 Revolution in Egypt

The greatest stumbling-block to the achievement of Egyptian independence had been the presence of British forces of occupation in accordance with the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936. This imperialist domination had a parallel in the oppression exercised by the landlords in the rural areas. A venal feudal clique ruled the country. Egypt's industrial development, meanwhile, had shown a marked advance during the Second World War: the industrial labour force numbered 367,000 in 1947, as against 273,000 in 1939.

When the war ended the country was swept by a mass movement calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops and the abrogation of the 1936 treaty. Workers went on strike. Students took an active part in the initiative. Peasants, artisans and the petty bourgeoisie joined in the national movement. Unfortunately, the various anti-imperialist actions were poorly organised. Within the Wafd Party, which led in respect of prestige and popularity among the masses, there formed a strong Right wing which represented the interests of the big bourgeoisie and the landlords. The working class was still insufficiently mature to head the liberation struggle. Nor were the Communists able to maintain their organisation in the face of the persecution and terror to which they were subjected. Nevertheless, they made a substantial contribution to the national liberation struggle.

As the struggle went on, the revolutionary democratic forces began to wield greater and greater influence. The Confederation of Egyptian Trade Unions, created soon after the end of the war, set up a Working Committee for National Liberation. Early in February 1946, the Cairo Students' Committee published a National Charter demanding the "complete withdrawal [of British forces] from land, sea and air, from every inch of the Nile valley". A National Committee of Workers and Students was set up, which called for a general strike to demand the immediate evacuation of British troops.

On February 21, 1946, a giant demonstration in Cairo was fired upon by British troops. Patriots draped the bodies of their dead in the national colours and carried them through the streets of the city. And patriotic demonstrations continued, undaunted by the terror.

In an effort to restore calm among the masses the government initiated talks with the British on the withdrawal of troops, but these brought no tangible results. A similar fate overtook an appeal to the United Nations: only the Soviet Union, Poland and Syria supported the just demands of the Egyptian people when the Egyptian problem came up for discussion in the Security Council, in January 1947.

With the Palestine war of 1948-49 over, the situation in Egypt once again became aggravated. Revolutionary ideas won over a section of the officer corps of the Egyptian army, and a secret organisation emerged here, known as the Society of Free Officers, headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser.

In January 1950, a Wafdist government came to power in the wake of parliamentary elections, which, however, failed to satisfy the aspirations of the electorate. For in contravention of the will of the majority of the people the Wafdist government undertook new diplomatic talks with Great Britain.

Throughout 1950 important strikes broke out in Egypt's industrial towns and mass anti-British demonstrations continued all over the country. Anti-feudal peasant uprisings occurred at Qufur Nadjm and Buhut. In 1951 the situation became even more strained. Increasing pressure from below forced the government to pass, in October 1951, a law abrogating the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 and the Sudan condominium agreement of 1899.

The British countered with savage repressions. Serious clashes between demonstrating crowds and British troops occurred at Ismailia and Port Said on October 16. Over 500 Egyptians were killed or wounded by the British between October 16 and November 5. Partisan warfare flared up in the Suez Canal zone. Patriots gathered to form "liberation units", which blew up British army depots and cut communication lines. Armed clashes with the British increased in number. Cypriot soldiers revolted at Port Said. According to a report appearing in *The Times* in December 1951, the nerves of British soldiers were on edge, they saw less and less sense in holding on to a base which had lost all military value in view of the hostility of the local population.

On January 25, 1952, at Ismailia, the British destroyed a detachment of police who had joined the patriotic forces, leaving 68 dead. In the early hours of the following morning 330 Egyptian soldiers left their Cairo barracks and demanded weapons to fight the British. The populace flocked in to join them. Demonstrating crowds called out "Down with the Government of Cowards!", "Down with the Traitorous King!", "Down with the British!" *Agents provocateurs*, merging with the crowds, began starting fires, and some 700 buildings were soon in flames. Thirty persons perished and hundreds were hurt. For some reason or other the police took no

notice. The conflagration gave King Farouk a pretext for dismissing the Wafdist government and giving the prime minister's post to Ali Maher, a reactionary extremist. Wholesale arrests of patriots began, and courts martial went to work.

In 1952 the Egyptian people's national liberation struggle entered a new and decisive phase. The monarchical regime found itself powerless to act. Partisan warfare in the Canal zone, mass demonstrations and strikes gave plain evidence that the revolution was gaining momentum. On the other hand, the working class proved incapable of guiding the masses, owing to lack of proper organisation. The Egyptian national bourgeoisie, moreover, was in a quandary: for while it was interested in ousting the colonialists and putting an end to the thoroughly corrupt monarchic regime, it feared the prospect of a people's revolution. The influence of the bourgeois-landlord nationalist parties, including the Wafd, was rapidly dwindling. In this political climate the bourgeoisie was beginning to turn hopefully to the officer cadres. And the activities of the Society of Free Officers grew in importance.

Most members of this organisation belonged either to the petty bourgeoisie or to the well-to-do strata of the peasantry. They were devoted to the purpose of winning national independence, rooting out the hated monarchy, and introducing democratic reforms. Their leaders were not yet quite clear in their mind as to what pattern of development the country would follow when independence had been won. Most of them expected that an independent Egyptian state would be fashioned on the capitalist pattern. For all that, they were sincere patriots, revolutionary nationalist-democrats.

On July 23, 1952, the Society of Free Officers, backed by the entire Egyptian army, launched its *coup*. The success of the *coup* must be attributed to the struggle that had been waged by the people, which had undermined the positions of the colonialists and their local agents. The state power was taken over by the Revolutionary Council, in which Nasser played a leading role. Initially, however, a government headed by the former prime minister Ali Maher was formed, while all statements on behalf of the Revolutionary Council were issued by General Muhammad Nagib in his capacity as chairman. On July 26, King Farouk abdicated and, accompanied by 204 valises, left the country never to return. Jubilation ran high at the news of the overthrow of the corrupt monarchy.

The events of July 23, 1952, were merely the beginning of the revolution. On September 7, Ali Maher was dismissed from the post of prime minister in favour of General Nagib. In accordance with a Revolutionary Council decision, on September 9 the new government passed a law on the confiscation of the royal lands, and on the partial expropriation of landlord estates for distribu-

tion among short-of-land peasants, subject to redemption over 30 to 40 years. On June 18, 1953, Egypt was proclaimed a republic. Nasser became president as from November 1954. The Egyptian Government demanded the withdrawal of the British troops from the Canal zone, and after strenuous negotiations obtained an agreement to that effect, signed on October 19, 1954. On June 13, 1956, the last contingent of British troops sailed from Egypt.

Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Sudan Win Independence

The courageous anti-imperialist struggle of the Egyptian people provided a strong stimulus for other North African countries, and there, too, the national liberation movement grew in scope. In Libya, which used to be an Italian colony, British and French troops stayed on after the end of the Second World War, and a military base was set up by the United States. The imperialist powers planned to partition Libya and to perpetuate foreign control over the country. But the people of Libya demanded independence and unity. At the 1949 session of the UN General Assembly the Soviet Union submitted a proposal providing for immediate independence for Libya, withdrawal of foreign troops and dismantling of foreign military bases on its territory. Crowds demonstrated in Tripoli, carrying such slogans as "Down with Anglo-American Imperialism!", "Long Live a United Libya!", and "Long Live the Soviet Union—Defender of Peoples' Independence!"

Faced with this situation, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution granting Libya independence as from January 1, 1952. Proclaimed a sovereign state, the country became known as the United Kingdom of Libya.¹

In Sudan, too, where the British colonialists had been exploiting the country's resources since the end of the 19th century by virtue of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium convention, the Egyptian revolution had had a strong impact. Along with the Al Ashigga and the Al Umma parties, which reflected the interests of the propertied classes, workers' organisations had been coming to play an increasingly active part in the country's political life. The trade unions now represented a force to be reckoned with; a Sudanese Federation of Workers' Trade Unions was formed in 1950, whose membership now totalled 150,000. The Sudanese Communist Party, founded in 1946, operated underground.

¹ On September 1, 1969, revolution in Libya proclaimed it a republic, the Libyan Arab Republic.

After Egypt's denunciation, on October 15, 1951, of the condominium convention the British authorities had hoped that certain manoeuvres of a constitutional nature would enable them to maintain their control over Sudan. These hopes, however, were shattered as a result of the anti-imperialist struggle in Sudan and the victorious revolution in Egypt.

The Anglo-Egyptian agreement on Sudan, signed on February 12, 1953, abrogated the condominium regime and recognised the right of the Sudanese people to self-determination at the end of a transitional period of three years. Parliamentary elections held in November 1953 brought a national government to power. The last of the British troops were out of Sudan by the end of 1955; and on January 1, 1956, the country was proclaimed a republic.

In Morocco, the people's movement for independence and reunification of so-called "French" and "Spanish" Morocco, became general after the war. Sultan Mohammed V, who viewed with sympathy the aspirations of the national bourgeoisie, presented to the French Government, in the autumn of 1950, an official demand for independence. A conflict between the Sultan and the French authorities ensued, which proved favourable to an upsurge of the people's struggle. The Moroccan Communist Party had been taking an active part in that struggle. Fighting for national independence was also the Moroccan National Front, a bloc of bourgeois-nationalist parties which wielded paramount influence in the country.

The French hoped to be able to crush the movement by force, and looked to the feudal elements for aid in this respect. In 1953, they dethroned Mohammed V with the aid of those very elements, exiled him to Madagascar, and hoisted a puppet of their choosing on the throne. The *coup d'état* was followed by ferocious persecution of the patriotic elements, which, however, failed to bring the expected results: the patriots joined to form armed groups, which attacked troop trains and military supply depots. In October 1955, the tribes of the Er Riff and Atlas highlands rose against the French. Forced to come to terms, the latter recalled Mohammed V from exile and put him back on the throne. On March 2, 1956, a Franco-Moroccan declaration on Moroccan independence was signed. On April 5, the country's independence was recognised by Spain. And thus the former French and Spanish zones reunited to form the state of Morocco.

The people of Tunisia achieved independence just about the same time. Patriotic feeling was at high tide after the war, and the government, which included members of the influential bourgeois-nationalist Neo-Dastur Party, initiated negotiations with France. Begun in August 1950, they continued for eighteen months, but failed to achieve any results. A general strike took

place in December 1951, on the initiative of the Neo-Dastur, the Tunisian Communist Party, the trade unions and other organisations. In January 1952, the French fired on a Tunisian demonstration; the Neo-Dastur leaders, headed by Habib Bourguiba, and the leaders of the Communist Party, headed by Mohammed Ennaffaa, were arrested and exiled in the desert.

Tunisian patriots began to arm. Partisan detachments were organised, which, joining forces, formed the National Liberation Army. Two years of war convinced the French that they couldn't win, and in September 1954, a new round of Franco-Tunisian negotiations was begun. Despite all France's efforts to draw them out she found herself compelled first to grant Tunisia autonomy and finally, on March 20, 1956, to recognise its independence.

The Suez Canal Crisis

The successes scored by the liberation movement of the Arab peoples by the mid-fifties posed a threat to the positions of the imperialist powers in the Middle East. Egypt, since the revolution of 1952, followed an independence line in its foreign policies. It refused to adhere to the Bagdad Pact. When Great Britain and the United States suspended the sale of arms to Egypt, the Nasser government began to buy them from the socialist countries. The Egyptian army came to be equipped with modern *matériel*; and this was a substantial aid to the national liberation movements of the Arab peoples.

In July 1956, the Egyptian Government passed a law on the nationalisation of the Suez Canal. The colonialists retaliated with an armed attack. First to attack, on October 30, 1956, was Israel; and on the following day Great Britain and France joined in the aggression. Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said and other towns were bombed.

The joint British, French and Israeli aggression against Egypt was an effort to halt the disintegration of the colonial system, mount a counter-offensive, and strike a telling blow at the national liberation movement. The colony-owning states had overlooked the fact, however, that the balance of world forces had radically changed since the Second World War. The Soviet Union and the socialist countries had become a mighty buckler well able to shield and protect the just aspirations of oppressed peoples. On November 5, the Soviet Government addressed a serious warning to Great Britain, France and Israel. "We are fully resolved," read the message of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, "to use force in order to crush the aggressors and restore peace in the East." The warning was taken, and on November 6

the aggressors announced the cessation of military operations in Egypt.

The Egyptian people displayed great courage in fighting back the British, French and Israeli aggressors, as in the case of the heroic defence of Port Said. Workers volunteered for service in the army by the thousands, and formed the backbone of the national guard assigned to the defence of industrial plants and public buildings. This active participation of the masses in fighting off the aggressors gave a more profound meaning to the Egyptian revolution. As President Nasser pointed out later, "the battle of Suez helped disclose the meaning of patriotism by stressing with particular force the link between the political revolution and the social".

The United Arab Republic

The Egyptian revolution of 1952, and even more so the defeat of the imperialist aggression in the Suez Canal zone, had the effect of bolstering the influence of the democratic forces in Syria. Imperialist pressure on that country was particularly heavy during 1957, the United States Government exerting this pressure through Turkey and Israel. This imperialist threat engendered among the Syrians a desire for closer ties with Egypt. The Syrian landlords and big capitalists saw cause for alarm in the successes of the democratic forces and counted on union with Egypt to strengthen their position. In February 1958, the union became a reality, and the two countries formed a United Arab Republic. Yemen was later admitted into the UAR with the status of an independent member of the confederation.

Actually it turned out that this rather precipitate union did not work. A revolt in the Syrian army broke out in September 1961, which led to the withdrawal of Syria from the UAR, after which she took the name of the Syrian Arab Republic. The UAR-Yemen alliance was also abrogated, in 1963. Egypt nevertheless retained the official appellation of the United Arab Republic.¹

July 1958 Revolution in Iraq

In Iraq, the revolutionary movement moved rapidly to a climax after the failure of the Anglo-Franco-Israeli military venture. This Arab state had been under a British mandate and thus had formed part of the British colonial empire. Although the mandate

¹ The Arab Republic of Egypt since 1971.

had actually been annulled in 1922, Britain continued to exercise control over the country by virtue of certain unequal treaties, specifically, as from 1930, under a "treaty of friendship and alliance". In 1955, under the pressure of a growing mass movement in Iraq, the British Government was constrained to revoke the 1930 treaty. But Britain remained Iraq's ally under the Bagdad Pact and therefore continued to control the Iraqi army, air bases, and strategic communication lines.

The British fostered a reactionary regime in the country, supported mainly by the big feudal landlords and comprador bourgeoisie. From 1930 on, Nuri al-Said, reactionary extremist and British figurehead, was to play a leading role in the Iraqi governments.

There were popular uprisings against foreign colonialists and local reactionaries in 1948 and 1952. Mass demonstrations, which finally assumed the proportions of an uprising, occurred at the time of the Anglo-Franco-Israeli assault on Egypt. That uprising was put down, but a revolutionary situation continued inexorably building up. In the beginning of 1957 a National Unity Front was formed by the Communist Party and three bourgeois-nationalist parties, namely, the National Democratic Party, the Istiqlal (Independence) Party, and the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party (Baath), all operating underground. A secret organisation known as the Free Officers, formed in the Iraqi army on the Egyptian pattern, co-operated with the new front.

On July 14, 1958, army units commanded by members of the Free Officers organisation and headed by General Abdal-Karim Kassem entered Bagdad. They seized the government buildings and the king's palace. King Faisal and Nuri al-Said were killed and a new government was formed headed by Kassem.

Great Britain and the United States made a move to intervene against the Iraqi revolution. On July 15, American troops were put ashore in neighbouring Lebanon, and on July 17 British troops entered Jordan. Faced with the determination of the Iraqi people to fight for their revolution, as well as with the support given to the Iraqi people by the nations of Asia and Africa, and especially in view of the energetic representations of the Soviet Government on behalf of the Iraqi revolution—the imperialists were forced to back down.

Thus Iraq became an independent sovereign state. In March 1959, the Iraqi Government officially announced the country's withdrawal from the Bagdad Pact. Important democratic reforms were introduced; a republican system of government was adopted; and equal rights for Arabs and Kurds were proclaimed. The workers could henceforth join trade unions and peasants form their associations. It became lawful for political parties, including the

Communist Party, to publish their newspapers. And on September 30, 1958, a law was passed on agrarian reform, which provided for the restriction of landlord ownership.

From the middle of 1959 onward, however, the Kassem government began to abandon the policy on the unity of all patriotic forces and on the support of the masses. The united national front disintegrated, and Kassem turned to strengthening his own personal dictatorship. This could not but weaken the government's position, and a military *putsch* followed on February 8, 1963. The Right wing of the Baath Party, which seized state power, proceeded to establish a reactionary regime and unleash a reign of terror directed against the democratic forces and, above all, the Communist Party. It proceeded to make war on the Kurds with the intention of depriving them of all of their national rights. In November 1963, a military group headed by Aref operated a takeover of state power, and shortly after the *coup* Aref became president. The new regime took some action to normalise the internal situation, notably to regulate relations with the Kurds.

Nevertheless the new government's policies were insufficiently consistent, especially after the president's death and the accession of his brother, a professional soldier, to that post. In June 1968, President Aref was removed from office by the Revolutionary Headquarters Council, and L. Bakr was made president.

National Liberation War in Algeria

During the war years the French Committee of National Liberation set up its headquarters in Algeria, and this circumstance contributed to the growth of national self-consciousness among the Algerian people. In the days that followed hard upon the end of the war mass demonstrations swept across the country to demand immediate independence. In the communes of Setif and Guelma the demonstrators were fired upon, and this provoked great indignation among the people, which developed into an uprising. As so often before, here and elsewhere, the rebels were practically unarmed and lacked proper organisation, and the French had no difficulty in putting the uprising down before the end of May and to initiate harsh repressions, disband the various national organisations or drive them underground, and send many of their leaders to prison. Nevertheless, the struggle against the French colonialists went on, headed by the Algerian working class, in which the indigenous population had begun to play an increasingly important role, alongside people of European origin. The Communist Party started a mass movement against lawless police action, demanding the liberation of those who had taken part in the uprising and been

sent to prison. The Algerian patriots were actively supported by the French Communist Party.

In 1947, after the governing circles of France had begun to pursue a pro-American line in their policies and Communists had been removed from participation in the government, a so-called statute of Algeria was foisted on the country, which, though granting some concessions, actually perpetuated its colonial status. That served to convince the broadest sections of the Algerian people that only a determined struggle could end the hateful colonial regime, their oppression as a nation, and the terror practised by the French authorities. Such, too, was the conclusion reached by the leaders of the re-activated nationalist organisations that represented the interests of the national bourgeoisie, bourgeois intelligentsia, small traders, artisans, employees and students. The early 1950s saw the beginning of an armed struggle for freedom in the adjacent French colonies of Tunisia and Morocco; and partisan units began to operate in the mountainous areas of Algeria itself. The Algerian patriots had taken into account the rising victorious national liberation movements of the peoples of Asia and Africa, as a whole, as well as the fact that the French had become deeply mired in the dragging "dirty war" with the people of Vietnam.

On November 1, 1954, the Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action, then operating underground, summoned the Algerian people to an armed struggle for independence. Early fighting took place south of Constantine, then in Great Kabylia, a highland country east of Algiers, from where it soon spread all over the country. This was a people's revolution, an anti-imperialist revolution headed by the National Liberation Front, or FLN, a mass organisation in which the leading role belonged to revolutionary intellectuals closely allied with the masses, especially the peasantry. The country was subdivided into districts, within each of which a local partisan army waged war more or less independently, inasmuch as the conditions of guerilla warfare made it difficult to ensure centralised military leadership. All these forces battling the French colonialists formed, taken together, the Algerian National Liberation Army, which numbered, as early as 1958, over 130,000 fighters. This army struck hard, when least expected, acquiring weapons in battle, severing French communication lines, blowing up important military installations, wiping out enemy units, etc.

The French countered with a regime of terror throughout Algeria, subjecting to persecution all those who they believed associated with armed resistance or even suspected of being in sympathy with it. Algerian patriots were mercilessly tortured and killed by the thousands. At the end of nearly eight years of war loss of life among the people of Algeria had reached the incredible figure of

1,500,000—out of a population of 9,000,000. This heavy sacrifice of lives, instead of intimidating the Algerians, merely embittered them and strengthened their determination to win the war. In their struggle the Algerian patriots were supported by progressive forces all over the world, notably by the Arab states, the Soviet Union and the socialist countries.

Through the efforts of the French Communist Party a mass movement for a just peace and independence for Algeria developed in France. Its significance was particularly great in view of the fact that chauvinistic tendencies were marked not only among the French bourgeoisie, but also among other sections of the population, and above all the military. This chauvinism was fanned by leading capitalists financially interested in holding on to Algeria as a French colony and interested also in a victory in the war as a sure means of strengthening the reaction in France herself. These elements within the ruling class came to be known as the "ultras", or extremists. These "ultras", joined by general Salan, in command of the French forces in Algeria, raised in May 1958, a revolt against the government when the latter broached the subject of possible negotiations with the Algerian patriots.

In September 1958, the National Council of the Algerian Revolution, the governing body of the FLN, proclaimed the formation of an independent Algerian Republic. A Provisional Government was set up, with headquarters initially in Cairo and then in Tunis. This government offered to start peace talks with France, but met with a rebuff. The creation of a Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic marked a new phase in the Algerian people's liberation struggle. A number of countries announced their recognition of the new government. And friendly nations increased their aid to fighting Algeria, notably by providing modern weapons, of which the Algerian patriots stood in great need. Meantime the National Liberation Army delivered increasingly effective blows against the French, in spite of the fact that French reinforcements and *matériel* continued to arrive in Algeria.

The realisation that the war against the Algerian people could not be won finally forced the French Government to recognise Algeria's right to self-determination and to agree to negotiate. Other contributing factors were: the growing movement in France in favour of granting Algeria independence; and a general shift to neo-colonialist conceptions on the part of quite a few French monopolists, which meant that an effort would be made to maintain French domination in Algeria by economic methods. Negotiations began in June 1960, but the desire of the French representatives to force the Algerians to what would have been tantamount to surrender caused a breakdown of the talks. This served to strengthen the determination of the Algerian patriots to achieve independence.

In the spring of 1961 France was compelled to renew negotiations with the representatives of the Provisional Government. This caused a new revolt of the "ultras" in Algeria, instigated by the Secret Armed Organisation, or OAS, created early in 1961 by extremist military leaders. The *coup* was suppressed by the army, which remained loyal to de Gaulle, but the OAS refused to submit to presidential orders and unleashed a campaign of terror against those who favoured Algerian independence.

Negotiations between France and Algeria were conducted in the French town of Evian in greatest secrecy. Twice they were broken off again. Renewed in February 1962, they resulted by March 18 in an agreement whereby the government of the country (during an interim period of from three to six months) was to be entrusted to a Provisional Executive Body of French and Algerian representatives. This body was to operate a popular referendum which would establish whether the Algerian people desired national independence and co-operation with France; in the event of an answer in the affirmative (of which there could hardly be any doubt) France was to immediately recognise the independence and sovereignty of Algeria (including Sahara) and withdraw her troops from the country within three years. The European residents of Algeria were to be given a like period of time to choose between Algerian or French citizenship. Full amnesty was announced for all Algerians sentenced for participation in the liberation movement.

Though implying a measure of compromise, the Evian agreements meant an important victory for the Algerian people, won in relentless and bitter fighting at enormous sacrifice of life. The referendum of July 1, 1962, returned a practically unanimous verdict in favour of independence, and Algeria became an independent state. And the Algerian revolution would hence be spear-headed against internal feudalism and foreign imperialism.

THE PEOPLES OF TROPICAL AND SOUTH AFRICA ON THE WAY TO LIBERATION

When the Second World War ended Africa was a changed continent. There had been significant advances in the economy of the African countries. Production of strategic raw materials had markedly increased, as also the extraction of minerals. There had been some growth of the manufacturing industries, notably in the consumption goods and food processing field, due to contracting imports of manufactured goods from overseas. Roads and airfields had been built in many regions, and port facilities enlarged. Labour had been required for all of this, and the labour force had sharply increased numerically in practically all the African countries.

Roughly a million Africans had been mobilised into the fighting forces. Never before had so great a number of African soldiers travelled away from their countries or from the African continent. They had fought in the Arab countries of North Africa and Ethiopia, as well as in Western Europe and even as far away as Burma and Malaya.

The war and its consequences had had a profound effect on the political and national thinking of the Africans. The metropolitan countries, particularly France, Belgium and Italy, had become compromised as a result of their defeat. Nothing could revive the faith in their invincibility that had been fostered in the indigenous population by colonial propaganda. Many Africans had gained a considerably broader conception of things in general: they had seen much more of the world than ever before. Never had the current of world events stirred the Africans as it did now. Such developments as the emergence of the socialist system and, later, the crash of the colonial regimes in the lands of Asia, had produced a lively impression in the countries of Africa and created favourable conditions for a struggle for liberation. How profound all these shifts had been became evident in the early aftermath of the war.

Fifth Pan-African Congress

In October 1945, Manchester played host to the Fifth Pan-African Congress. This Congress was far different from those that came before, both in respect of its membership and the resolutions adopted. Side by side with the fighters for Negro emancipation who had become known back in the 1920s, arriving from the United States and the West Indies, sat the representatives of various comparatively young African political organisations and trade unions. Indeed, these formed a majority.

Among those present were: Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, patriarch of the Pan-African movement, prominent Negro public figure and scientist; Kwame Nkrumah, future president of Ghana; Jomo Kenyatta, future president of Kenya; Peter Abrahams, the noted South African writer; and many other public and political personalities whose names were later to become known the world over.

The resolutions adopted by the Congress contained—for the first time in the history of Pan-Africanism—a demand for independence. Its Declaration stated:

“The peoples of the colonies must have the right to elect their own governments, without restrictions from foreign powers. We say to the peoples of the colonies that they must fight for these ends by all means at their disposal . . . the struggle for political power by colonial and subject peoples is the first step towards, and the

necessary prerequisite to, complete social, economic and political emancipation. . . . Colonial workers must be in the front of the battle against imperialism. . . . Colonial and subject peoples of the world, unite!"

Another document adopted by the Congress was the Appeal to the Colonial Workers, Farmers and Intellectuals which summoned them to organise mass movements against colonialism.

This Congress mirrored the important developments brewing on the African Continent, though still below the surface.

The Emergence of Ghana

First among the countries of Tropical Africa to gain its freedom, in March 1957, was the British Gold Coast colony. Its proclamation as a sovereign state reverberated throughout the continent. Many African countries viewed it as a promise of their own early liberation. It was a sign of the times, too, that the first sovereign state of Tropical Africa had dropped the name of Gold Coast given it by the colonialists to take that of Ghana, in tribute to the powerful West African country that existed in the Middle Ages.

Ghana had travelled a difficult road to gain its independence. 1945 saw the formation in the Gold Coast of a Trade Union Congress, and in December 1947, the United Gold Coast Convention came into being, the first political organisation to demand independence. This latter organisation was headed by bourgeois elements and that section of the feudal landlords which was especially closely linked to them. D. A. Grant, a prominent exporter of timber and cocoa, was given the post of president, Dr. J. K. Danquah became a vice-president, and Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, back in his native country again after thirteen years in the United States and Great Britain, took, in 1947, the post of secretary-general.

The rapidly rising cost of living in this period produced various forms of protest on the part of the population, such as strikes, meetings, demonstrations, and boycott of foreign-made goods. On February 28, 1948, soldiers who had been given neither jobs nor allowances on being mustered out of the army came to the governor's residence to submit their demands, and were fired upon by the police.

Nevertheless the British authorities considered it necessary to grant the Gold Coast population certain concessions; and a Constitutional Committee was set up to revise the system of government. Its membership included practically all the leaders of the United Convention; and some of these used this as a pretext for claiming that Britain's attitude towards her colonies had radically

changed for the better. This produced a split in the Convention, and in the middle of 1949 a Convention People's Party emerged therefrom headed by Kwame Nkrumah, which was determined to assume leadership in the struggle against the colonial regime.

In November 1949, the People's Party, in co-operation with the Trade Union Congress, convened a Gold Coast Representative Assembly with the participation of trade unions, co-operatives, and various cultural, youth and women's organisations. The Assembly demanded that the country be granted dominion status. When the British Colonial Office refused, the People's Party issued, on January 8, 1950, an appeal to the people to begin a campaign of "positive action", which was to include meetings, demonstrations, a general strike, and a boycott of goods of British origin. Taking its start in Accra, the campaign quickly spread over the rest of the country. A state of siege was proclaimed by the governor, and leaders of the People's Party and Trade Union Congress were arrested. But these repressions merely gave a further impetus to the liberation struggle.

Towards the close of 1950 and early in 1951 the British Government introduced a new system of government for the Gold Coast, which provided for the formation of a local government. Elections to a Legislative Assembly, held in February 1951, ended in a resounding victory for the People's Party, which won 34 seats out of 38. In 1952 Kwame Nkrumah was given the post of prime minister.

For all these changes, however, the Gold Coast remained a colony, with the British governor still wielding the power of veto. In 1953 the Legislative Assembly approached the British Government with a request to place before the parliament a bill granting the Gold Coast independence within the framework of the British Commonwealth. This request ran into the opposition not only of reactionary elements in the metropolis but also of the feudal nobility in the Gold Coast itself. In many parts of the country the feudal landlords began forming armed detachments to fight the People's Party. And a number of political parties cropped up in opposition to the Nkrumah government.

Elections to the Legislative Assembly in July 1956, however, showed that the majority of the people were against a colonial status. The election returns, the changing balance of world forces, and the decision of Britain's ruling circles to alter the methods of colonial exploitation, all pointed to the necessity of granting the Gold Coast independence. Accordingly, the British Government resolved to grant it dominion status, and on March 6, 1957, the Gold Coast was solemnly proclaimed an independent state and took the name of Ghana. The British trust territory of Togo was incorporated into the new state. A referendum conducted in this

part of Togoland in May 1956, had shown that the majority of its population were in favour of union with the Gold Coast (after it was granted independence), rather than continue as a trust territory. The independence of the eastern part of Togo under French trusteeship was proclaimed in 1960.

Guinea, First French Colony to Gain Freedom

Eighteen months after the liberation of Ghana another country south of the Sahara rid itself of the colonial regime. This was Guinea. While still a dependency known as "French" Guinea, it formed part of a solid block of French colonial possessions, administratively divided into French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. Besides Guinea, the former comprised Mauritania, Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, French Sudan, Niger and Upper Volta. French Equatorial Africa comprised Gabon, Middle Congo, Ubangi-Shari, and Chad. This area also contained the French trust territories of Cameroon and Togo.

In October 1946, representatives of the various political parties of the French colonies met in Bamako (now capital of the Mali Republic) and decided to create a common political federation to be known as the African Democratic Union. This organisation came out strongly against colonial rule and by 1949 its membership had grown to roughly a million. While expressing the prevailing anti-imperialist feelings, it also reflected the trend towards unity among the African peoples, more specifically the desire to preserve—after the achievement of independence—the "federations", which was the name applied to French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. Many Africans hoped that it would be possible eventually to win independence for the two large and therefore more viable federations, rather than for the twelve minor colonies.

In the liberation movements in the French colonies, trade unions were coming to play a greater and greater role. They, too, displayed a trend towards concerted action: thus, in 1957, they succeeded in forming a united trade union centre known as the General Union of Workers of Black Africa. In their struggle, the African workers had the unfailing support of the Communist Party and progressive trade unions of France.

The growing power of the national liberation forces compelled the French Government to make concessions. The French governing circles had their hands full with the wars that had been going on since 1954 in Algeria and since 1955 in the French trust territory of Cameroon, and had to be careful not to allow armed conflict to break out in other French colonies. In the summer of 1956 the

French president signed a law decreeing that each colony was henceforward entitled to form a government council which would function as an executive body. The terms of reference of such councils, however, were to be quite limited, the chair could be occupied only by the French governors, and the minister of French overseas territories would have the right to veto any of their decisions. Moreover, and this was of even greater importance, the law, while conferring wider powers on certain colonies, was frankly designed to prevent the retention of any common governing bodies on a "federation" level.

In 1957 the African Democratic Union at Bamako called for the formation of federation states. The French Government flatly rejected the proposal, considering that it would be easier to deal with small and weak countries than with one or two larger states.

Faced with the disintegration of the imperialist colonial system and a serious political crisis at home as a result of the war in Algeria, President de Gaulle announced a referendum in all the French colonies of West and Equatorial Africa. The people were to be asked whether they wished to remain within the French community or to be completely independent of France. This referendum, conducted on September 28, 1958, was not an expression of the free will of the people. The internal feudal elements and other forces that had thrown in their lot with the French imperialists were determined to prevent a break with the metropolis. Witness reports indicate that in some colonies the election returns were crudely falsified. Many voters were frightened into believing that France would turn her back on any people that came out against remaining within the French community.

As a result, Guinea was the only country that voted for complete independence from France: 95 per cent of her voters voted against remaining within the French community. This was largely due to the efforts of the Democratic Party of Guinea, the local branch of the African Democratic Union. This party had acquired great prestige in the land. Sékou Touré, its secretary-general, had headed the colony's government council. Shortly before the referendum in Guinea the Democratic Party had succeeded in bringing about important reforms in the interests of the people at large, such as tax cuts for peasants, higher wages for workers, dismissal of tribal chiefs from administrative posts, etc.

Just before the referendum Sékou Touré said that at the Bamako Congress Africa had come out in favour of the federations, with a view to retaining French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa and converting them into states which would adhere to the Franco-African community. Resolutions to that effect, he said, had been submitted to the French Government.... However, the French

Government had failed to take cognisance of this in its draft constitution. It wished to partition Africa, it told us: Guinea will become a state, the Ivory Coast will be a state, every territory will become an independent state and make its own laws. And although the West African market was rather limited, Sékou Touré added, and should have been extended to cover French Equatorial Africa, so as to constitute a single economic and monetary entity, it was nevertheless the intention to arrange things in such a manner that Guinea should be a state separated from Senegal, that there should be customs houses on their common frontiers, and that there should be similar customs houses on Guinea's frontiers with Sudan and the Ivory Coast.

On October 2, 1958, when the final returns of the referendum had come in, Guinea proclaimed herself an independent republic. Soon thereafter all French experts were recalled from the country, and a rapid outflow of French capital followed: the French Government attempted to organise an international boycott of the new state. Thanks to the firmness of the Guinean people, however, as well as to the support of the socialist countries and neighbouring Ghana, the French efforts failed to bring Guinea to her knees.

1960—Africa Year

The proclamation of Ghanaian and Guinean independence made the first breach in the system of colonial rule in Tropical Africa. Thereafter the disintegration of that system continued at a rapidly rising rate.

Historically, 1960 may be regarded as Africa Year: seventeen new states emerged on the African continent during that year. On January 1, Cameroon, hitherto a French-administered territory, proclaimed its independence, to be followed by Togo, another French trust territory, on April 27; the Malagasy Republic on June 26; the Republic of the Congo (ex-Belgian colony) on June 30; and on July 1 British Somaliland and the Italian trust territory of Somaliland united to proclaim themselves a republic.

Between August and November all the colonies of French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa were proclaimed independent. There thus came into being: the Republic of Dahomey, the Republic of Niger, the Republic of Upper Volta, the Ivory Coast Republic, the Chad Republic, the Central African Republic (Ubangi-Shari prior to 1959), the Congo Republic (capital—Brazzaville; formerly Middle Congo), the Gabon Republic, the Republic of Senegal, the Mali Republic (ex-French Sudan), and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Nigeria, largest of African countries in size of population, became independent on October 1.

Yet it was during this selfsame year 1960 that Africa came to realise how completely illusory the independence thus proclaimed could be in certain conditions. A convincing object lesson was given the Africans by the tragedy of ex-Belgian Congo, which foreign imperialism succeeded in plunging into chaos within a few months of its "independence", and by the fate of Patrice Lumumba and his comrades-in-arms, done to death by the colonialists and their henchmen. The tragedy of the Congo and the dramatic events that took place in other African countries showed only too clearly that the second phase of a national liberation revolution, the one that began with the proclamation of independence, was often more complicated, more difficult, and sometimes more bloody, than the struggle to end a country's colonial status.

New States Emerge in East and Central Africa

Among the countries of East and Central Africa which achieved independence between 1961 and 1964, British possessions were in the majority, namely, Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. There were two trust territories: Tanganyika, administered by the British, and Ruanda-Urundi, by the Belgians.

These countries were of considerable importance to the world capitalist economy. Thus, the "Copper Belt", a highland area in Northern Rhodesia, was one of the world's leading producers of copper. The plantations of Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika yielded heavy crops of coffee, cotton and sisal. That is why the governing circles of Great Britain had been intent on holding on to these possessions.

In Kenya and Northern Rhodesia, to name two of them, there had been a large number of European settlers. Their climate is favourable, quite unlike that of many areas in West Africa, which have rightly earned for themselves the name "white man's graveyard". In the middle 1950s the white population of just the two above-mentioned colonies numbered roughly 100,000. Quite a few of these settlers were ready to take up arms in defence of colonial rule, and the ruling circles of the parent countries could rightly count on their support.

In order to maintain their colonial rule in East and Central Africa, the British considered it highly important to create colonial federations: an East African, which would include Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika; and a Central African, comprising Nyasaland, and Northern and Southern Rhodesia. The idea of forming these two federations dated back to the period between the First and

Second World wars, though it had remained deferred ever since. But after the Second World War one such federation was actually formed; it came to be officially known as the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The white settlers of Southern Rhodesia viewed this federation as a means of extending their control to cover Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, while the settlers of these two colonies, who formed a negligible minority of their population, hoped to benefit by the support of the more populous and better organised white settlements of Southern Rhodesia. In all three colonies the settlers were unanimous in the belief that they would thus find it easier to keep the Africans in subordination and so assure an influx of capital from Europe and America. On an economic level, federation pursued the aim of linking the relatively developed industry of Southern Rhodesia with the raw material resources of Northern Rhodesia and the vast reserves of cheap labour provided by Nyasaland.

In uniting the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland the British Government sought to strengthen its dominant position in these colonies by enlisting the white settlers in the struggle against the growing forces of liberation. The African peoples, however, actively fought against the formation of any colonial federations. The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland functioned just ten years, from 1953 to 1963; and as to an East African Federation—that the British had never been able to create.

The anti-imperialist movements that developed in the British East and Central African colonies in post-war years were accompanied by the sprouting of various mass political organisations, whose membership ran into tens and hundreds of thousands. Among them may be mentioned the Kenya African National Union, founded in 1960, headed by Jomo Kenyatta; the Tanganyika African National Union headed by Julius Nyerere, founded in 1954; and the United National Independence Party of Northern Rhodesia, headed by Kenneth Kaunda. Other large organisations existed in Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Zanzibar. All of them owed their existence to the activities of numerous political groups, trade unions and social organisations, which had provided the Africans with an opportunity to gain experience in fighting for their rights.

The movements for independence varied from country to country, naturally, in respect of certain characteristic features and the specific difficulties encountered. Yet there was also much that was similar in their history. In all of these countries the colonial authorities instituted mass persecution of the population. In Kenya, between 1952 and 1955, in their efforts to crush the Mau Mau peasant rebellion the British colonialists threw 62,000 Africans into prisons and concentration camps, including Jomo Kenyatta

and other independence movement leaders; and over 11,000 Kenya Africans were killed.

In the Rhodesias, in Nyasaland, as in the other countries of East Africa, the authorities resorted to such measures as state of emergency, mass arrests, prohibition of political organisations, etc. Suppressed political organisations promptly reappeared under new names, however, and with even more numerous memberships, as a rule.

First among the countries of East Africa to achieve independence, in December 1961, was Tanganyika. As of July 1, 1962, a United Nations resolution ended the trusteeship regime in Ruanda-Urundi, in lieu of which two states appeared on the map, namely the Republic of Ruanda and the Kingdom of Burundi¹. Uganda gained independence in October 1962; Zanzibar in December 1963; and in 1964 Tanganyika united with Zanzibar to form the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland fell apart towards the close of 1963, and in July 1964, Nyasaland was proclaimed a state under the name of Malawi, after the name of the numerically largest of its peoples. Northern Rhodesia gained independence in October 1964, and forthwith dropped the name it had been given once upon a time in honour of Cecil Rhodes, the British colonialist, to become known as Zambia, after the river Zambezi.

Problem of Freedom for South Africa

By the beginning of 1966 nearly all the relatively large colonies north of Angola, Southern Rhodesia and Mozambique had won independence. Only such smaller countries as French Somaliland, Portuguese Guinea and Spanish Sahara continued under colonial regimes. Sierra Leone had become an independent state within the British Commonwealth early in 1961, and Gambia² early in 1965. In September and October, 1966, Basutoland and Bechuanaland gained statehood under the respective names of Lesotho and Botswana.

A large cluster of colonies was now left only in South Africa. These included the Portuguese possessions in Angola and Mozambique, the British protectorate of Swaziland³ and Southwest Africa (Namibia), annexed, to all intents and purposes, by the Republic of South Africa.

¹ The Republic of Burundi since November 1966.

² On April 24, 1970, Gambia was proclaimed republic.

³ An independent state within the British Commonwealth since September 6, 1968.

As soon as the Federation of Rhodesia fell apart, South Rhodesia (which the Africans call Zimbabwe) fell into the hands of the extreme racist section of the white settlers, which in November 1965 proclaimed the country an "independent" state, while retaining their dominant position therein. This was done against the will of the Africans, who form the majority of the population.

These remaining African colonies came to form a kind of barrier fencing off the Republic of South Africa, the most racially-minded country in the world today, from the continent's new independent states. And, in turn, the Republic of South Africa props up, in a manner of speaking, the regimes of the still surviving colonies on its northern borders, with which it constitutes a solid bloc.

The problem of liberating the southern part of Africa is fraught with many difficulties. This is the continent's richest part. It is here that 70 per cent of the capitalist world's total output of gold and platinum is produced, together with diamonds, uranium, vanadium and many other valuable minerals. The world's biggest monopoly concerns vie for domination in this area. Some 3,500,000 white settlers live in South Africa, mainly in the Republic of South Africa, a considerable proportion of whom embrace the racist creed and are willing to promote the interests of imperialism.

Far greater forces than elsewhere on the continent were lined up here against the movement for liberation, but the struggle against colonialism and imperialism was gaining momentum, especially in the Portuguese colonies, where since the early 1960s it had developed into a regular war.

Struggle for African Unity

The liberation forces in every African country grew apace and success achieved by any one of the former colonies served to inspire the rest of the continent. The developing national liberation revolution made the Africans realise more and more that they were facing common tasks and that unity on an all-African scale had become a necessity.

In 1958, Africans began, for the first time in history, to initiate conferences for the purpose of discussing their common tasks. This constituted an important advance. Prior to that, African issues were debated and decided solely by the representatives of imperialist powers assembled in conference to cut up and piece together at will the map of Africa and legalise the "right" of the participants to exploit selected countries of the "Dark Continent".

This new type of conferences was initiated by the first Conference of Independent African States, convened at Accra in April

1958. It was attended by representatives of the eight then already existing independent countries, namely, Ghana, Guinea, the UAR, Morocco, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Liberia and Libya.

The Conference made an exhaustive examination of all aspects of the anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist struggle on the African continent. Other conferences of independent African states followed: at Addis Ababa in June 1960; at Leopoldville in August 1960; and at Casablanca in January 1961.

But the broadest representation of the numerous political and public organisations of all contemporary African countries was achieved through the periodic All-African peoples' conferences. The first such conference met at Accra, in December 1958; the second in Tunis, in January 1960; and the third in Cairo, in March 1961. Permanent elective bodies functioned in the intervals between conferences. The new arrangement led to a much greater participation of the African countries in the Afro-Asian solidarity movement.

The idea of a common struggle against colonialism meantime assumed an increasingly definite shape. The range of subjects tabled for discussion by the All-African peoples' conferences grew ever wider. The second conference adopted resolutions relating to practically every colony and proposing specific measures for ending the colonial status of each. Much more attention was given to such problems as the role of the working class in the struggle for the complete liberation of Africa; the policy of neutralism; and the struggle for universal peace. The first All-African peoples' conference was devoted primarily to the problem of political liberation; the second—to the achievement of economic independence; and the third—to neo-colonialism, now rapidly becoming the main threat to the peoples of Africa.

From conference to conference, the Africans showed a growing desire to employ more active methods in their struggle. Whereas non-violence and passive resistance were stressed by many delegates at the first conference as the only admissible tactics, at the second recommendations were made to form a volunteer corps to aid Algeria and other peoples now actively at war, and the third called for the creation of a supreme African headquarters.

An unflinching demand voiced by the conferences of the late 1950s was for independence for most of the African countries in 1960. And every African nation, obtaining the support of the whole continent at these representative assemblies, fought with all the greater firmness for the realisation of its ambitions.

Those countries who succeeded in achieving independence regarded the continuing colonial regimes in other regions of the continent as a threat to their newly gained sovereignty. And rightly so, as amply proved by the fact that the South African Republic

furnished mercenaries for the "Foreign Legion" in the Congo, for the Smith regime in Southern Rhodesia, and so on.

Characteristic of all African countries, parallel with a yearning for independence, was a growing trend towards a united stand against colonialism and imperialism and mutual aid both in fighting for freedom and in building a new life. True enough, this idea had a different meaning for some African leaders; so that in the late 1950s and early 1960s there came to exist a number of associations and political blocs that pursued rather different aims.

The founding of an African Unity Organisation spelled a signal success for the trend towards complete unity. This organisation came into existence by virtue of a Charter adopted at a conference of the heads of state and heads of government convened in May 1963, at Addis Ababa. Its programme included: promoting solidarity among the African states; co-ordinating their activities and strengthening co-operation; safeguarding their independence and territorial integrity; and fighting all manifestations of colonialism. The members of the Addis Ababa conference declared themselves resolved to settle all differences by peaceful procedures; to refrain from adhering to any blocs; and to aid in every possible way the liberation of those African countries that remained under colonial rule.

The Assembly of the Organisation of African Unity held in 1964 at Cairo declared Africa an atom-free zone, thereby making a substantial contribution to world peace.

However, the development of the OAU in the first years following its emergence in 1963 proceeded far from smoothly. Thus, the conference of heads of state and government of African countries, meeting at Addis Ababa towards the close of 1966, showed that their unification in a genuinely united anti-imperialist force was running into serious difficulties, posed above all by the manoeuvres of neo-colonialism. The concept of unity, fundamental to the OAU, was extremely popular, however, and had numerous adherents in all African countries.

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIBERATED COUNTRIES OF ASIA AND AFRICA

The tide of national liberation revolutions that had swept across Asia and Africa had brought political independence to scores of colonies and dependencies. In 1914 these countries accounted for 66.8 and 60 per cent, respectively, of the world's territory and population, but by April 1965, the lands remaining under a colonial regime formed a mere 4.5 and 1.1 per cent of its territory and population.

Independence: the Consequences

The Statement adopted by the 1960 Meeting of Representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties stressed that "the breakdown of the system of colonial slavery under the impact of the national-liberation movement is a development ranking second in historic importance only to the formation of the world socialist system".¹

The new sovereign states were at different levels of social, economic and political development. Some had thrown off their colonial or semi-colonial yoke as the result of successful peoples' democratic revolutions. Others remained within the orbit of the world capitalist economy, though enjoying a special status therein. Quite a few of the developing countries had been granted formal political independence, but were not yet actually fully independent due to the fact that they were either saddled with puppet governments or belonged to imperialist military blocs.

While they remain economically dependent on imperialist states, developing countries continue to be the object of semi-colonial exploitation, to be the world's rural appendage, so to say. This economic basis is precisely the mainstay of modern neo-colonialism. Imperialism aims to prevent the defection of former colonies and semi-colonies from the capitalist system and is prepared to use all possible means to that end, ranging from colonial wars all the way to economic "assistance". The imperialist powers are currently banking, in the new situation, on an alliance with the Right-wing collaborationist bourgeois elements of the new states of Asia and Africa.

Now that the world socialist system is largely determining the development of mankind, however, and thanks to the support of the Soviet Union, the other socialist states and the international workers' movement, most of the new states have come to enjoy genuine political independence, their economic weakness notwithstanding.

Most of the states that have thrown off the colonial yoke base their foreign policy on the principle of non-adherence to any imperialist military blocs. These non-aligned countries play an important role on the international scene, actively opposing the aggressive policies of the imperialist powers and the stocking and testing of atomic weapons, fighting for the creation of atom-free zones, etc.

As to the internal development of the new states, a characteristic feature was the aggravation of contradictions between the working people and the propertied classes.

¹ *The Struggle for Peace, Democracy and Socialism*, Moscow, 1963, p. 61.

With class warfare growing ever more intense, the national bourgeoisie was exhibiting a trend towards making deals with foreign imperialism and internal reaction.

Republic of India: 500,000,000 Strong

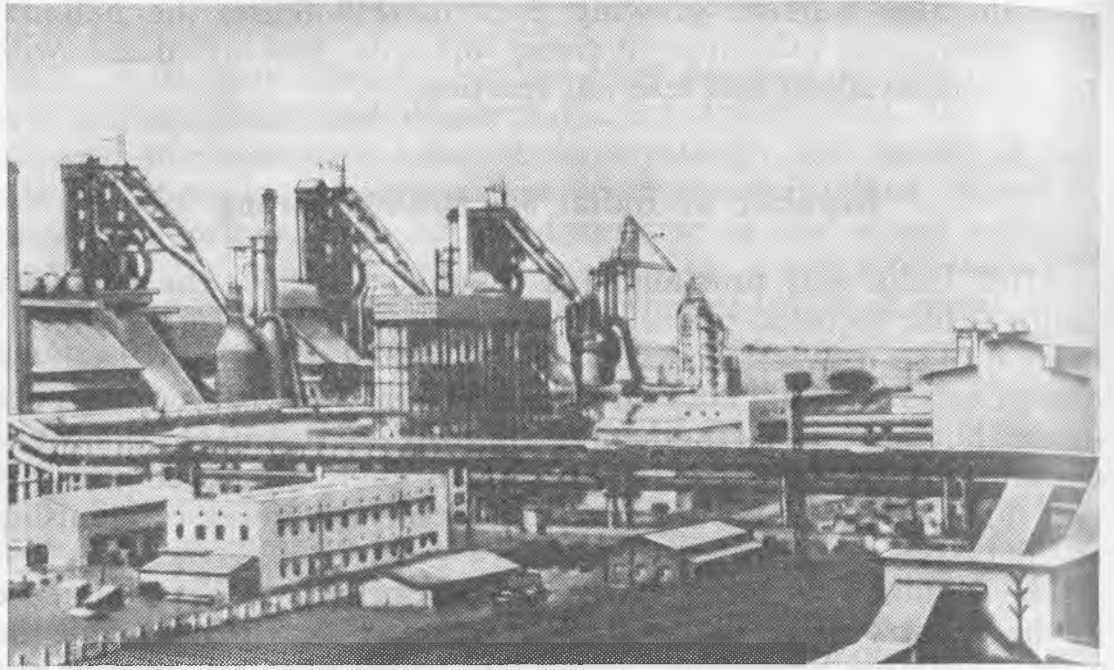
After India was proclaimed a republic in 1950, the country's political life focussed mainly on the prospects of its further development. The national bourgeoisie, which had established itself in power, was intent not only on assuring India's newly won independence, but also on strengthening its own dominant position. The working people, on the other hand, were increasing their activity, and this factor had an important effect on the power relationship of the classes.

The National Congress Party had retained its leading influence in the country after the 1951-52 elections to parliament and the state legislative assemblies, which had given it 44 per cent of the total votes, and in which the Communist Party had received 6.7 per cent (6,000,000) of the votes. But the 1957 elections gave the Communist Party 12,000,000 votes and 29 and 207 seats, respectively, in parliament and in the state legislative assemblies. In Kerala the Communists collected a majority of votes and formed a state government. The overall situation in the country and a desire to maintain its influence among the masses made it incumbent on the National Congress to follow an increasingly consistent policy of undermining the positions of the feudal landlords and princes. Nehru's influence within the party became stronger than before.

On the whole, the Indian Government's foreign policy may be said to have been anti-imperialist, progressive. India consistently followed the policy of non-adherence to any imperialist blocs, and established cordial relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

At home, the government's main aim was to create conditions favourable to the country's economic development by promoting national capital. The agrarian reforms of the 1950s had weakened the positions of the landlords, but landlord ownership of estates had remained. About one-third of the arable lands continued to be leased on onerous semi-feudal terms. Still, capitalist relations were developing more and more rapidly in the rural areas; the process of class differentiation among the peasantry was also picking up speed; and the rural bourgeoisie had grown stronger.

Taking into account the weakness of Indian capital and the reluctance of the big national bourgeoisie to invest in heavy industry, the Indian Government resolved to create a relatively power-



Metal works at Bhilai, India

ful public sector. Initially, this sector comprised the facilities which had belonged to the British colonial authorities (such as railways, etc.). Next, the public sector was extended to include power installations and the basic branches of heavy industry. The assets of state-owned companies increased by a factor of 20 over the decade 1951-61, though the public sector still accounted for only 10 per cent of industrial production.

The year 1951 saw the initiation of the five-year plan system; and in January 1955, the Sixtieth Session of the National Congress adopted a resolution declaring that the party set itself the aim of achieving in India "a society on the socialist pattern". This resolution mirrored the growing trend towards socialism among the masses. Actually, it must be said, the Indian governing circles in speaking of socialism meant, more often than not, a development of Indian capitalism with a strong accent on the state-capitalist sector. A government statement in regard to the first five-year plan contained the following: "It should be remembered that while the government can influence the private sector, it cannot determine the actual placement of investments therein. The programmes in question, therefore, should be regarded as statements of opinion regarding what is considered practicable and desirable." But the advancement of state entrepreneurship and the fulfilment of the five-year plans played a progressive role notwithstanding. Here in India, as in the other developing countries, state capitalism was anti-imperialist in its nature, and had set out to eradicate the

consequences of colonialism and promote the country's independence.

India had a great deal to show for the aid it received from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries in the field of industrial development. Between 1955 and 1961 she was granted Soviet credits to the amount of roughly Rs. 6,000 million. The Soviet Union built a steel works at Bhilai, the largest in India, and aided in laying a foundation for the heavy engineering and oil-extracting industries. An agreement was concluded for the construction by the USSR of yet another steel works, at Bokaro.¹ All told, more than 40 projects for the national economy were built or were under construction with the help of the Soviet Union.

The Republic of India scored a marked advance in the development of its national industry. New branches were added, such as the production of atomic energy, manufacture of electronic equipment, aircraft construction, and machine-building. Industrial production was growing considerably faster now than under British colonial rule.

Over the first two decades of independence industrial production practically tripled. Manufactured goods now figured in India's exports—for the first time in the country's history. Key positions in heavy industry, transport, communications, as well as in foreign trade and banking were in the hands of the state.

While promoting the development of the national economy as envisaged by the five-year plans, the country's progressive forces were carrying on the fight to improve the condition of the masses and to compel the propertied classes to finance industrial production. India's working people came out for an expansion of the public sector and its democratisation; for the restriction of private capital; for radical agrarian reforms in the interests of the peasantry; and for an end to all feudal relics in the rural areas.

The big Indian bourgeoisie, on the contrary, was seeking to exploit the public sector entirely in its own interests and to obtain the output of state-owned enterprises (that is, metals, electric power, etc.) at low prices, thus assuring it handsome profits. The section of the monopolist bourgeoisie that was linked to foreign capital called for a limitation, and even for the complete abolition, of the public sector. The forces of reaction were exerting a heavier and heavier pressure on the National Congress Party leadership and on the Indian Government. This was particularly conspicuous in 1959 in the case of the state of Kerala.

The emergence, in 1959, of the new Right-wing Swatantra (Independent) Party was but a manifestation of the growing activity and consolidation of the forces of reaction. Created to safeguard

¹ The initial section was commissioned in 1972.

the interests of the big capitalists and landlords, the Swatantra called for a limitation of the public sector, the dissolution of the National Planning Commission, abolition of the non-adherence policy, and rapprochement with the Western powers. Reactionary activity reached a peak following the exacerbation of the Indo-Chinese frontier conflict in the autumn of 1962. The state-of-emergency law passed in October was used for mass repressions against the Communists. Right-wing elements did their best to work up a chauvinistic frenzy. And the Western imperialist powers, for their part, exerted increasing pressure on the Nehru government in an attempt to induce it to give up its non-alignment policy.

In the face of growing Right-wing pressure India's working people carried on the fight for their economic and political rights. The mass movement got going again in the summer of 1963, after a short recession. A wave of mass demonstrations rolled across the country in July and August 1964, as a result of increased difficulties with the food supply.

The death of J. Nehru, which followed on May 27, 1964, came as a shock to all Hindus. Contrary to the expectations of the Right-wingers, however, it did not lead to any radical changes in the policies of the Indian Government. L. Shastri, who succeeded Nehru, announced that his government would continue the late prime minister's policy. In 1965 a conflict with Pakistan over Kashmir created a serious situation in India: the conflict developed into regular warfare with heavy loss of life and was settled only through the friendly mediation of the Soviet Union, which invited the two sides to negotiate at Tashkent. The Declaration of Tashkent came to be the last official act of Prime Minister Shastri, who died at Tashkent on the eve of his departure for Delhi. He was replaced as prime minister by Indira Gandhi, daughter of J. Nehru and a prominent public figure in her own right, who continued the policy of development laid down by her father.

In the second half of the sixties, however, India's economic difficulties increased, largely in consequence of the situation in agriculture, where the half-measures of the unfinished agrarian reform failed to provide the landless peasantry with land or deliver them from bondage to the rich, the traders and the money-lenders. While by these years agricultural production roughly doubled since 1947, it was still insufficient to supply the wants of the population. The necessity to import foodstuffs was drawing heavily on the budget, seriously setting back the country's balance of payments, with the inevitable dire consequences. 10,400,000 tons of grain (or 30 per cent of India's total annual imports) were imported in 1966/67. The price paid for this grain—1,140 million rupees—considerably lessened the possibility of importing the industrial equipment needed to continue the programme of industrial-

sation. The Indian monopolies tried to induce the government to renounce Nehru's concept of top priority to the development of the state sector of the national economy, but their efforts failed.

Sharper class contradictions were reflected in the elections to the all-India parliament and the state parliaments that took place early in 1967. An extreme polarisation of political forces became manifest. On the one hand, the Indian Communists were able to strengthen their position, and governments of the United Left Front, led by Communists, were formed in several states (Western Bengal, Bihar, Punjab and others). Many Indians came to see the soundness of communist principles, which point the way to true democracy and profound social changes and to the eventual building of a society where there is no room for exploitation.

On the other hand, the elections showed a considerable strengthening of the reactionary political forces, which gathered the second largest number of votes. Swatantra and other reactionary organisations were clamouring for repressive measures against democratic organisations and leaders. As a result, the central government dissolved the progressive governments set up after the 1967 elections in Western Bengal, Bihar and Punjab. But the government set up by the extreme Right-wing elements in the state of Orissa continued to function. The Right-wingers also controlled the capital's municipal council.

This polarisation of political forces affected the Indian bourgeoisie's most important party as well: dissension increased within the Indian National Congress, as a result, *inter alia*, of some loss of that party's popularity. While its central leadership was promoting a programme of "building a democratic socialist society", certain influential elements were calling for co-operation with the Right-wingers. Swatantra and other Rightist organisations were carrying on subversive activities and provoked sanguinary clashes on religious grounds in various places. And the political atmosphere in India became increasingly unsettled.

For a Non-Capitalist Mode of Development

Past experience and that of the new states of Asia and Africa testify that no developing country can count on capitalist methods to tackle the job of eliminating economic and cultural backwardness—a legacy of colonial rule; capitalist methods are certain to lead to neo-colonialism.

Meanwhile the effective aid in the political, economic and cultural fields now being made available to the developing countries by the world socialist community provides excellent opportunities

for the formerly backward countries of Asia and Africa to opt for a non-capitalist mode of development. That is precisely what the working class and the working-class parties are fighting to achieve. The idea of breaking with a social system that engendered colonialism has a wide popular appeal. It is a perfectly logical consequence of the struggle to safeguard the newly won independence that voices are lifted in a number of countries in favour of a non-capitalist mode of development, or, to put it differently, in favour of socialism. This preference is voiced by revolutionary democratic nationalists who reflect the interests of the petty urban bourgeoisie, the peasantry, and certain sections of the national bourgeoisie which had initially hoped to rebuild their economy by the familiar methods of private entrepreneurship. In the 1960s some of the developing countries, notably the UAR, Burma, Algeria, Guinea, Syria, Congo (Brazzaville) and Tanzania, initiated important reforms as a prelude to a change-over to a non-capitalist mode of development.

The Algerian People's Democratic Republic

In the Algerian People's Democratic Republic the situation became extremely difficult and complicated after the signing of the Evian agreements. The war and the terrorist tactics of the OAS had laid the country waste. The French were leaving *en masse*, practically to a man, abandoning their businesses and farms. French employees, teachers and experts were also leaving the country. Most enterprises were idle.

The consequences of the policy of division and separatism practised by the French were making themselves felt. The problem of charting Algeria's further development provoked violent conflict.

The more farsighted leaders at the National Liberation Front (FLN) realised that the revolution should go on and the aspirations of the people at large should be satisfied if the independence so dearly bought was to be safeguarded. The FLN programme adopted at the June 1962 session of the National Council of the Algerian Revolution at Tripoli was based on the assumption that the struggle for national independence would be followed by a people's democratic revolution which would introduce reforms embodying socialist principles. The Tripoli programme included an agrarian reform and the nationalisation of transport, banks, foreign trade, mineral resources, etc. A sharp conflict ensued between the leaders of the Provisional Government who favoured moderate reforms and the democratic wing of the FLN, bringing the country to the brink of civil war, but ending in victory for the forces of democracy. The National Legislative Assembly convened

in September 1962, proclaimed Algeria a People's Democratic Republic.

That is when workers began, on their own initiative, to take over administration of the enterprises and farms abandoned by the French and setting up "committees of self-administration". This upset the calculations of those sections of the national bourgeoisie which had hoped that the property abandoned by the colonialists would fall into their hands. The working people succeeded in getting the "committees of self-administration" officially recognised. The decrees of March 1963, declared all property abandoned or unexploited by the French nationalised and officially transferred to the "committees of self-administration".

To carry on the revolution it now became necessary to unite all progressive forces and organise a party that would form the working people's striking force and provide leadership for an independent Algeria. An important step in this direction was the April 1964 congress of the FLN. The Algerian Charter adopted by the congress stressed that self-administration manifested and would continue to manifest a continuous process of transition from a national people's revolution to a socialist revolution, with all the economic and political problems implicated in the transition from colonialism to statehood, showing the way to socialism.

By 1965 the self-administrated sector of the Algerian economy comprised 40 per cent of all arable land and 150,000 farm labourers. In industry this sector accounted for 20 per cent of the total industrial production.

Algeria undertook a programme of industrialisation which would change the face of the country and assure economic and social progress. Her first project in the field of heavy industry—a metallurgical complex at Annaba was to produce yearly 450,000 tons of steel with the completion of its first section. A large chemical plant producing ammonia and nitrogen fertilisers was built at Arzew. Petroleum discoveries were made and it was planned to set up a petroleum and chemical complex near Arzew, including a refinery handling 2,500,000 tons of petroleum yearly. Industrialisation was calculated to end unemployment and the mass emigration of labour from Algeria. Many specialists living in France, where Algerians used to migrate in search of work, were approached with the proposal to return.

A factor of importance for the reconstruction of an independent Algeria were the friendly relations established by the young republic with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Soviet aid to Algeria was steadily increasing. In December 1963, a Soviet-Algerian agreement on economic and technological co-operation was concluded and long-term credits were made available to Algeria. In 1964 the Soviet Union built and presented as

a gift to Algeria a petroleum and gas institute, a textile secondary specialised school, and two educational centres. In addition, the Soviet Union has agreed to help Algeria with the construction of 28 dams in the country's arid regions.

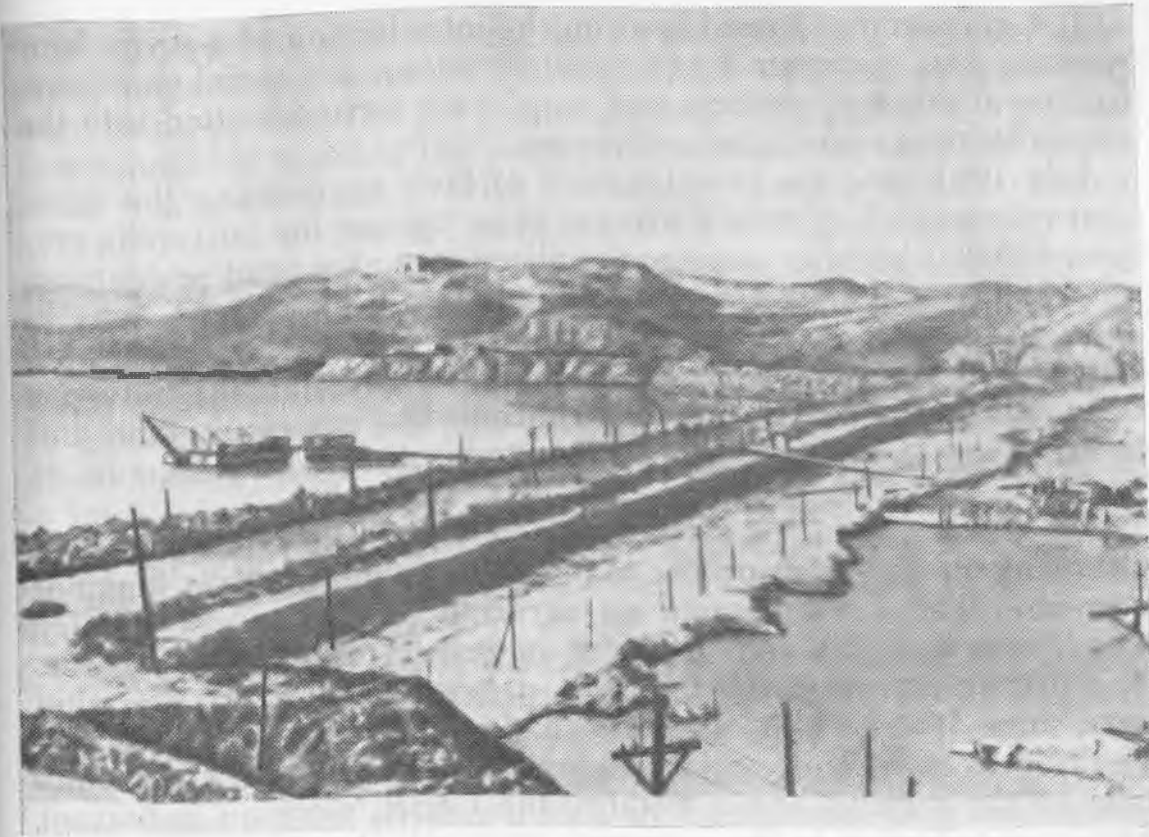
Thousands of Soviet engineers, technicians, geologists, teachers, physicians, etc., were at work here, helping the Algerian people build up a new independent economy and training national cadres. Soviet engineers were aiding in the construction of the Annaba metallurgical complex, mentioned above, which was financed by a Soviet loan of 115,000,000 rubles. Soviet specialists worked out a project designed to radically alter the aspect of the Sahara by building irrigation systems and bringing water to the desert oases. A service that will long be gratefully remembered by the Algerian people was the removal by Soviet Army sappers of thousands of mines remaining on Algerian soil after the war, an operation that brought thousands of hectares of land back into cultivation.

Algeria was following an active independent policy in the sphere of foreign relations and was dedicated to the principle of Arab unity in the struggle against Israeli aggression. The revolutionary government's determined stand brought about the evacuation of all remaining French military bases.

Since Algeria launched her programme of non-capitalist development there was a sharpening of the class war in the country, the Right-wing elements often trying to resort to force. Thus in 1967 an armed putsch was attempted by Chief of the General Staff Zbiri, which, however, was put down by the government. The progressive social, economic and political reforms implemented by the National Liberation Front had the active backing of the Algerian people.

The United Arab Republic

In the 1960s political life in the United Arab Republic was focussed primarily on the prospects of the country's further development. The petty-bourgeois revolutionary nationalists who came to power in Egypt following the July 1952 revolution took over leadership of the struggle against imperialism and for the strengthening of the country's political independence. Viewed objectively, this was a struggle waged to turn Egypt into an independent capitalist state. This anti-imperialist policy of the revolutionary government received the active support of the masses, who had played so decisive a role in dealing with the Anglo-French Suez gamble. The bourgeoisie, however, had tried to pluck the fruits of that victory over the forces of imperialism. The acquisition of property rights to the foreign banks and enterprises after



Construction site of the Aswan Dam

the nationalisation of the Suez Canal had fortified the positions of the big bourgeoisie. Intent on a "normalisation" of relations with the monopoly capital of the imperialist powers, it had begun to show displeasure with some aspects of the policy followed by the Nasser government. The masses, meanwhile, clamoured for social reforms and better living conditions.

When they came to see that the country's hard-won independence was imperiled, Nasser and his followers, counting on the support of the people at large, decided to launch a series of reforms designed to weaken the economic and political positions of the big bourgeoisie. These were initiated by the nationalisation, in 1960, of the Misr Bank, a leading Egyptian banking concern. In July 1961, the government decreed the nationalisation of all banks and insurance companies and some of the leading commercial houses, and the revocation of a number of concessions previously granted to foreign investors. More nationalisation decrees followed in 1961-64. As a result the government gathered in all banks, all insurance companies, and the vast majority of the big and medium-sized industrial plants. The government got under control 90 per cent of the country's industrial production and practically all of its foreign trade.

The government passed laws on the introduction of a seven-hour working day, minimum wage rates, vacations, and social insurance. Representatives of workers and employees were admitted into the administrative councils of enterprises.

July 1961 saw the promulgation of laws augmenting the agrarian reforms, which struck a heavy blow against the latifundia system. 480,000 hectares were nationalised, out of a total arable area of 2,800,000. By 1964, some 332,000 families received land in return for the payment of certain sums. Nevertheless, private ownership relations continued to prevail in Egyptian agriculture; a considerable number of peasants continued to possess no land and the number of unemployed farm hands ran into hundreds of thousands.

The various economic reforms introduced in the UAR aided the efforts of the Egyptian people to build up an independent national economy. The UAR became an agrarian and industrial country which was basically self-sufficient in respect of consumer goods. A ten-year economic development programme was in operation here since 1960, which envisaged a doubling of the national income by 1970. Friendly relations between the UAR and the countries of the socialist camp, notably the USSR, were an important factor contributing to the country's economic development and to the strengthening of its political and economic independence. A powerful contribution to the development of its productive forces was the Aswan Dam built by the Soviet Union.

Economic reforms were paralleled by changes in the country's political life. February 1962 witnessed the convention of a National Congress of Popular Forces which adopted a Charter of National Action, an important instrument having the force of a programme. The Charter established that no developing country could achieve success through capitalist methods and set forth a programme of social reforms. The interests of the reactionaries, according to the Charter, conflicted with those of the people, inasmuch as the reactionaries monopolised the country's entire wealth; that is why they must be deprived of all of their weapons as the one *sine qua non* prerequisite of a peaceful solution to class warfare.

Elections to the National Assembly were conducted in March 1964, in accordance with the principles laid down by the Charter of National Action, which gave the workers' and peasants' representatives over 50 per cent of the seats. The provisional constitution of the UAR, promulgated at the same time, proclaimed the country a democratic socialist state founded on the union of the nation's peasants, workers, intellectuals and national bourgeoisie. All emergency laws were decreed repealed and political prisoners freed, including the Egyptian Communists.

It must still be said that the social and economic reforms definitely outstripped, in scope and speed, the political changes that were being operated in the UAR: the lack of a political organisation capable of heading the masses in their fight for social advancement was making itself felt. The Arab Socialist Union created by presidential decree in November 1962, with a membership that totalled, in 1965, roughly 7,000,000, was at the beginning of its activity a mere embryo of an ideologically uniform and well-organised national democratic party fit to be the vanguard of the UAR working people. In this situation an important role was still played by the bureaucratic machine largely controlled by bourgeois elements hostile to the policy of non-capitalist development.

Imperialism, however, was not content to allow the United Arab Republic pursue its course of development along non-capitalist lines and resorted to various measures to obstruct it, including outright armed aggression.

On June 5, 1967, Israel, backed by the imperialists of the United States, Britain and West Germany and by the forces of Zionism, launched a war of aggression against the UAR, Syria and Jordan with the purpose of overthrowing the progressive regimes of the three countries and striking a blow at the national liberation movement of the Arab peoples. During the six days the war lasted Israel succeeded in occupying extensive areas belonging to the three Arab countries, notably the Gaza strip and Sinai Peninsula belonging to the UAR. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries at once declared their solidarity with the victims of the Israeli aggression, called for unconditional condemnation thereof by the UN Security Council, and broke off diplomatic relations with the aggressor. On November 22, 1967, the Security Council adopted a resolution under which Israel was to withdraw from all of the occupied Arab areas before starting any negotiations concerning a peaceful settlement between Israel and the Arab countries. Israel flatly refused to comply and continued its raiding tactics against the Arab countries in infringement of the cease-fire agreement.

Immediately after the June events President Nasser relinquished his powers, but this act provoked spontaneous popular demonstrations in the country's important towns, calling upon the president to continue in his post, which he was constrained to do. The UAR leadership devoted itself, in the months that followed, to a careful analysis of all aspects of the Arab-Israeli war in order to draw therefrom the necessary lessons. It was established that the republic's military reverses were caused not only by the inadequate fighting efficiency of its armed forces but also by the failure of a certain segment of high-ranking officers to share the leadership's progressive views: having come to constitute a privileged stratum of the military bureaucracy, these men had lost interest in the re-

public's further non-capitalist development. These elements were resolutely purged from the officer corps; and those who had been directly responsible for the armed forces' unpreparedness to repel the aggressor were dealt with accordingly.

The events of June 1967 showed that the revolution of 1952 had been implemented largely from the top, without the masses having been widely drawn into participation. Taking this into account the UAR leadership undertook a programme of substantial democratisation of the country's political life, providing, notably, for a reconstruction of the Arab Socialist Union on a democratic foundation, for the introduction of the principle of electivity to all its administrative bodies from top to bottom, half the seats were reserved for workers' and peasants' deputies. This was to assure the United Arab Republic further successes in its advance.

Burma

Over a period of fourteen years, since its coming to power after the withdrawal of the British colonialists in 1948 until 1962, the bourgeoisie led the country along the capitalist path, cloaking its policies with pseudo-socialist terminology. Admittedly, Burma achieved an advance during that period, as exemplified by a certain dislodgement of foreign capital and the creation of a state sector, by its adherence to a non-alignment policy, and by certain achievements in the educational and cultural field; but the colonial pattern of the Burmese economy had remained and foreign capital still retained strong positions therein. Living standards were going down. Economic, political and inter-nationalities contradictions were growing sharper. The Burmese Communist Party, outlawed in March 1948, was waging an armed struggle against the government. The reactionary Right-wing opposition and feudal-separatist elements also had armed forces in the field.

On the night of March 1, 1962, state power was seized by the Revolutionary Council set up by ranking army officers and presided over by the Commander-in-Chief, General Ne Win. General Ne Win was put at the head of the Revolutionary Government of Burma. Within the Burmese army, formed in the struggle against Japanese and British imperialism, prevailing sentiment was anti-imperialist and democratic. Its officer cadres were chiefly of petty-bourgeois, intelligentsia and peasant stock. The new government headed by Ne Win desired to take the country along a new, progressive path of development. And on April 30 the political declaration "Burma's Road to Socialism" was issued.

This programme document proclaimed the aim of the Revolutionary Council to be the establishment of socialism in Burma.

It envisaged the nationalisation of vital means of production in agriculture and industry, as also the nationalisation of commerce, transport, communications, foreign trade, etc. It provided for the continued existence of private entrepreneurship, though subject to fair and reasonable restrictions.

Substantial social and economic reforms were introduced on the basis of the declaration, including the nationalisation, subject to payment of indemnity, of British-owned property in the petroleum-extracting industry, and of all private banks owned by foreign or Burmese interests. Then foreign trade was nationalised and control established over domestic trade. Large private enterprises were also taken over by the state. The revenue of capitalists who retained ownership of their enterprises was made subject to progressive taxation. Measures were taken to end the vestiges of feudalism in rural areas and to improve the lot of the peasants. Dispossession of tenant-peasants was prohibited, and a law passed in March 1965 abolished the payment of rent to landlords.

In view of the increasingly anti-popular nature of the bourgeois parties' activity, the Revolutionary Council dissolved all political parties in the land except the Burmese Socialist Programme Party which was the leading organisation of the Burmese revolution. The string of reforms introduced in Burma since the *coup d'état* of 1962 showed that the country was swinging over to a non-capitalist mode of development. Burma was ridding herself of foreign monopoly capital control. And the big national bourgeoisie was also losing its grip on the country.

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Among the new independent countries of Tropical Africa there were likewise some that were resolved to take a non-capitalist path of development. In Guinea, for instance, various industrial plants were being set up with a view to pulling the country out of the backward state in which it found itself as a result of centuries of colonial oppression. The main effort was directed towards the development of state-owned enterprises. In the agricultural field there were notable successes in the activities of production co-operatives.

Similar measures were adopted in the Congo (Brazzaville). In Ghana, the Convention People's Party previously in power had also sought to effect the transition to a non-capitalist mode of development, but a *coup d'état* in 1966 brought the downfall of Kwame Nkrumah's government.

THE PEOPLES OF LATIN AMERICA STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM

During the Second World War the United States expanded its economic and military penetration of the countries of Latin America. When the war ended there were 92 United States' military bases on that continent. Inter-American co-operation, so-called, facilitated for the North American monopolies the seizure of dominant positions in the sphere of Latin American foreign trade, the share of the European countries therein dropping from 30-35 per cent on the eve of the war to 4 per cent in 1944, whereas that of the United States rose from 33 to 60 per cent. Using lend-lease, credits and loans, the United States strove to enmesh Latin America in the net of financial dependence. North American monopoly firms tried hard to hinder the development of national industries in the countries of Latin America. These policies were mirrored with particular clarity in the Clayton Plan¹, which provided for the repeal of customs duties on North American goods imported into these countries, promotion of American capital investment, and abstention from nationalisation of foreign-owned property.

The United States imperialists jealously protected any reactionary forces in the Latin American countries, such as the dictatorship of Jorge Ubico in Guatemala, the Trujillo tyranny in the Dominican Republic, the Bolivian "butcher" Enrique Peñaranda, and so on. But although the situation that had built up during the war was favourable to the American monopolies, they found themselves powerless to halt the process of national development, as also the growing democratic forces in the Latin American countries.

A weakening of the economic positions of the European capitalist countries and Japan and the associated suspension or curtailment of the import of manufactured goods into the countries of Latin America made for a more rapid development of national industries in the latter. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela and Peru, all important exporters of strategic and raw materials and food supplies, had substantially increased their foreign exchange reserves, which contributed to their industrial development. New heavy industry centres appeared, especially in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Chile, which began to transform into agrarian-industrial, rather than purely agrarian, countries. This industrial development was paralleled by the strengthening of the national bourgeoisie and the growth of the working class.

Because the Second World War, as waged by the anti-Hitler coalition nations, was essentially anti-fascist, it was conducive to

¹ So named after the then US Assistant Secretary of State.

an upswing of the democratic national liberation movement of the Latin-American peoples. The struggle against the reactionary regimes in El Salvador, Ecuador and Guatemala grew in strength and scope, and in a number of countries the masses won certain democratic freedoms, and the Communist Parties were legalised. Political parties were allowed to carry on their activities in Brazil, largest of the Latin-American countries, where the Communist Party was legalised and Luis Carlos Prestes set free after having been imprisoned since 1936. The overall situation in Latin America was now favourable to the further growth of national democratic forces.

Argentina

The social consequences of accelerated capitalist development in Argentina was a strengthening of the national bourgeoisie, which had begun to chafe under the burden of its dependence on the ruling circles in Great Britain and the United States. This feeling manifested itself in growing nationalist tendencies and, more specifically, in the policy adopted by Perón, who became president of Argentina in February, 1946.

Perón's policy aimed at bolstering the positions of the national bourgeoisie by a series of measures designed to weaken those of the foreign monopolies, American primarily, and to impose some restriction on the power of the land oligarchy and the Church. A state sector of the national economy came into being following the redemption of the railways and of the property of certain foreign firms, as well as the nationalisation of the Central Bank. Other measures included the raising of wages of selected categories of workers, and the introduction of paid vacations, Christmas premiums in addition to wages, and a pension scheme. Steps were taken to reduce unemployment. And a housing programme for workers was inaugurated.

Perón created a so-called National Revolution Party (better known as the Perónist party), with a membership including capitalists, public servants, and workers. The aim of this party was to achieve a harmony of class interests.

Perón promised to make an end of big capital, the landlord oligarchy and imperialism, and to create a "just state". In June 1946, he established diplomatic and trade relations with the Soviet Union, and this momentous decision served to increase his prestige among the people at large. Perón's policies, however, could not remove the basic contradictions inherent in the Argentine society, in which, no matter how much stronger the position of the national bourgeoisie had become, the leading role belonged to the

bourgeois-landlord oligarchy which was closely linked with foreign imperialism. In 1955, the cost of living index had reached 685 per cent as against 1943. The large estates remained in the hands of the landlords.

Argentina continued to be dependent on Great Britain, and increasingly so on the United States. A number of economic agreements was concluded in 1954 and 1955 with the United States, whereby American monopolies were given full rein to expand at will in the country. This was tantamount to a capitulation to imperialism on the part of the Argentine bourgeoisie in their quest for support against the forces of democracy.

Despite the appeals of the leaders of the National Revolution Party for class peace the struggle of the working class for its interests grew more and more intense. The Perónist government was by then unable to cope with the mounting pressure of the masses. The oligarchy and the Catholic Church had resolved to get rid of Perón. On September 16, 1955, a *coup d'état* was effected in the capital and state power passed into the hands of a clique of extreme reactionaries. The latter, however, failed to set up a dictatorship; and the democratic forces, led by the Communist Party, carried on a ceaseless struggle against the various pro-imperialist groups which, one after another, usurped the power in the years that followed. This struggle left the reactionaries no breathing spell in which to entrench themselves for any length of time to speak of. Meanwhile the forces fighting for true independence and democracy intensified their activity. In July 1963, Arturo Illia, nominee of the People's Civic Radical Union Party, became president. He proclaimed himself as favouring maintenance of the constitutional freedoms, and an independent foreign, and progressive domestic policies.

However, President Illia did not display sufficient consistency. In fact he did very little to improve the lot of the masses during the three years of his presidency, which made it all the easier for the reactionaries to counter-attack. In June 1966, a military junta overthrew the president, charging him with not having waged "resolutely enough" the struggle against the Communist Party, and made General Onganía head of the state and government. The constitution was suspended for an indefinite duration, parliament dissolved, and political parties banned. The main blow was levelled by the Argentine reactionaries against the Communist Party, which was once again forced to go underground. An "anti-communist act" went into effect in August 1967, which provided for prison terms of up to eight years for membership and even for sympathy with the Communist Party. But the liberation struggle went on, despite these stern repressive measures. A general strike rocked the country in December 1966, in which some 4 million

workers, the vast majority of Argentina's proletariat, took part. Another nation-wide strike, provoked by the workers' economic plight, took place in March 1967. An important role in organising these actions was played by the Communist Party, which was fighting to create a coalition of democratic forces.

Brazil

President Getulio Vargas's concessions to the democrats provoked the wrath of the Brazilian reactionaries and a *coup d'état* which, in October 1945, brought to power a government headed by General Enrique Gaspar Dutra. This government delivered its hardest blows against the Communist Party, which, in 1947, was once again outlawed. The Communists—senators and deputies alike—were unlawfully deprived of their mandates; and Luis Carlos Prestes was again ordered arrested. And next the Dutra government broke off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

The elections of 1950 returned Vargas once again to the post of president, thereupon he came out with a criticism of American imperialism and promised to introduce social and economic reforms. His inability, however, to take drastic action of a kind that might have helped curb the oligarchy at home and undermine the positions of imperialism, and even more so his fear of accepting the support of the masses together with his repression of the democratic organisations left him without any support whatsoever. The domestic reactionaries and North American imperialists were quick to take advantage of the situation. In August 1954, Vargas was again relieved of his post, and committed suicide, according to the official version, though the circumstances of his death still largely remain to be cleared up.

The years that followed these dramatic events presented a record of the struggle waged by the growing national forces against the domestic oligarchy backed by foreign imperialism. That the partisans of democracy and an independent national policy were definitely growing stronger, though not without deviations from the charted course, is evident from the quick succession of events: the collapse of the reactionary Casti Filho government after only a year in power following Vargas's overthrow; and the quick succession of cabinets under Juscelino Kubitschek (1955-60), Jânio Quadros (October 1960-August 1961), and João Goulart (1961-64).

The overthrow of Quadros by reactionary military circles reflected the desire of the Brazilian oligarchy and American imperialism to remove a government that tried to stand up for the country's national interests. The reactionaries tried to keep vice-president Goulart from winning the power, for he was popular as the



Anti-US demonstration at Santiago, Chile (1961)

leader of the workers' party and known for his Left-wing tendencies. Rallied in support of Goulart were all the democratic parties, including the Communists and Socialists, broad sections of the petty bourgeoisie, and the nationalist bourgeoisie. Mindful of the possibility that the reactionaries might resort to force, the workers proceeded to organise militia detachments. A railwaymen's strike prevented troop reinforcements from reaching the capital. Even in the army there were considerable forces which openly supported Goulart. A broad democratic national front thus formed, and the reactionaries had to back down, though by getting parliament to approve a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the post of prime minister they did succeed in restricting the president's power.

Despite the sabotage practised by the reaction backed by the US imperialists the measures taken by Goulart resulted in stimulating progressive tendencies. A National Liberation Front came into being, which rallied the working class and the national bourgeoisie for a struggle against both the oligarchy and imperialism. Soon after his accession to the presidential post Goulart re-established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and declared his government cordially disposed towards revolutionary Cuba.

Another step was to limit to some extent the activities of foreign monopolies in Brazil.

Here, as frequently elsewhere, however, the National Liberation Front and the democratic forces as a whole lacked the required degree of unity, and the reactionary military, taking advantage of this circumstance as well as of Goulart's vacillation on the question of introducing progressive measures, effected a *coup d'état* on April 1, 1964, and overthrew his government. Goulart was replaced in the presidential post by Marshal Castello Branco, who established a military dictatorship. Mass repressions against democrats began. All the traditional political parties were dissolved in 1965, and two organisations set up in their place, namely, the government-sponsored National Regeneration Union with an assured majority in the chamber of deputies and senate and the Brazilian Democratic Movement, which represented the opposition and comprised the remnants of the former Left-wing bourgeois and socialist organisations. A new constitution was promulgated early in 1967, which legalised the military putsch of 1964 and considerably broadened the presidential powers (during the same year the presidential post was given to Marshal Costa-e-Silva). Brazil's dependence upon the United States increased again. While hitting hardest at the Communists, the country's rulers were at the same time striving to put the greatest possible restrictions on the activities of the legal opposition. But even in the changed situation the Brazilian people carried on the struggle against foreign imperialism and against reaction at home.

Mexico

In Mexico, the economic upswing that had set in during the Second World War continued into the post-war period: the reforms introduced by Cárdenas during his presidency were bearing fruit.

During the period 1940-60 industrial production tripled in volume and the industrial labour force grew from 856,000 to 1,980,000. The country's population increased from 20,000,000 to 35,000,000 over the same period, and the number of those employed in the sphere of production from 6,000,000 to 12,000,000. Capitalist development registered considerable gains. A state sector came into being in the national economy, to play an important role therein. And there was also an increase in the production of agricultural raw materials and consumer goods for both the foreign and domestic markets.

To be sure, national development ran into counter-action on the part of foreign imperialists, whose Mexican investments totalled, in 1960, \$1,081 million, North American monopolies accounting

for 73.7 per cent thereof. In 1963, the share of the United States in Mexico's import and export trade amounted to 70 per cent.

Here, in Mexico, where the agrarian reform had been of a more radical nature than elsewhere in Latin America (before the Cuban revolution) there were, in 1964, 521 latifundia of from 50,000 to 100,000 hectares each and 1,000 of from 1,000 to 10,000 hectares, 9,600 landlords owned 80,000,000 hectares of land when there were 2,500,000 landless peasants and farm labourers in the country! This situation was one of the main reasons for the bitter struggle that was being waged by the progressive forces against the forces of reaction.

The first post-war government, that of Miguel Alemán (1946-52), which represented the banker, big merchant and landlord bloc, adopted a pro-American foreign policy and protected the interests of foreign, chiefly North American, capital. President Ruiz Cortines (1952-58) followed a more independent foreign policy, and this aggravated relations between Mexico and the United States, though the activities of United States monopolies in Mexico remained virtually unrestricted. During the presidential elections of 1958 López Mateos, candidate of the Constitutional Revolutionary Party then in power, offered a programme envisaging a higher standard of living and an independent foreign policy of peace. Official propaganda portrayed the López Mateos government (1958-64) as a government of the people. Like its predecessors, however, it failed to solve the country's most urgent problems, including that of improving the economic condition of the working people.

Meanwhile, class warfare in the country grew in intensity. The democratic and anti-imperialist movement was strongly influenced by the achievements of the world socialist system, notably the Soviet Union, and by the national liberation struggle carried on by the peoples of Latin America. Such events as the overthrow of the dictatorial regimes of Rojas Pinilla in Colombia (1957) and Pérez Jiménez in Venezuela (1958) and the collapse of the Batista tyranny (1959) and the victory of the people's revolution in Cuba gave an added impetus to the democratic movement in Mexico.

Mexican workers in the textile, petroleum-extracting and other industries began to strike as early as 1958. The railwaymen's strike, including some 100,000 workers, was a particularly forceful demonstration, savagely suppressed by the Mateos government: its leaders were arrested, many leaders of the Communist and the Workers' and Peasants' parties were sent to prison, where they were to remain for years.

The policies of the Mateos government gave rise to widespread discontent among the people. A movement for a "new deal" was started, headed by Lázaro Cárdenas, a noted, internationally

known Mexican statesman. A Peasant Centre joined in the movement. The Communist Party congresses of May 1960, and December 1963, worked out a definite programme for the struggle to achieve democracy and end the domination of foreign capital. These activities made themselves felt in the presidential elections (July 1964), when the Communist Party came out as the sponsor of a plan to create a People's Electoral Front and nominated for president Ramon Danzoz Palomino, one of the most popular leaders of the Mexican peasantry. A split in the Left-wing forces, however, and the pre-eminent position of the governing Constitutional Revolutionary Party swung the elections in favour of Díaz Ordaz, Minister for Internal Affairs in the Mateos government, who entered upon his duties as president in December 1964.

In the foreign policy sphere Mexico favoured peaceful co-existence and the creation of an atom-free zone in Latin America. In those years Mexico was the only Latin American country maintaining diplomatic relations with revolutionary Cuba, in line with the wishes of the Mexican people.

Chile

The end of the Second World War saw an upsurge of the workers' movement in Chile, which revealed the considerably increased influence of the Communist Party. In the presidential elections of September 1946, on the initiative of the Communist Party, the democratic organisations nominated Gonzalez Videla, a radical.

The traditional parties of the Chilean oligarchy suffered a defeat; and Gonzalez Videla, on taking office, formed a government with the participation of Communists.

This was a momentous event not only in the history of Chile but of Latin America as a whole. It reflected the far-reaching changes that had been taking place all over the world as a result of the victory won by the Soviet Union in the Second World War over the forces of fascism and reaction; and it reflected also the growing prestige of Chile's Communist Party. As might have been expected, such a development caused uneasiness among the foreign imperialists. Within a few months, in 1947, the United States governing circles, backed by the other imperialist countries, launched an offensive against the Chilean democracy, which coincided perfectly with the wishes of Chile's ruling classes. For the Communist ministers had been trying to put through measures designed to undermine the positions of the reaction.

In April 1947, President Videla, alarmed at the growing activity of the working class, broke with the Communist Party, dis-

missed the Communists from government, and declared a state of siege in the country. In October the government ordered the leaders of the Communist Party arrested. Mass repressions began. And in compliance with the US imperialists' demands Videla broke off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

In 1948 a decree on the "Defence of Democracy" was adopted, which was directed against all progressive organisations in the interests of the Chilean oligarchy. Thousands of workers and peasants were sent to concentration camps, and tens of thousands of citizens were disfranchised. Subsequently the Videla government signed a military agreement placing the country's armed forces under the control of the Pentagon.

Videla's reactionary policies were continued by his successor, Carlos Ibáñez (1952-58). The latter won the elections under cover of criticism of Videla's policies, but he went even farther than his predecessor in the matter of concessions to the Chilean oligarchy and the foreign imperialists.

Increasing activity on the part of the reactionaries and the virtual take-over of the country's economy by foreign monopolies did more than provoke the masses to protests: they sowed discontent among the middle classes and the national bourgeoisie as well. The democratic and anti-imperialist movement was headed by the working class: undaunted by the reign of terror inaugurated by the government, the Chilean Communist Party fought staunchly to achieve unity among the working class and all democrats. A single trade union centre was organised in 1953, on the Communist Party's initiative, which played an important role in healing the split within the proletariat. The working class called for the re-establishment of democratic rights and for the defence of Chile's sovereignty as a state. These were the slogans of the general strike of May 1954. In the following year the strike movement expanded. In February 1956, a number of parties¹ joined together to organise a Popular Action Front (PAF), which united all of the country's progressive forces and adopted a programme envisaging the introduction of far-reaching social and economic reforms, the establishment of a democratic regime, and the strengthening of Chile's national sovereignty.

The PAF programme was approved in its entirety by the masses, and, what is more, received the support of some bourgeois circles, notably the parliamentarians. The PAF succeeded in getting the reactionary "Defence of Democracy" law repealed, and this was its first important achievement. The Communist Party was le-

¹ These included: the Communist, Socialist, Democratic, People's, Radical-Doctrinaire, Labour, and Radical Anti-Imperialist parties.

galised. The PAF was enabled to take an active part in the presidential elections of 1958. To counteract the Right-wing organisations, who were intent on electing Jorge Alessandri, the PAF nominated Salvador Allende, leader of the Socialist Party. The elections, held on September 4, gave Allende 354,000 votes, but the presidency went to Alessandri, who received 386,000. The Alessandri administration followed an anti-democratic policy that enriched the local oligarchy, which, of course, co-operated with foreign imperialism.

In 1964, the presidential elections were marked by sharp class encounters, the democratic forces once more challenging the forces of reaction. The parties traditionally favoured by the Chilean oligarchy, namely, the Conservative and the Liberal, refrained—and for good reason—from nominating candidates of their own.

The most serious contenders for the presidency among the nominees of the ruling classes were Eduardo Frei, leader of the Christian-Democratic Party, and Julio Duran, leader of the Right wing of the Radical Party. The PAF and other democratic forces backed Salvador Allende. The elections, stubbornly contested, were won by Eduardo Frei, who had the support of all the elements of the governing camp, determined to keep Salvador Allende from winning.

Frei gathered 1,418,000 of a total of 2,550,000 votes; and Allende received 982,000, as compared with only 354,000 in 1958, so that the September 4, 1964 elections gave ample evidence that Chile's democratic forces continued to grow and gather strength.

Revolutionary Events in Bolivia and Guatemala

The post-war developments in the lands of Latin America were indeed dramatic. Their peoples fought courageously for progress in the face of the determined resistance of the national oligarchy and foreign imperialism. They experienced all the bitterness of the defeat of the revolution in Bolivia and Guatemala, but they also had the joy of seeing victorious the Cuban revolution, which ushered in a new phase of the liberation struggle waged by the peoples of Latin America.

In the period of transition from capitalism to socialism now going on on a global scale Latin America must give top priority to the task of putting an end to the system of latifundia and the domination of foreign capital as a prerequisite for any attempt to resolve the problems of a socialist revolution. This holds equally good for the underdeveloped countries of Central America and the more advanced Latin American countries, such as Brazil, Argentina, Chile

and Mexico. One attempt to end the domination of landlords and foreign capital was the Bolivian revolution of 1952, which was accomplished by the masses, though under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie. That revolution spelled the end of the pro-imperialist dictatorship of the mine owners and landed gentry, and the national bourgeoisie took over at the helm of the state.

The government of Hernan Siles Zuazo and that of Victor Paz Estenssoro, which ruled the country in turn between 1952 and 1964, introduced a series of reforms calculated to weaken the positions of the foreign monopolies and the owners of large estates. Tin mines were decreed nationalised, and an agrarian reform was effected. As the masses increased their activity, however, demanding higher living standards, and as the influence of the Communist Party grew and the trade union movement developed, the Bolivian bourgeoisie began to lose its revolutionary ardour. Then, too, the foreign imperialists were increasing economic pressure on Bolivia in an attempt to paralyse the country's economy and doom the people to starvation. This proved too much for the bourgeoisie, and rather than put through radical anti-imperialist and anti-feudal reforms with the support of the people, it decided in favour of concessions to the reactionaries.

On the other hand, the masses were fully resolved to see the revolution through to a victorious end. And by the autumn of 1964 the political situation in the country had become extremely aggravated. Differences between the national bourgeoisie and the masses provided the reactionaries and a military clique led by General Barrientoz with an opportunity to overthrow the government of Paz Estenssoro, in November, and state power passed as a result into the hands of a junta headed by Barrientoz. The masses put up a resistance to the reactionary offensive, which developed, in the spring of 1965, into armed clashes in which detachments of workers' militia and miners were opposed to the troops of the junta. The latter emerged victorious from the struggle; but the Bolivian people carried on the fight for a free, democratic Bolivia.

An important event in the Latin American peoples' national liberation struggle was the revolution in Guatemala, which had repercussions all over the continent even though it came to pass in a minor country. It began in October 1944, with the overthrow of the pro-American Ubico dictatorship, then proceeded to attack the relics of feudalism and the positions of foreign imperialism. An agrarian reform was introduced, directed against the country's biggest landowner, the United Fruit Company. A programme of measures was worked out, designed to help achieve economic independence, and a series of important socio-economic reforms was effected. In April 1945, Guatemala established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. And a new constitution was adopted, also

in 1945, which was in line with the aspirations of the Guatemalan people.

The new democratic regime fostered a greater degree of organisation among the proletariat and peasantry. A Communist Party was founded in 1949, and later a single trade union centre and a peasant federation were formed.

At this point the United States started a broad campaign against Guatemala, determined to prevent the Guatemalan revolution from producing an impression in the other Latin American countries; and in July 1954, this campaign was capped by outright armed intervention; and the Guatemalan revolution was crushed. But the forces of democracy everywhere in Latin America had drawn their conclusions therefrom, and these nothing could eradicate. The Guatemalan revolution had shown convincingly that the forces of feudalism and imperialism had to be completely defeated if the dependent countries were to strike out on the road to progress and independence, and that radical economic reforms were essential to the achievement of higher standards of living.

It had once more confirmed the truth of the Marxist principle that the working people can never achieve true freedom without smashing the old machinery of the state. The national bourgeoisie, on seizing state power in Guatemala, did not go beyond perfecting and reforming the old state machinery. The army remained unchanged; socially, its officer cadres had nothing in common with the masses.

Moreover, the Guatemalan revolution had again demonstrated the urgent need for union between the proletariat and the peasantry and laid bare the duplicity of the national bourgeoisie. During the first phase of the revolution, coinciding with the presidency of Juan Arévalo (1945-50), the national bourgeoisie showed on more than one occasion its hostility towards the working class and the Communist Party and tolerance in regard to subversive activities on the part of the reactionaries. During the second phase, coinciding with Jacobo Arbenz's term in office (1950-54), the revolution made serious gains, but again the national bourgeoisie displayed an inconsistency—certain bourgeois elements leaned increasingly towards capitulation. On balance, therefore, the national bourgeoisie proved incapable of pressing the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist revolution to a victorious end. And so the Guatemalan experience brought up once more the problem of a new type of revolution, a people's revolution in which the leading role would be played by the working class. For no other type of revolution can deal effectively with feudalism and imperialism: the events in Cuba made that perfectly clear.

Chapter Eleven

FORCES OF PEACE VERSUS FORCES OF WAR

When nuclear weapons became an accomplished fact mankind found itself facing the question of whether or not it would find a way to survive. The tragedy of Hiroshima and the menace of "atom diplomacy" as practised by the ruling circles of the United States were instrumental in alerting hundreds of millions all over the world. The educational campaign carried on by the Communists, Left-wing Socialists and all the various democratic organisations helped people understand the nature of the danger they faced and where it came from, and how it could be averted. In 1948 and 1949, when the cold war was going strong, the idea of a united stand for peace began increasingly to gain ground among the masses.

The Peace Movement

In August 1948, there was convened at Wrocław, Poland, a World Congress, which was attended by more than 500 scholars, scientists, writers and artists, representatives of the progressive intelligentsia of 45 countries. A Manifesto in defence of peace was adopted which appealed to the peoples of the world to speak out for peace, for free cultural development, for national independence, and for friendly intercourse among nations. Early in 1949, the International Cultural Contacts Committee set up by the Congress and the Women's International Democratic Federation, acting jointly, proposed that a World Congress for Peace should be convened for the purpose of rallying the active forces of all nations in the defence of peace. The idea of convening such a congress was supported by the World Federation of Trade Unions, the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Federation of Former Political Prisoners.

It so happened that the international situation grew much worse shortly after the Wrocław Congress. The North Atlantic military bloc created in April 1949 came to play the role of a new Holy Alliance, aimed this time not only against possible future revolutions, but against the existing socialist states as well. There was the "Berlin crisis", which made for a tense, brink-of-war atmosphere. And it was in this political climate that the First World Congress for Peace went to work in Paris on April 20, 1949. Over 2,000 delegates from 72 countries, representing organisations whose combined membership numbered over 600,000,000 men and women, did their best to express the will of the peoples to preserve the peace and to plan ways and means of staving off the menace of war. The governments of the bourgeois countries were quick to see the serious threat to their aggressive schemes inherent in the new movement, and made every effort to prevent the Congress from meeting, refused delegates visas to leave their countries for Paris, while the French Government reduced visa quotas for the socialist countries. The Chinese delegation was simply refused admission into France. Part of the Congress therefore met in Prague.

The sponsors of the movement succeeded in rallying to the common cause people belonging to different parties and classes, people of various religious faiths and political convictions. Frédéric Joliot-Curie told the opening sitting that declarations of support of the Movement for Peace had been sent in by the representatives of many national trade union, peasant, youth, women's and churchmen's organisations.

Other speakers revealed that the preparations for war were linked with the colonial policies of the "great" bourgeois powers and at the same time they showed the connection between the growing democratic, anti-war movement in these countries and the national liberation struggle of the colonial peoples. The Congress came out against the criminal war then waged by the French colonialists in Vietnam and the armed aggression of the Dutch Government in Indonesia.

The Congress set up a Permanent Committee and a Permanent Committee Bureau, whose membership included prominent public figures from many lands. The Congress Manifesto called upon all peoples to unite to safeguard the peace. "We stand for the prohibition of atomic weapons and all other means of mass destruction of human life," said the Manifesto, in part. "We demand restriction of the armed forces of the great powers and the establishment of effective international control to ensure that atomic energy would be used exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind. . . . We shall fight for national independence and the peaceful co-existence of peoples. . . . We condemn the war hyste-

ria as breeding racial hatred and enmity among peoples. . . . The World Congress for Peace proclaims that the defence of peace shall henceforth be the concern of all peoples."

The Congress stimulated a widespread movement in scores of countries. National committees for the defence of peace sprang up everywhere. In bourgeois countries the governments were practically unanimous in adopting a hostile attitude toward those who took an active interest in the movement. The Government of the United States even barred a delegation of the Permanent Committee from setting foot on American soil, and the British parliament followed suit. In Holland, Permanent Committee members were arrested and deported after a day's detention by the police. Active peace campaigners, in some instances men and women of conservative or liberal-bourgeois views, were often declared to be "Communists" by the authorities and their demand of preserving peace qualified as "subversive" and traitorous in regard to the national interests.

In March 1950, the Permanent Committee of the World Congress for Peace, meeting at Stockholm, adopted an appeal that was destined to play a most important part in rallying the forces of peace. It read, in part, as follows: "We demand the unconditional prohibition of atomic weapons as a weapon of intimidation and mass destruction of human life.

"We demand the establishment of strict international control to ensure the observance of this decision.

"We consider that any government that first employs atomic weapons against any country shall be guilty of a crime against humanity and shall be treated as a war criminal.

"We call upon all men of goodwill the world over to put their names to this appeal."

First to sign the Stockholm Appeal were over a hundred internationally prominent statesmen, scholars and scientists. The signature-collecting campaign developed into a gigantic international referendum on the atom bomb issue. Some 150,000 committees in defence of peace were established in the towns and villages of 75 countries. The aims of the movement were explained at public meetings and in house-to-house canvassing.

While the collection of signatures to the Stockholm Appeal went on, the working class intensified its activities directed against the armaments race, the purchase and shipment of American arms to European countries, and the transportation of troops and equipment to areas where colonial wars were being fought. In the beginning of 1950 two thousand workers at Nice, France, broke through police lines and dumped into the sea military *matériel* prepared for shipment to Indo-China. In March, the dockers of Naples refused to unload an American ship that had arrived

with a cargo of arms for the Italian army. A month later 16,000 workers at the port of Antwerp struck in protest against discharging a shipment of American military equipment. About that same time, in Japan, 106 prominent scientists signed an Appeal to Scientists in which they declared that "Peace is the soil on which life and scientific research can develop. . . . We have therefore resolved to oppose war, whatever happens". Not a few cases were recorded in Western Europe when scores of men lay on the railway tracks to keep troop trains and shipments of arms from moving. The Stockholm Appeal signature campaign was a great success, in fact, it became the greatest international mass undertaking in history. Over 500,000,000 people signed the demand to outlaw the atom bomb.

In the summer of 1950 the United States imperialists, hand in hand with the South Korean reactionaries, unleashed civil war in Korea; and at the same time American troops occupied the Chinese island of Taiwan. To stop the American intervention and re-establish peace in Korea became henceforward one of the main aims of the Movement for Peace. The Second Congress for Peace, held in November 1950 in Warsaw, appealed to the United Nations to stop the war in Korea, withdraw the foreign troops, end the American intervention in Taiwan, and also the military operations against the republic of Vietnam. A resolution condemning the re-militarisation of Germany and Japan was adopted. Over 1,750 delegates representing 81 countries elected a World Peace Council, which was to be the organisational centre of the movement. At its first session in February 1951 the Council adopted an Appeal to the governments of the five great powers, the USSR, USA, China, Great Britain and France, calling upon them to conclude a Peace Pact. 600,000,000 men and women, or nearly one-half of the adult population of the world, backed the Appeal with their signatures.

Late in 1952 an International Congress for the Defence of Peace was convened in Vienna. This was a highly representative meeting, attended by more than 1,500 delegates from all walks of life: parliamentarians, trade union and peasant leaders, writers, artists, churchmen, etc.

The World Peace Council acted to rally international public opinion, to arouse the consciousness of millions and summon them to action in the various dangerous crises that followed each other in the 1950s and early 1960s as a result of the political gambles of the imperialist powers. Thanks to the purposeful and energetic activity of its members the Movement for Peace was able to create a moral and political climate which was unfavourable for the proponents of "the positions of strength policy", diplomacy of intimidation and atomic blackmail. And still Western politicians and

propagandists continued to claim that war was unavoidable, and that true statesmanship lay in the ability to balance "on the brink of war". A war of a new type, it will be recalled, in which the population of entire countries and even continents could be wiped off the face of the earth. A certain fatalism was widespread in regard to war as a calamity which was inevitably visited upon mankind from time to time.

Is a World War Inevitable?

The Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (February, 1956) subjected the new situation obtaining in the world in the mid-1950s to an exhaustive analysis. The Soviet Union had, by that time, not only healed the wounds it had suffered in the course of a war of unparalleled savagery, but had made great strides in the development of its industry, science and technology. The other countries of the socialist system, too, were going through a process of rapid development. The United States atom bomb monopoly had been ended as early as 1949, when atom bomb tests were carried out in the USSR. The imperialist camp, on the other hand, suffered a set-back, politically and economically, as a result of the rapidly growing scope of the liberation movement in the colonies and dependencies. Class warfare was on the increase, meanwhile, in the bourgeois countries. In addition to demands for better working conditions the proletariat, urban and rural, now insisted more and more forcefully on a policy of peace and prevention of a new world war. The world power relationship had shifted sharply in favour of socialism.

The conclusion arrived at by the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU was this: a new world war is not an inevitable certainty, there is a real possibility of averting it. This conclusion is of prime theoretical and practical significance. The champions of peace the world over had now a definite programme to go by, for it was now no longer a question of achieving a more or less prolonged breathing-spell but of eliminating world wars in general. The theses worked out by the Congress received the unanimous approval of the Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in 1957, 1960 and 1969, as well as the subsequent congresses of the CPSU.

By the time the CPSU Programme was adopted, in October 1961, the world power balance had shifted still more in favour of the socialist countries, whose share in the global industrial output now amounted roughly to 37 per cent, as against 27 per cent in 1955. The world's first space flights of Yuri Gagarin and German Titov gave convincing proof of the remarkable advances achieved

by the Soviet Union in the realm of science and technology. The Soviet Army had been completely re-equipped with rocket and nuclear weapons. The revolutionary movement of the colonial peoples was rapidly gathering momentum. In the spring of 1961 Cuba defeated an attempt at direct armed intervention undertaken by counter-revolutionary mercenaries. Just as the invading force was being beaten back the Cuban Government announced that the Cuban people were passing on to the construction of socialism. Thus it came about that the socialist revolution won a victory on American soil.

In the advanced capitalist countries, moreover, the workers' movement and the movement against war had scored notable success.

Such were the factors that made it possible for the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU to confirm and stress in the Party Programme the proposition that humanity can be delivered from the danger of a new world war. The forces of imperialism and reaction are intent, of course, and will continue to be intent, on unleashing a war, and it would be a grave mistake to underestimate the danger. But there is no fatal inevitability of war and it is here that the peoples can make themselves heard. Of paramount importance in this respect is the stand of the socialist community, especially the Soviet Union, which is viewed by the people throughout the world as the bulwark of world peace.

The Twenty-Third Congress of the CPSU, held in March and April of 1966, gave a great deal of attention to the problems of safeguarding peace. The Congress emphasised that if peace is to be safeguarded it will be necessary for the forces of peace all over the world to incessantly multiply their efforts and for the movement for peace, trade unions, women's and youth associations, and other mass democratic organisations to increase the vigour and scope of their activities.

Of prime importance to the maintenance of peace in the world are: unity among the socialist countries and constant preparedness of their defence system, and an alliance of the international workers' movement and the national liberation movement in a stand against war. The Twenty-Third Congress of the CPSU instructed the Soviet Government to continue its efforts to safeguard world peace.

General and Complete Disarmament

The central problem of the contemporary times is that of disarmament. In the sixties more than 100,000,000 people either served in the armed forces or were employed in the production of ar-

maments. In the early 1960s military expenditures amounted yearly to over \$120,000 million. This amount would be enough to finance a fundamental economic and technological reconstruction of the entire African continent; roughly half that amount would pay for the construction of 100 or more metallurgical plants like the Bhilai complex in India. The price paid for a modern bomber would pay for two large power plants. The armaments race means an unparalleled waste of human effort and material resources.

Nor is that all. The more atom and hydrogen bombs are stockpiled, the more rockets and supersonic bombers are built to deliver them, the greater becomes the direct threat of war. And it should be kept in mind that the war might break out either as a calculated act of the militarist circles of some bourgeois country or as a result of chance circumstances, of a miscalculation, a mechanical error, or even simply of mental derangement on the part of a pilot or rocketeer. If the arms race is not halted nuclear weapons will proliferate, more and more countries will come to possess them. And the danger of war will become even greater.

There is only one way to ward off the danger that threatens humanity, and that is disarmament, complete and general. This was precisely the substance of the proposal tabled by the Soviet Government at the Fourteenth Session of the UN General Assembly of 1959.

An important contribution to the consolidation of all the forces of peace was made by the World Congress for General Disarmament and Peace, which met in Moscow in June 1962.

Further efforts in behalf of an agreement on disarmament were made by the Soviet delegation at the Eighteenth Session of the UN General Assembly, held in September 1963.

Since 1956, the Soviet Government had been urging that nuclear weapons tests should be discontinued, but no headway could be made because the representatives of the United States and Great Britain at the negotiations kept insisting on the introduction of a system of control which would be, essentially, but a lightly camouflaged form of espionage. Modern technology had reached a level where any tests could be detected by instruments and the use of observation posts, which existed in all countries. The Western countries, however, insisted on numerous on-the-spot inspections, especially in connection with the discovery of underground tests.

Early in July 1962, the Soviet Government made it known that it would be prepared to conclude an agreement on the discontinuance of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. On August 5, 1963, an agreement on the cessation of tests in the three environments was signed, in Moscow, by the Soviet

Union, the United States and Great Britain. Within a short time over 100 states had officially adhered to this agreement.

The Soviet Union regarded the signing of the agreement on partial discontinuance of nuclear arms tests as but the first step, the ultimate aim being to achieve complete and general disarmament in the interests of world peace. The Soviet Government also suggested coming to an agreement on the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the NATO countries, on the one hand, and the member-states of the Warsaw Pact, on the other, and on a freezing or reduction of military budgets.

CONCLUSION

It has been the purpose of these two volumes to present, necessarily in brief, the basic processes and principal events that make up the history of the human race from its inception in times immemorial to the present day (ending with 1967, to be precise). Since it was impossible to treat all these processes and events in equal detail, some omissions in our narrative were inevitable. We have tried to write a short history of mankind, in popular form, picturing the main trends of social development.

This development, covering several millenniums, followed no simple or easy path. Man, in the early dawn of his existence, stood practically helpless, practically unarmed, facing the tremendous forces of nature. The story of mankind has been a story of successive disasters, many retreats and reverses suffered by those who worked and pressed ahead at the hands of those who tried to hold them back. Repeatedly beaten and cruelly tried, mankind nevertheless advanced along the road of progress.

It is necessary to picture man in the environment of those primitive times before one can do justice to the advance he has made since then. Take man's immensely increased power, to begin with, covering the whole range from superstitious terror of the forces of nature and realisation of utter helplessness in the face of those forces to cognition of the laws and hidden secrets of nature. The change becomes striking when one compares the cave-dweller, naked or dressed in skins, with a stone for a weapon, and a man of the 1960s flying in a comfortable air-liner at 1,000 kilometres per hour. But that is not the most important achievement of progress. The most important achievement lies in the fact that the many millenniums, during which the various forms of exploitation of man by man followed one another, ended in the victory of the

exploited over the exploiters, first in just one country and later over a substantial part of the globe, bringing closer the day when the last parasitical system would finally break up.

The history of the human race is not so much a record of inventions, such as of various implements and machines, as a record of progressive changes in men's social relations. Marx and Engels have done mankind an unforgettable service by discovering the laws that govern political events, ideological processes and other aspects of social life in different epochs. We are speaking of the relations entered into by people in the process of producing material benefits. The Marxist method was first to explain numerous hitherto mysterious historical phenomena and interpret the essence of the activities of famous historical personages who had been motivated not by idealistic impulses, as has been accepted all along by historians belonging to the bourgeoisie and nobility and is maintained by most bourgeois scholars today, but by quite definite class interests. That this method works has been proved by many examples dealing with the vicissitudes of political struggle in the classical age, the wars of conquest waged by the medieval potentates of the East, the events of the early bourgeois revolutions, or the acute problems of modern times. Class warfare will inevitably be found to have been at the root of all these events, while the main rallying point of the class warfare have been the liberation movements of the oppressed and exploited masses. That is why we have given in these volumes so much attention to the struggle of these oppressed masses against those who exploited them, the struggle which pointed up so definitely the leading role of these masses in history. History has proved beyond doubt that this role increases in parallel with the development of the human race. The struggle against exploitation had been for centuries of a spontaneous nature, aiming not at putting an end to the system, but rather to "improving" that system, at eliminating the most odious of its proponents. As late as three or four centuries ago this struggle was carried on, of necessity, under a religious guise, wholly adapting itself to the principle of the immutability of monarchic rule.

As the centuries went by, however, the struggle waged by the masses gained strength and became more overt, and, what is most important, more purposeful. On the threshold of the modern age there occurred, for the first time in history, events of tremendous significance, namely, social revolutions which gave vent to an unparalleled explosion of energy and creative initiative on the part of the masses. These early social revolutions, true enough, did not and could not fulfil the peoples' longing for social justice. At the time of the bourgeois revolution in England, in the 17th century, and even later, in the 19th century, the situation was not yet ripe

and the preconditions absent of a socialist revolution. The revolutionary initiative, high courage and utter disdain of danger shown by the masses helped install the bourgeoisie in a position of power, merely facilitated, that is to say, the replacement of one mode of exploitation by another. At the same time, however, these revolutions gave the masses a good schooling in class warfare, which served them consistently all through the subsequent course of historic development.

Far from merely proclaiming the advent of the capitalist system, the bourgeois revolutions had social consequences which exercised a decisive influence on the course of history. We are speaking here of the emergence of the working class, the social force that was destined to lead man's struggle to end oppression through exploitation. Awareness of the historic role it was to play did not simply dawn upon the working class one fine day. This important function was discovered and theoretically substantiated by Marx and Engels, and, in a new historic situation, developed by Lenin, and later brilliantly put into practice. The emergence of a proletariat and its development into an important social force radically altered both the nature and the prospects of the liberation movements the world over. The victory of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, which opened the era of successful socialist revolutions, meant that the world-wide revolutionary process had entered a new phase in which it would grow in scope as never before, gathering in all the various forces and trends interested in putting an end to exploitation by the bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries.

The world revolutionary movement owes its unprecedented growth in strength and scope in modern times, and particularly now, to the creation and development of the socialist community of countries. The success achieved by the working class in Soviet Russia was a signal success of the liberation movement as a whole. The Soviet Union became a veritable staging ground for the developing world-wide revolutionary movement, and its rapid strides in the field of socialist construction set an example and inspired the masses in their struggle against capitalist oppression and colonial exploitation. And the drawing power of this trend towards a new life and freedom grew even stronger after a number of other countries of Europe and Asia achieved a transition to socialism. The existence of a socialist community, an achievement of the greatest significance for the universal revolutionary process, is the main factor, in the current situation, that determines the further development of that process.

The socialist countries comprise 26 per cent of the earth's surface and account for roughly 35 per cent of the world's population. During the brief period of its existence the socialist commu-

nity has achieved outstanding success in all spheres of social life and proved beyond any doubt its superiority over capitalism, especially in the sphere of economic development. In 1970 the socialist community accounted for 39 per cent of the world's industrial production. The rapid pace of production growth in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries is marked by a steadiness which the capitalist mode of production is incapable of attaining. Socialism ensures unlimited opportunities for the development of personality and the productive forces. Within the framework of the socialist community the rapid economic development of every member state is facilitated by close mutual co-operation based on the principles of equality of rights and fraternal aid. The new pattern of relationships among the states of the socialist community has made possible co-operation, specialisation, and international socialist division of labour.

It should be stressed that the powerful influence exercised by the socialist countries on the world-wide revolutionary process is due precisely to their achievements in the economic field. This spectacular upsurge of their national economies has led to a steady improvement of living standards in the socialist countries, most of which had previously been classed as backward, while the rapid development of their productive forces has also laid a foundation for the building up of their defences. All this has contributed to a shift in the world power relations in favour of socialism and to the detriment of capitalism.

The Twenty-Fourth CPSU Congress which met in Moscow at the end of March and the beginning of April 1971 was an event of historic importance. In his report to the Congress, the CC CPSU General Secretary, Leonid Brezhnev, gave a profound analysis of the multifarious constructive activities of the Communist Party and all Soviet people in the years after the Twenty-Third Congress. The Soviet people had successfully fulfilled the eighth five-year economic development plan, making a substantial contribution to the building up of the material and technological base of communism and to improving the well-being of the people. Tremendous work had been carried out to secure peaceful conditions for the construction of communism, to consolidate the positions of the Soviet Union and the fraternal socialist countries on the international scene. A spectacular achievement of this policy was the signing in August 1970 of the Treaty between the USSR and the FRG, which confirmed the latter's recognition of the post-war frontiers in Europe and paved the way toward an essential improvement of the relations between the two countries. The quadripartite accord on West Berlin reached by the USSR, the USA, Britain and France in September 1971 was a long step toward stronger peace in Europe.

The normalisation of relations between the USSR and the USA, which began with the high-level talks in Moscow in May 1972 and was further stimulated by the visit of Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CC CPSU, to the USA in June 1973, was an event of great international significance.

The essence of this normalisation lies in the transition from cold war to genuinely peaceful coexistence. This means détente, normalisation of political relations, solution of problems by negotiation and development of mutually beneficial co-operation in many spheres. The agreements concluded between the USSR and the USA in 1972-73 such as the Fundamentals of Mutual Relations between the USSR and the USA, the agreements on the prevention of nuclear war, strategic arms limitation and the basic principles for further negotiations in this sphere were designed to serve these very aims.

The improvement of relations between the USSR and the USA will also be facilitated by the growing co-operation between them in the field of economy and trade.

The consistent fulfilment by the USSR and the USA of their commitments in this area is a prerequisite for making Soviet-American relations a permanent factor in guaranteeing world peace and the irreversibility of the developing processes of détente and intensification of peaceful, mutually advantageous co-operation between states with differing social systems.

The Twenty-Fourth CPSU Congress adopted a scientifically grounded programme of communist construction in the coming period to meet the Soviet people's major requirements. The central target of the Directives approved by the Congress for the Ninth Five-Year Economic Development Plan for 1971-75 is a considerable rise in the material and cultural standards of life of the people. This can be attained only on the basis of high development rates of socialist production, an organic combination of the achievements of the revolution in science and technology with the advantages of the socialist economic system. The Congress decisions provide for a still more active enlistment of the mass of the people in the fulfilment of the tasks facing society and government. The Congress outlined various measures to secure all-round development of public education and science, further advancement of literature and the arts.

The Congress gave prominence to international problems and opposed the aggressive policy of imperialism by a programme of struggle for the freedom and independence of peoples, for stable international security—a programme of active work in defence of peace. This policy called upon to contribute to the growth of the anti-imperialist movement of the working people of the world enjoys universal approval. The continuing development of the world

socialist community is the greatest guarantee that the world revolutionary process will be accelerated. Doctrinaires and sectarians are to be found within the international communist movement who attempt to dispute this important proposition and contrapose the anti-colonial national liberation movement to all the rest factors of the international revolutionary process. There is nothing to support this point of view: both the record of history and a Marxist analysis of the current revolutionary process prove beyond any doubt that the determining factor of that process is the world socialist system. This in no way detracts from the importance of the national liberation struggle waged by peoples living under the imperialist yoke or those who have but recently gained their freedom. On the contrary, the struggle they carry on is an important element of the world revolutionary process, inasmuch as it draws into that process millions of people in the lands of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Right now the states that have thrown off imperialist political domination are waging a strenuous battle against the still continuing imperialist economic domination, against neo-colonialism. This battle they are waging is undermining the imperialist system and dealing telling blows against the remainders of colonialism. They are aided in their efforts by the policy of non-adherence to the various imperialist blocs, followed by most of the new sovereign states. No less important for the world revolutionary process are the radical social reforms that are being currently carried out in some of these countries and that are starting them on a non-capitalist road of development. Such countries can fully rely on the socialist community for support.

Another element of the current world revolutionary process is the workers' movement in the capitalist countries. There the proletariat is having to carry on the fight against heavy odds, against an experienced foe that uses a wide variety of political, economic and ideological weapons in order to steer the workers' movement into a reformist channel. The situation is further aggravated by a split within the proletariat, the existence within it of various parties, trade union organisations, etc. There is another reason why the revolutionary struggle does not expand as rapidly as it otherwise might: the high economic level reached by the advanced capitalist countries enables their monopolies to pay many workers higher wages, inasmuch as productivity of labour in such countries has been greatly increased as a result of important scientific and technological progress. Entirely wrong, however, is the assertion made by bourgeois ideologists and echoed by various doctrinaires and sectarians that the working class in the capitalist countries is willing to "let well enough alone" and has given up the struggle against the bourgeois system. The strike movement has expanded

impressively in the post-war era, and a remarkable feature has been the close co-ordination between the political struggle and that in the economic sphere.

The workers' fight for peace, and against the threat of nuclear war is gaining ground. Although the struggle for peace cannot be characterised as a socialist enterprise, it does advance, like the other democratic movements, the purpose of social reform. "*The struggle for democracy*," says the Programme of the CPSU, "*is a component of the struggle for socialism.*"¹ The immediate aim of the Communist Parties is to build up broad anti-monopoly alliances.

This epoch of ours is marked by the final transition of mankind from the capitalist system, which has outlived its usefulness, to socialism and communism. Now, more than ever, we see constant proof of the truth of the principle that it is the masses who are the true makers of history. The centuries-long exploitation of those who work by a numerically small propertied class is coming to an end, and so is the system under which "civilised" colonisers have been plundering the millions of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The path of historical progress is not a smooth one, of course; it has its ruts and pot-holes. The experience of history teaches us that the peoples of the world must work hard if they are to overcome the resistance of the forces of reaction; but that very same experience convinces us that we are travelling the right road. The principles of communism which now hold sway over an area comprising more than a third of the world's population are penetrating far and wide and attracting more and more followers. However stubborn the resistance that capitalism and its ideologists may put up, the world continues to advance along the road of progress. And progress—nowadays—is synonymous with communism.

¹ *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1962, p. 484.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

- 1917 November 7 — Great October Socialist Revolution.
 (October 25, Julian calendar)
- November 7-8 — Decrees on Peace and on Land issued by Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. Soviet Government formed.
 (October 25-26, Julian calendar)
- November 15 — Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia adopted by the Council of People's Commissars.
 (November 2, Julian calendar)
- December — Rumania occupies Bessarabia.
- December 31 — Independence of Finland recognised by Soviet Government.
 (December 18, Julian calendar)
- 1918 January-March — Finnish Workers' Republic.
- January 28 — Soviet Government decrees Red Army of Workers and Peasants.
- January 28-February 3 — Political strikes in Berlin and other German industrial cities.
- March 3 — Peace Treaty between Soviet Russia and Central powers signed at Brest-Litovsk.
- March 6-8 — Seventh Congress of Russian Communist Party, RCP(B) meets.
- March 9 — Entente powers start military intervention in the north of Russia.
- April 5 — Japanese and British troops land in Vladivostok.
- May 25 — Anti-Soviet revolt of Czechoslovak corps in Russia.
- June — Mass strikes and demonstrations staged in Austria-Hungary.
- July 10 — RSFSR Constitution adopted by Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

- August — British troops land in Baku and Central Asia.
- August 16 — American troops land at Vladivostok.
- August 30 — Attempt on life of V. I. Lenin, head of the Soviet Government.
- Summer of 1918 — Complete evacuation of Russian troops from Iran.
- August-September — Rice riots in Japan.
- September 29 — Armistice agreement between Bulgaria and Entente powers signed.
- October 28 — Independent Czechoslovak state proclaimed.
- October 30 — Mudros armistice agreement between Turkey and Entente powers signed.
- November 3 — Armistice agreement between Austria-Hungary and Entente powers signed.
- November 3 — Sailors revolt at Kiel. Bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany begins.
- November 7 — Polish Republic proclaimed.
- November 9 — Bourgeois-democratic revolution wins in Germany.
- November 11 — Compiègne armistice agreement between Germany and Entente powers signed. End of First World War.
- November 12 — Austria proclaimed a republic.
- November 16 — Hungary proclaimed a republic.
- November — General strike in Rio de Janeiro.
- December 1918- — General strike of textile mill workers at
- January 1919 — Bombay.
- 1918 — Montagu-Chelmsford reforms in India.
- 1918-1919 — Revolutionary activity in Chile.
- 1918-1919 — Upsurge of strike movement in Peru.
- 1918-1920 — "Hands off Soviet Russia" movement in Great Britain, France and the United States.
- 1919 January 5-12 — General political strike of Berlin workers. Armed clashes with government troops.
- January 9 — General strike in Buenos Aires.
- January 15 — Assassination of K. Liebknecht and R. Luxemburg.
- January 18, 1919- — Paris Peace Conference.
- January 21, 1920
- February 28 — Proclamation of Afghan independence.
- March — Anti-Japanese revolt in Korea.
- March 2-6 — Constituent Congress of Communist International.
- March — Anti-imperialist armed uprising in Egypt.
- March 18-23 — Eighth Congress of the RCP(B).
- March-July — First campaign of Entente powers in Soviet Russia.

- March 21 — Proletarian revolution in Hungary. Hungarian Soviet Republic proclaimed (was in existence till August 1).
- April 13 — Bavarian Soviet Republic proclaimed (was in existence till May 1).
- April 16-27 — Revolt in units of French fleet in the Black Sea.
- April — Active national liberation struggle against British imperialism begins in India.
- May — Upsurge of anti-imperialist movement in China.
- May-June — Afghan war of independence.
- June 28 — Peace treaty between the Entente powers and Germany signed at Versailles.
- July 1919-March 1920 — Second campaign of Entente powers in Soviet Russia.
- September 10 — Peace Treaty of St. Germain signed by Austria.
- September — Bourgeois revolution begins in Turkey.
- September 1919-January 1920 — Powerful strike of steel workers begins in USA.
- October — Yudenich forces defeated at Petrograd.
- November 27 — Peace Treaty of Neuilly signed by Bulgaria.
- 1920 January 23 — National vow approved by Turkish parliament.
- February — Soviet North cleared of Entente and whiteguard forces.
- March 29-April 5 — Ninth Congress of the RCP(B).
- March — German workers go on general strike. Monarchist putsch fails.
- April 6 — Far Eastern Republic proclaimed.
- April-November — Third campaign of Entente powers in Soviet Russia.
- June 4 — Peace Treaty of Trianon signed by Hungary.
- June — Gilan Province national revolutionary government formed at Resht, Persia.
- July 19-August 7 — Second Congress of Communist International meets.
- August 10 — Peace Treaty of Sèvres between Entente powers and Turkey signed.
- Summer — Civil war ends in Central Asia.
- September — Workers seize industrial plants in Italy.
- September 2 — Bukhara People's Soviet Republic formed.
- November 29 — Armenian Socialist Republic formed.
- December — Electrification of Russia Plan (GOELRO) adopted by Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets.
- 1920 — First mass strike of African miners in Union of South Africa.
- 1920-1921 — Upsurge of revolutionary movement in Mexico.
- 1921 — Bitter unrest among farm workers in Patagonia, Argentina.

- 1920-1922 — Peasant movement under Eka (Union) leadership in India.
- 1921 February 25 — Georgia proclaimed a Socialist Soviet Republic.
- February 26 — Treaty signed by RSFSR and Iran on the establishment of friendly relations.
- February 28 — Treaty of friendship signed by RSFSR and Afghanistan.
- February 28 — Counter-revolutionary revolt at Kronstadt.
- March 8-16 — Tenth Congress of RCP(B).
- March 16 — RSFSR and Turkey sign pact of friendship and brotherhood.
- March 16 — Anglo-Soviet trade agreement signed.
- April 7 — Sun Yat-sen elected president extraordinary of South China Provinces Republic.
- June 22-July 12 — Third Congress of Communist International.
- July — People's revolution wins in Mongolia.
- September 19 — Independent Rif Republic proclaimed in Morocco.
- November 12, 1921-February 6, 1922 — Washington conference on Far East and Pacific problems.
- 1921-1926 — France and Spain at war with Rif Republic.
- 1922 February — British Government issues declaration on independence of Egypt.
- March 27-April 2 — Eleventh Congress of RCP(B).
- March — Transcaucasian Federation of Socialist Soviet Republics formed.
- April 10-May 19 — International conference on economic and financial problems at Genoa.
- April 16 — Soviet-German Treaty signed at Rapallo.
- October — Fascist dictatorship established in Italy.
- October 25 — Japanese troops withdrawn from Vladivostok. Civil war ends in Soviet Far East.
- November 5-December 5 — Fourth Congress of Communist International.
- November 15 — Far Eastern Republic admitted into RSFSR.
- November 20, 1922-July 24, 1923 — International Conference of Lausanne on the Near East.
- December 30, 1922 — First Congress of Soviets of the USSR approves Declaration and Agreement on formation of the USSR.
- 1923 January — Ruhr district occupied by French troops.
- April 17-25 — Twelfth Congress of the RCP(B).
- June 8-9 — Fascist putsch in Bulgaria.
- October-November — Workers' governments function in Saxony and Thuringia (Germany).
- October 17 — Proclamation of Khorasm Socialist Republic.
- October 23-25 — Armed uprising of workers in Hamburg, led by E. Thaelmann.

- October 29 — Turkey proclaimed a republic.
 1923 — General railwaymen's strike in Indonesia.
- 1924 January 20-February 1 — First Kuomintang Congress.
 January 21 — V. I. Lenin dies.
 January — Second All-Union Congress of Soviets adopts USSR Constitution.
 February-October — Diplomatic relations with the USSR established by Great Britain, Italy, Norway, Austria, Greece, Sweden, China, Mexico and France.
 May 23-31 — Thirteenth Congress of the RCP(B).
 June 17-July 8 — Fifth Congress of the Communist International.
 July 16-August 16 — London conference of Allied Powers. Dawes plan adopted.
 September — Proclamation of Bukhara Socialist Republic.
 October 1924-February 1927 — "Prestes Column" march, Brazil.
 November 28 — Proclamation of Mongolian People's Republic.
- 1925 January 20 — Diplomatic relations established between the USSR and Japan.
 1925 — Anti-imperialist "May 30th movement" in China.
 May — Uzbek and Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republics admitted into the USSR.
 June 19-October 10 — General strike at Hong Kong and Canton.
 October 5-16 — International Conference at Locarno.
 December 17 — Soviet-Turkish Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality signed.
 December 18-31 — Fourteenth Congress of the RCP(B) assumes name of All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) or All-Union CP(B).
 1925-1928 — Upsurge of national liberation struggle in Nicaragua.
- 1926 April 24 — Soviet-German Treaty of Friendship and Non-aggression signed.
 May 4-12 — General strike in England.
 May 12-13 — Fascist putsch of Pilsudsky in Poland.
 July — Chinese national-revolutionary army begins its march to the North.
 August 31 — Soviet-Afghan treaty of neutrality and non-aggression signed.
 November-December — Armed uprising against Dutch in Java.
- 1927 April 12 — Counter-revolutionary *coup d'état* in Shanghai operated by Chiang Kai-shek.
 May 27 — Great Britain breaks off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.
 July 15-16 — Anti-fascist demonstration fired on and general strike begins in Vienna.

- October 1 — Soviet-Iranian treaty on guarantees and neutrality signed.
- November 30 — Proposal on complete general disarmament tabled in League of Nations by the USSR.
- December 2-19 — Fifteenth Congress of All-Union CP(B).
- December 11-13 — Uprising in Canton (Canton Commune).
- 1928 July 17-September 1 — Sixth Congress of Communist International.
- August — New constitution promulgated in Afghanistan.
- August 27 — Briand-Kellogg Pact concluded in Paris.
- October — First Five-Year Plan initiated in the USSR.
- November — Reactionary revolt in Afghanistan.
- 1928-1930 — Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Soldiers' Deputies formed in Central and South China.
- 1929 October 3 — Diplomatic relations re-established between the USSR and Great Britain.
- 1929-1933 — World economic crisis.
- 1930 March — "Salt march" in India.
- June 26-July 13 — Sixteenth Congress of All-Union CP(B).
- 1930 — Mass anti-British movement in India.
- 1930 — People of Peru rise against Leguia dictatorship.
- 1931 April — Bourgeois-democratic revolution in Spain begins. Monarchy overthrown.
- 1931-1932 — Mass movement in Chile against pro-American governments.
- September, 1931-1932 — Japanese conquest of Manchuria.
- 1932 — Gold mines workers of Tanganyika fight for higher wages.
- February 2, 1932-1934 — International Disarmament Conference works at Geneva.
- 1933 January 30 — Fascist dictatorship established in Germany.
- February 27 — Nazis stage Reichstag fire.
- March 27 — Japan withdraws from League of Nations.
- August — Anti-imperialist revolution in Cuba.
- September-December — Reichstag fire trial at Leipzig.
- October — Germany withdraws from League of Nations.
- November 16 — Diplomatic relations established between the USSR and USA.
- 1933 — Chiang Kai-shek launches punitive expedition against Soviet areas in China.
- 1933-1937 — Second Five-Year Plan in the USSR.
- 1934 January 26-February 10 — Seventeenth Congress of All-Union CP(B)

- February — Fascist putsch and general anti-fascist strike in France.
- February — Armed clashes between Austrian workers and fascists.
- September 18 — Soviet Union becomes member of League of Nations.
- December 19 — Japan denounces Washington agreements of 1922.
- 1935 January — North-Western March of the revolutionary forces in China.
- May — Mutual assistance treaties signed between the USSR and France and between the USSR and Czechoslovakia.
- May — Popular Front formed in France.
- June 18 — Anglo-German agreement on naval armaments signed.
- July 25-August 25 — Seventh Congress of Communist International.
- October 3 — Italy attacks Ethiopia.
- November — All-Union conference of Stakhanovites in the Soviet Union.
- 1935 — Fresh upsurge of anti-imperialist revolutionary movement in India.
- 1935 — National liberation alliance formed in Brazil.
- 1936 January — Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) formed in the USA.
- February 16 — Popular Front wins parliamentary elections in Spain.
- March 7 — German troops enter Rhineland.
- March 12 — Soviet-Mongolian protocol on mutual assistance signed.
- March 26 — Popular Front formed in Chile.
- May 3 — Popular Front wins parliamentary elections in France.
- May-June — Powerful strike movement in France.
- July 18 — Fascist revolt in Spain. Spanish people launch national-revolutionary war against fascist rebels and German and Italian intervention (1936-1939).
- November 25 — Japan and Germany sign Anti-Comintern Pact.
- December 5 — Eighth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets adopts new Constitution of the USSR.
- 1936 — Strike movement grows in the USA.
- 1937 July 7 — Japan attacks China. Chinese people start anti-Japanese war.
- August 21 — Non-aggression treaty signed by the USSR and China.
- November 6 — Italy joins Anti-Comintern Pact.
- 1937 — Mexican Government decrees nationalisation of railways.
- 1938 March — German troops occupy Austria.
- March — Mexican Government decrees nationalisation of petroleum industry.

- 1938 — Popular Front wins elections in Chile.
- 1938 — Third plan of economic development initiated in the USSR.
- September 29-30 — Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy sign pact on dismemberment of Czechoslovakia at Munich.
- September 30 — Anglo-German non-aggression declaration signed.
- December — Franco-German non-aggression declaration signed.
- 1939 March 10-21 — Eighteenth Congress of All-Union CP(B).
- March — German troops occupy Czechoslovakia.
- April — Italy effects conquest of Albania.
- August 23 — Soviet-German non-aggression treaty signed.
- August 25 — Anglo-Polish treaty of mutual assistance signed.
- September 1 — Nazi Germany invades Poland. Second World War begins.
- September 3 — Great Britain and France declare war on Germany.
- September — Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia reunite with the USSR.
- September 28 — Mutual assistance treaty between the USSR and Estonia signed.
- October 5 — Mutual assistance treaty between the USSR and Latvia signed.
- October 10 — Mutual assistance treaty between the USSR and Lithuania signed.
- November 30, 1939-
March 12, 1940 — Armed conflict between the USSR and Finland.
- 1940 April — Germany occupies Denmark and Norway.
- May — Germany occupies Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg.
- May 26-June 3 — British troops evacuate Dunkirk.
- June 10 — Italy declares war on Great Britain and France.
- June 17 — People's government set up in Lithuania.
- June 20 — Fascist government overthrown in Latvia.
- June 21 — Fascist government overthrown in Estonia.
- June 22 — Franco-German armistice agreement signed at Compiègne.
- June 24 — Franco-Italian armistice agreement signed in Rome.
- July 10 — French Communist Party issues appeal for resistance to nazi invaders.
- July — Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia proclaimed Soviet Socialist Republics.
- July — USSR and Rumania reach agreement on Bessarabia.

- August 2 — Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic proclaimed.
- August — Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian Soviet Socialist Republics admitted into the USSR.
- September 27 — Tri-Partite Pact signed at Berlin by Germany, Italy and Japan.
- September — Japan invades and occupies Vietnam. Vietnamese people start war of liberation.
- October 12 — German troops enter Rumania.
- October 28 — Italy attacks Greece.
- November 1940-March 1941 — Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Slovakia join Tri-Partite Pact of fascist states.
- 1941 April — German and Italian troops invade Yugoslavia and Greece.
- April 13 — Neutrality pact between the USSR and Japan signed.
- June 22 — Germany attacks the Soviet Union. Soviet people start Great Patriotic War.
- July 12 — The USSR and Great Britain sign agreement at Moscow on concerted action in the war against fascist Germany.
- July — Partisan warfare against invaders begins in Yugoslavia.
- December — German army defeated at Moscow.
- December 7 — Japanese air and naval forces attack Pearl Harbour and other American, British and Dutch possessions in the Pacific Ocean. War starts in the Pacific.
- December — Germany and Italy declare war on the United States.
- December 1941-May 1942 — Japan conquers Malaya, Burma, Philippines, Indonesia and Singapore.
- 1942 January 1 — United Nations Declaration signed by 26 states at Washington on all-out war against the fascist bloc.
- January 29 — Treaty of alliance signed at Teheran by the USSR, Great Britain and Iran.
- May 26 — Anglo-Soviet treaty on war-time alliance and post-war co-operation signed.
- June 11 — Soviet-American agreement signed on principles applicable to mutual assistance in military operations against aggressors.
- August 12-15 — Conference of heads of government of Great Britain and the Soviet Union in Moscow.
- September 1942-February 1943 — Battle of Stalingrad.
- November 8 1942 — Anglo-American troops land in North Africa.
- Brazil and Mexico enter the war against Germany.
- 1943 January 18 — Soviet troops break blockade of Leningrad.

- May — German and Italian troops surrender in Africa.
- June — Communist International dissolved.
- July — Anglo-American troops land in Sicily.
- July 24-25 — Fascist government overthrown and Mussolini arrested in Italy.
- July-August — Battle of Kursk.
- September 8 — Italy surrenders.
- October 13 — Italy declares war on Germany.
- November 28-December 1 — Conference of heads of government of the USSR, USA and Great Britain at Teheran.

- 1944 June 6 — Allied forces land in northern France to open second front.
- July 22 — Liberation of Poland begins. Date declared national holiday.
- August 18-25 — Popular uprising victorious in Paris.
- August 23-24 — Popular anti-fascist uprising victorious in Rumania.
- September 9 — Popular uprising victorious in Bulgaria.
- September — Finland drops out of fascist bloc.
- October 20 — German invaders cleared out of Belgrade.
- October — Reactionary dictatorship overthrown in Guatemala.
- November 29 — Albania cleared of German forces.
- December — Provisional national government set up in Hungary.
- 1944-1946 — Agrarian reforms introduced in Albania, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia.

- 1945 February 4-11 — Yalta (Crimea) Conference of heads of government of the USSR, USA and Great Britain.
- April 4 — Hungary cleared of German troops. Date declared national holiday.
- April 25-June 26 — United Nations Conference meets at San Francisco. UNO founded.
- May 2 — Soviet forces take Berlin.
- May 5 — Popular uprising in Prague.
- May 8 — Unconditional surrender of German armed forces act signed.
- May 9 — Victory Day.
- July 17-August 2 — Potsdam (Berlin) Conference of heads of government of the USSR, USA and Great Britain.
- August 6-9 — Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in Japan, wiped out by barbarous American atom-bomb attack.
- August 9 — Soviet Union declares war on Japan.
- August 14 — Soviet-Chinese treaty of friendship and alliance signed.
- August 17 — Republic of Indonesia proclaimed.
- September 2 — Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) proclaimed.

- September 2 — Japan signs act of unconditional surrender, ending Second World War.
- October 3 — World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) formed.
- October — Fifth Pan-African Congress meets.
- November 20, 1945-October, 1946 — Nuremberg trial of war criminals held.
- November 29 — Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia proclaimed (since 1963—Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).
- December — International Democratic Federation of Women founded.
- 1945 — World Federation of Democratic Youth founded.
- 1945 — Landlord ownership of land abolished in Eastern Zone of Germany.
- 1945 — Upsurge of the national liberation struggle in Egypt.
- 1945-1946 — Upsurge of anti-imperialist movement in India.
- 1946 January 11 — People's Republic of Albania proclaimed.
- March — Provisional People's Committee of North Korea passes land reform law.
- March — Independence of Transjordan proclaimed.
- March — Agrarian reform introduced in Bulgaria.
- April — Independence of Syria proclaimed.
- June 18 — Italy proclaimed a republic.
- July — Philippines' independence proclaimed.
- September — Monarchy abolished in Bulgaria.
- September — General political strike in Burma.
- October — New constitution adopted in France.
- October — Democratic Union of Africa formed.
- November — Linggadjati Agreement between Indonesian Republic and Holland signed.
- December — French imperialists start "dirty war" against the people of Vietnam.
- December 2 — British and American zones of occupation in Germany united (Bizonia established).
- 1946-1949 — Revolutionary civil war in China.
- 1946-1950 — Fourth Five-Year Plan in the USSR.
- 1947 January-May — Anti-republican conspiracy in Hungary.
- February 10 — Peace treaties signed by Allied Powers and Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania and Finland.
- March — Truman Doctrine proclaimed by the USA.
- June — Marshall Plan adopted by the USA.
- June-August — Indian subcontinent divided into two independent states—India and Pakistan.
- June — Reactionary, anti-labour Taft-Hartley law passed in the USA.

- November — UNO adopts resolution on partitioning Palestine.
- December 30 — Rumania proclaimed a People's Republic.
- December — New constitution adopted for Italy.
- 1948 January 4 — Republic of Union of Burma proclaimed.
- January 17 — Renville agreement between Indonesian Republic and Dutch signed.
- January 30 — Gandhi assassinated.
- February — Reactionary putsch in Czechoslovakia fails.
- February — Ceylon granted dominion status.
- Spring — Agrarian reform introduced in Czechoslovakia.
- May 14 — State of Israel created.
- June 20 — Separate monetary reform introduced in West Germany.
- September 9 — Korean People's Democratic Republic formed.
- 1948 — Trial of Communist Party leaders in the USA.
- 1949 January — Council for Mutual Economic Aid set up by the USSR and European People's Democracies.
- April — North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) formed.
- April 20-25 — First World Peace Congress meets.
- August — Constitution of Hungarian People's Republic adopted.
- September — Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) formed.
- October 1 — Chinese People's Republic proclaimed.
- October 7 — German Democratic Republic (GDR) proclaimed.
- November — Indonesian-Dutch Round-Table conference meets at the Hague.
- 1950 January 26 — Republic of India formed.
- February 14 — USSR and Chinese People's Republic sign treaty of friendship, alliance and mutual assistance.
- October 1950-July 1953 — Korean people wage national liberation war against American aggressors.
- 1950 — State of Jordan formed.
- 1951 — Nepal wins independence.
- October — Egyptian Government denounces Anglo-Egyptian agreements of 1899 and 1936.
- 1951-1955 — Fifth Five-Year Plan of Economic Development in the USSR.
- 1950s — Anti-democratic McCarran and Humphrey-Butler acts passed in the USA.
- 1952 July — National revolution in Egypt.
- October 5-14 — Nineteenth Congress of All-Union CP(B) in the USSR. All-Union CP(B) renamed Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).

- 1952 — Revolution in Bolivia.
- 1952 — Independent state of United Kingdom of Libya created.
- 1952 — Agrarian reform completed in China.
- 1953 June 18 — Egyptian Republic proclaimed.
- 1954 June 27 — First atomic power station commissioned in the USSR.
- July — Agreement on ending war in Vietnam reached at Geneva.
- October 19 — Agreement reached by Egypt and Great Britain regarding withdrawal of British troops from Suez Canal zone.
- November — National anti-imperialist revolution starts in Algeria.
- 1955 April — First conference of the countries of Asia and Africa at Bandung.
- May — Treaty of friendship, co-operation and mutual assistance among the socialist countries of Europe signed at Warsaw.
- July — General strike in Chile.
- July 18-23 — Geneva conference of heads of government of the USSR, USA, Great Britain and France.
- 1955 — American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations merge to form AFL-CIO.
- 1956 January 1 — Sudan proclaimed Sudanese Republic.
- February 14-25 — Twentieth Congress of the CPSU.
- March 20 — Tunisian independence proclaimed.
- March-April — France and Spain recognise independence of Morocco.
- May — Final dissolution of Netherlands-Indonesian Union.
- July — Egyptian Government passes law on nationalisation of Suez Canal.
- October-November — Great Britain, France and Israel launch armed aggression on Egypt.
- October-November — Counter-revolutionary revolt in Hungary.
- December 18 — British Gold Coast colony granted dominion status.
- 1956 — Popular Action Front formed in Chile.
- 1956 — Sixth five-year economic development plan initiated in the USSR.
- 1957 March — West European states conclude treaty on creation of the European Economic Community (Common Market).
- March 6 — Ghanaian independence proclaimed.
- May 10 — Rojas Pinilla dictatorship overthrown in Colombia.
- May 14-16 — Meeting of Representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow.

- August — Malayan independence proclaimed.
- October 4 — World's first artificial satellite of the earth launched in the USSR.
- 1958 January 23 — Pérez Jiménez dictatorship overthrown in Venezuela.
- February — United Arab Republic (UAR) proclaimed.
- July 14 — People's revolution victorious in Iraq. Iraqi Republic proclaimed.
- September 30 — Agrarian reform law passed in Iraq.
- October 2 — Guinean Republic proclaimed.
- 1958 — Period of Fifth Republic inaugurated in France.
- 1959 January — Democratic, anti-imperialist revolution victorious in Cuba.
- January 27-February 5 — Extraordinary Twenty-First Congress of the CPSU.
- May — Law on agrarian reform passed in Cuba.
- 1959-1965 — Seven-year economic development plan in the USSR.
- 1960 July 11 — New constitution adopted for Czechoslovakia.
- November — Meeting of Representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow.
- 1960 — Powerful movement against racial discrimination begins in the USA.
- 1960-1964 — Decrees on nationalisation issued in Egypt.
- 1961 April 12 — World's first space flight performed by a Soviet citizen, Y. A. Gagarin.
- July 1 — Referendum on form of government effected in Algeria.
- October 17-31 — Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU.
- 1961 — Syria withdraws from United Arab Republic.
- 1962 March — Evian agreements between France and Algeria signed.
- April 30 — Burma adopts "Burma's Road to Socialism" political declaration.
- June — World Congress on Disarmament and Peace meets in Moscow.
- October-November — Caribbean crisis.
- 1962 — People of South Vietnam begin national liberation war against American aggressors.
- 1962 — Algerian People's Democratic Republic proclaimed.
- 1963 April 7 — New constitution for Yugoslavia adopted.
- May — Organisation of African Unity created.
- August 5 — Treaty on partial prohibition of atomic weapons tests concluded in Moscow.
- November 22 — US President John F. Kennedy assassinated.
- 1963 — State union of UAR and Yemen abrogated.

- 1964 March — United Arab Republic proclaimed a democratic socialist state.
- June 12 — Treaty of friendship, mutual assistance and co-operation signed by the USSR and GDR.
- October — Plenary meeting of Central Committee of the CPSU.
- 1966 January — Governments of India and Pakistan sign Tashkent declaration.
- February — Soviet automatic station makes soft landing on Moon.
- March 29-April 8 — Twenty-Third Congress of the CPSU.
- July — Bucharest Declaration of the Warsaw Treaty member-states on measures to strengthen peace and security in Europe adopted.
- 1966 — France withdraws from the military organisation of NATO.
- 1967 April — The Karlovy Vary Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe on problems of safeguarding peace and security.
- June — Israel starts armed aggression against the UAR, Syria and Jordan.
- July — World Conference on Vietnam in Stockholm.
- Summer — Massive Negro demonstrations against racial discrimination in the USA.
- October — World's first automatic link-up and undocking in mid-orbit of the Soviet artificial earth satellites, *Cosmos-186* and *Cosmos-188*.
- November — Nation-wide celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in the USSR.
- 1968 April — New, Socialist Constitution adopted in the GDR.
- May — General strike and upsurge of the mass revolutionary movement in France.
- July — USSR, USA and Britain sign the treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

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