

THE FIGHTING WORKER

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Fall of Singapore Reveals Decay of British Empire

U.S.S.R. FACES NEW DANGERS

The bourgeois press is "elated" by the Soviet victories. The Stalinist press is presenting the present Russian counter-attack as "proof" of the correctness and "invincibility" of Stalinism.

A word of warning is needed.

When the German army invaded the Soviet Union last June most of the bourgeois critics were sure that Russia would fall within 3 months, or 6 months the latest. The Revolutionary Workers League at that time predicted that the Red Army would continue serious resistance. "This will involve," said the Fighting Worker "millions of Nazi troops through the winter, even if the Red Army must still retreat many miles".

PREDICTIONS VERIFIED

At that time, of course, our critics laughed and stated that this was wishful thinking flowing from a "false" position that the Soviet Union is a warped Workers State. But our predictions, based on a correct evaluation of the social system in the Soviet Union, on the correct assumption that the Red Troops fired by their revolutionary ideology would fight harder and better — this was all borne out.

Now, however, there is the opposite "criticism". The pessimists of yesterday are now "absolutely certain" that the Red Army will continue its smashing counter-attack right up to Berlin. The Stalinists are whispering around that the Hitler machine is so badly smashed it will not even be able to launch a spring offensive.

The RWL is highly gratified that the Workers State still fights on. We are defensists only as far as

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The sun HAS set on the British Empire. Perhaps not literally, but politically and historically, very definitely.

Britain owns directly, one-fourth the territory of the world — 13½ million square miles and 504 million population. In addition she controls the Dutch Empire, which includes such rich plums as the Dutch East and West Indies, as well as the Belgian Empire.

This great Empire has been nearly 400 years in building, since the dawn of capitalism. But since the first World War, the Empire has been in decay. Its "victory" and the Versailles Treaty only gave it a breathing spell. The 1926 General Strike revealed its internal weakness; the present war reveals its impotence. The decay of world capitalism, the expansion of its imperialist rivals, and growing colonial unrest has dealt it mortal blows. The fall of Singapore is but another important nail in its coffin.

HALF-TRUTHS

Mr. Churchill is trying to explain the loss of this island bastion as the result of lack of ammunition, shipping, planes, etc., and the fact that Japan does not have to disperse her military and naval forces over such widely divergent areas as do the British.

But the decisive factor is ignored. The British are unable to mobilize the colonial millions against the comparatively puny forces of the victorious Japanese, because of the masses hatred of their exploiters.

The growing colonial unrest shows itself in many ways. About two months ago, the Asiatic workers at the British naval base of Singapore struck; of 12,000 workers, only 800 reported for duty. Elsewhere in British Malaya, the police were left in the towns to fight off revolt, rather than be mobilized to slow down

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Demand Freedom of Odell Waller

CHICAGO MASS MEETINGS SUCCESSFUL

Thomas H. Stone, senior counsel for the Defense in the Odell Waller Case, toured from Virginia to Chicago, in order to speak at public meetings arranged by the Waller Defense Committee. The Chicago meeting was well attended by Negro and white workers. Mr. Stone dealt with both the legal and class angles of the Waller case in a very effective manner. One of the highlights in his talk

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SAVE ODELL WALLER CON- FERENCE PLANNED

A national "Save Odell Waller Conference" is being organized by the Richmond Waller Defense Committee and its affiliated bodies. It will be held in Richmond, Virginia, March 1st, at the Hall of the National Ideal Benefit Society, 210 East Clay Street.

The Conference will take up the Case of Odell Waller, and the issues involved — the restrictions imposed by the Poll Tax, racial

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Extend The October Revolution!

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the Soviet Union is concerned. As far as the imperialist powers are concerned, we consider it an imperialist war. We take second place to no one in our defense of the State built by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. We assert, however, that a real defense of the Soviet Union is possible **only** on the basis of an internationalist policy against the imperialist war and against all the Social Patriots, especially Stalinism (both inside and outside the Soviet Union).

DANGERS AHEAD

But it must be recognized that the battles won, although important, do not yet constitute a Nazi rout.

A number of possibilities lie ahead:

1—Germany will continue on the defensive in the Soviet Union for a few months, and then push on to a new Spring offensive. How effective Soviet resistance will be then, will depend on many things. How much aid will America send? How much dissension will dev-

elop behind the German lines? How well is Germany today organizing European war economy? What will happen to the class struggle within Russia — will world capitalism exact still more concessions, undermining property relations and demoralizing the working class, or will workers democracy be reestablished and the bureaucracy removed? Will proletarian revolutions mature soon? All these concrete factors will weigh heavily on military events.

IF OFFENSIVE GOES ON

2—Should the revolution break out behind the German lines, or should a push in the Mediterranean area in an attempt to make contact with the Japanese end in a costly defeat, Germany might be forced to remain on the defensive throughout the Spring and probably longer. In that case the Red Army offensive would continue unabated. If the offensive pushed deep enough into Europe, Stalinism would then get "peace" — but not the "peace" she is bar-

gaining for. An unholy alliance of all the world imperialist powers, even "defeated" France, would then move to crush the revolutionary threat. The imperialists would call a temporary truce in the imperialist war, to deal with the main enemy.

3—Supposing, on the other hand, that the Red Army is thrown back to the Ural mountains. Then we may expect a "new" attitude by the imperialist "allies". Churchill and Roosevelt are careful not to criticize the Soviet Union today, while it is still a powerful military force. On the other hand they do not involve Stalin in the top war councils. If the Red Army is decisively set back, however, American Imperialism will demand and will get one concession after another from Stalinism.

CRISIS COMING

On this basis the political struggle within Russia would reach the boiling point — either the re-establishment (Continued on page 3)

Colonial Unrest Shakes Far East

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the Japanese advance. The smug British bourgeoisie so feared the natives that it refused to give them guns until a week before Singapore's occupation — and then only to a few thousand Chinese: shotguns to fight off tanks and dive-bombers! An offer by the Tamils, described as a "fierce tribe", to defend Malaya was unceremoniously rejected. Thus the Japanese found it relatively easy to infiltrate through the jungles

Rejecting the "scorched earth policy," the British left the rubber trees, the naval base, and the rest of the wealth of Malaya almost intact for the Japanese invader.

RUTHLESS EXPLOITATION

British imperialism in the Far East, has always been extremely parasitical and ruthless. The main revenue that sustained Singapore came from a government

OPIMUM monopoly, which yields a 1100% profit. Malaya is governed by a governor who meets his council (7 British out of 13 members), once a month, for one hour.

In the nearby Dutch Indies, indirectly part of the British Empire, similar conditions prevail. Wages are as low as 15 cents per day; the public school system is a myth; there is 95% illiteracy. Natives are not permitted to visit Dutch warships; nor are native troops allowed to train with machine guns.

The British are a thousand times more fearful of the natives in their Empire, than they are of the Japanese "invaders." Therein lies the story of the fall of Singapore and the present threat to India.

The role of Singapore as Britain's watch-dog in the Far East will never be re-established, no

matter how the future tide of battle goes. Although the loss of Singapore was a big defeat, weakening the position of the United Nations in relation to Japan, it at the same time greatly strengthened America's hand against Great Britain.

COLONIES LOOK TO U. S.

The ruling classes of the colonies and dominions are moving away from the British control at an accelerated pace. Australia, New Zealand, and India are increasingly dependent on Wall St. for leadership in the war. Australia has already followed Canada's course; while formally a part of the British Empire, actually it is becoming a section of the growing American Empire. With Britain being forced back further — in the Far East by Japan, in the Near East by Germany — India

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SOVIET UNION

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lishment of workers democracy or capitalism will carry the day. (As a capitalist power, with Stalinism as well as the Marxists eliminated, Russia would be treated by Wall Street as a fifth cousin colonial power).

A political victory by the proletariat in the Soviet Union, however, would again unleash revolutionary forces everywhere and a new offensive would then not only be possible but certain. This time it would have no "allies" in the bourgeois camp. America and Germany would unite to smash a healthy Workers State fighting for World Revolution.

**EXTEND THE
 OCTOBER REVOLUTION**

Any way that events turn, therefore, the Russian fight will be settled on the SOCIAL and POLITICAL front, not on the military front (although it is an important auxiliary front). And it is precisely here that the role of Stalinism is so treacherous. For in supporting the imperialist war and the allied imperialists, Stalinism is disorienting the only ally the Soviet Union has, the world proletariat.

Neither optimism, nor pessimism are needed in reading the press reports on Soviet advances. What is needed is realism, the knowledge that as far as the Soviet Union is concerned it is basically not a struggle of Nation against Nation, but of Class against Class.

NOTICE

Readers should note that the Demos Press has no connection whatsoever with the Social Science Institute, located at the same address.

Free Odell Waller!

Waller Conference

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discrimination, and the plight of the sharecroppers, particularly in the southern states.

All labor and fraternal organizations are invited to send delegates or observers to participate in the framing of the policies of the Conference and the ensuing actions necessary to carry them out. Individuals who cannot get any response from their organizations are invited to take part with voice but no vote.

Organized mass pressure has saved the life of Odell Waller on the two previous sentences to the electric chair. Only this pressure, greatly increased will be able to save him again from the proposed electrocution scheduled for March 20th. The case is being taken to the Supreme Court of the United States. Without the weight of organized labor behind it the efforts of the legal staff must be confined only to the filing of routine briefs. It is up to the workers to organize sufficient pressure to counteract that of the landowners and bankers of Virginia, who are relentlessly howling for the blood of Odell Waller.



**«The State Can
 Do No Wrong»**

While Senator Byrd of Virginia attacks the standard of living of the American masses, in Washington, by opposing crumbs of relief to unemployed, youth, sharecroppers, etc., as "unnecessary non-defense expenditures," his political machine carries on the good work back home. Howard Carwile, son of a sharecropper's family, has been refused by the Byrd-Glass outfit, the right to sue the state of Virginia for redress of grievances suffered at the Blue Ridge Sanatorium, on the grounds of "state immunity." The capitalists have changed the old feudal maxim: "The King Can Do No Wrong" to "The State Can Do No Wrong." Of course, capitalists are permitted to sue the state for violations of contract.

Protest Meeting

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revolved around the exact opposite of the discrimination shown to the Negro sharecropper. A certain Mr. Seidel, a white landlord, shot and killed one of the Negro tenants on his plantation, who had come to claim his share of the crops. In the same county, with a similar poll tax jury of landlords, Mr. Seidel was acquitted, but Odell Waller is still sitting in jail, waiting for the scheduled electrocution on March 20th, while the committees are putting up a fight for a review of the case by the U. S. Supreme Court.

POLL TAX CONDEMNED

A resolution was carried, which condemned the poll tax, and the role of the Virginia Courts, the landlords, bankers, and their "liberal" stooges. The resolution with signatures of many of the people present was sent to Odell Waller, also a letter of solidarity and money collected. The Washington Park Forum co-operated fully with the committee and gave up their meeting in order to hear Mr. Stone. A South Side Church took up a collection which was presented at the meeting, and the Currents Events Discussion Circle held an affair at which Mr. Stone again spoke.

The Committees are now working on an "all out for defense of Waller" effort, and are organizing toward making the Richmond Conference an expression of mass protest against the brutal, callous, discrimination against the Negro and white sharecroppers in this country.

**FEBRUARY, 1942
 INTERNATIONAL
 NEWS**

Theoretical Organ
 International
 Contact Commission

WAR AND REVOLUTION:
 NEW ASPECTS OF
 WORLD STRATEGY
 Cannon's Statement On The War
 Price: 5 Cents

Imperialists Fear Colonial Revolts

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will undoubtedly follow suit. Such people as Nehru, Indian Congress leader, are very much pro-U. S.

Contrary to the prevailing propaganda, the plans of Uncle Sam and John Bull do not coincide: in fact they are hostile. The Washington "Merry-Go-Round" column reports that Churchill wanted Roosevelt to sacrifice the Far East, in favor of all aid against Hitler in Europe. Whether this suggestion was ever made or not, the idea is easily understood.

BRITISH FEAR U. S. POWER

Britain is anxious not to have a powerful America overrun Asia by herself — if Japan is ever stopped. The economic power of the U. S. would spell certain death for British control, and the establishment of unbreakable U.S. control instead. Far better to allow the seizure of the whole Far East by Japan for the time being; concentrate on dealing Hitler a death blow in Europe; and then JOINTLY invade Asia with the U. S., with the latter at least partly exhausted.

A victory of the United Nations would find a mammoth battle at the peace table. America would insist on such formulæ as would emasculate the British Empire even though they might formally restore her territories. In such a world, Singapore would play an unimportant role. It can be circumvented first of all by a proposed canal across Siam—something which Britain effectively checked when Japan tried it years ago. In addition, airplane transportation and shipping, which will be a thousand times more important after the war, would likewise modify the importance of Singapore.

AXIS STRATEGY

Thus the Anglo-American conflict continues unabated, but in different form. Meanwhile, the danger to both powers of losing the war is very real at the moment. Japan will now intensify her efforts to:

1—Smash the Burma Road and open the door to the rear of China and the North of India at the same time.

2—Gain control of the Indian Ocean and thus almost completely stifle allied shipping from the Atlantic, to supplement her present control of shipping in the Pacific. In this connection, Japan will undoubtedly increase pressure on France for the island of Madagascar off the African coast (Germany may possibly do the job), in order to control both ends of the Indian Ocean.

At the same time, Germany may be expected to make a sharp stab in the Near East, possibly through Turkey. Such a movement, if successful, would serve three purposes: it would

1—Create a pincer around the present stalemate in Russia, threatening the Soviet Union in the rear;

Churchill and Pearl Harbor

The United States went to war because the Japanese Imperialists attacked one of its colonies, in Pearl Harbor, on December 8th. That's how the fairy tale goes.

But here is the truth, and it comes from the mouth of no other than Winston Churchill:

"On the other hand the probability since the Atlantic conference (4 months before Pearl Harbor!!) at which I discussed these matters with Pres. Roosevelt... that the United States, EVEN IF NOT ATTACKED HERSELF would come into the war in the Far East and thus make the final victory assured, allayed some of these anxieties, and that expectation has not been falsified by events."

So — the cat is out of the bag. Roosevelt promised Churchill in August that the United States would soon declare war and invade the Far East. Japanese Imperialism merely beat it to the punch.

Jan. 30, 1942.

2—Establish a land-sea contact with the Japanese; this is vital today with Japan in control of great stores of tin, rubber and the oil that will be taken from the Dutch East Indies;

3—Give the Germans direct immediate access to the riches of Persian oil.

Of course, these variants are contingent on many other factors: Soviet resistance, the rate of American production, Japanese-Russian relationships, etc. If America is cut off the southern part of the Asiatic mainland, her only remaining base of operation would be Siberia. Thus if Russia can hold out on the European front, she can exact great concessions from America in supplies.

IMPERIALISTS PROPOSE, MASSES DISPOSE

The allies have been given an enormous defeat. But the military defeat was prepared by the economic, social and political decay of their imperialist rule. The outcome of the war will be decided not by the exploiters whose actions now dominate the world scene, but by the further development of the action of the masses. In England, cabinet changes are made to thwart the growth of defeatist sentiment resulting from the Asiatic defeats. Today the clash of the masters has produced the first rumbles of the storm among the slaves below. Tomorrow, the storm of colonial rebellion will break out in full fury, merging the colonial revolutions of Asia and other "submerged continents" with the proletarian revolutions in Europe and America. As part of this, in Asia will arise, on the ruins of the British Empire, not an Empire of the Axis, or Wall Street, but a — Far East Union of Socialist Council Republics.

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If the "democratic" imperialists can't win the support of their colonial slaves against the Axis imperialists "over there," how can they expect the wage-slaves to expend their last drop of energy for production over here?