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After a delay of three months, W.I.N. appears again, but in a new format. The fact that we have had to produce it in duplicated form will be a great disappointment to our readers as it is to us. It is a change which could not be avoided! Our income has simply proved hopelessly inadequate to meet the rising costs of production.

A working class organisation such as ours is entirely dependent upon the financial aid of those who support our ideas. The fact is that W.I.N. has been accumulating a debt over a long period and now we have reached a stage where we must call a halt.

It is vital for the working class that the theoretical ideas of revolutionary communism find expression in the British movement. We are sure that the continued appearance of W.I.N., even though duplicated, will be welcomed by Marxist students. Please send a donation to ensure the regular appearance.

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THE NATIONALISATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRY

by B.Hunter.

The major difference between the Third Labour Government and the previous two, undoubtedly lies in the degree to which it carried out its own programme. Immedia tely on their assumption of office, the previous reformist Governments faced sharp exposures. The gap between their programme and the possibilities of realising it, as well as the total inadequacy of that programme were almost immediately made evident. It is undeniable that, based on the experience of these previous Labour Governments, there was a tendency in our movement to believe that the course of the Third Labour Government would be similar, and a brief period of office would suffice for the contradictions of reformism to be openly manifested. The possibility of the Labour Government carrying out the nationalisation of an important sector of the economy was not explained by us insofar as we expected the conflict between programme and reality would develop quickly.

In the past, when the question was discussed, it was assumed that the reformists would gain their absolute majority in the midst of sharp struggles between the classes. From that assumption flowed the conclusion that the contradictions of a reformist government would be immediately manifested. Should it attempt to put forward a programme of nationalisation of the most important branches of industry, Trotsky stated in "WHITHER BRITAIN", the bourgeoisie would "paralyse its strength, frighten it, introduce dissention in its Parliamentary majority, in short bring about a financial panic, interruptions in food supply, lockouts, terrorise the upper ranks of the workers organisations and cripple the proletariat."

Today, the Labour Government nationalises industries which form the basis of capitalist economy, and it is undeniable that there has so far been no fundamental opposition from the bourgeoisie. However, the advent of the present Labour Government took place in a different situation to the previous two, particularly insofar as the economic conjuncture is concerned. The advent of the Labour Government itself dialectically affected the economic situation, aiding British capitalism by its control of the workers to exploit the post-war market.

Today, favourable conditions are present for the realisation of a large measure of the declared programme of the Labour leaders.

THE STATIFICATION OF CAPITALISM

It is necessary to establish, forst of all, that the process of nationalisation, of the growth of state intervention in the economy is not, in itself, in opposition to the general development of capitalism, but in line with it.

Marx pointed to the developments at work in capitalism towards the concentration and the centralisation of capital. As an important result of these developments, the increase in the tempo of capital accumulation, and the tremendous development of the productive forces; the competition for markets becomes increasingly fierce. The intense sharpening of international competition during this period of monopoly capitalism expands the importance

of tariffs, subsidies, diplomatic and military pressure as part of the state aid to capitalism. With the tremendous centralisation of capital necessary for modern productive processes, the importa nce of the state as guarantor and supplier of capital enormously increases.

During the 1914-18 war, Bukharin pointed out that the development of capitalism had reached a stage where:

> "Finance capital seizes the entire country in an iron grip. 'National economy' turns into one gigantic combined trust whose partners are the financial groups and the state...
>
> Competition is reduced to a minimum within the boundaries of 'national economies', only to flare up in colossal proportions such as would not have been possible in any of the preceding epochs... competition is being almost entirely shifted to foreign countries; obviously the organs of struggle that is to be waged abroad, primarily state power, must therefore grow tremendously."
>
> (IMPERIALISM AND WORLD ECONOMY)

In the interests of the survival of capitalism, in a world of contracting markets, imperialist wars and revolutions, the state has been forced to play a more decisive role. Since the beginning of the century, the capitalist state has increasingly intervened, striving to make the national capitalism it represents, a more efficient competitor, attempting to aid and regulate, to control sections of the economy for the benefit of the capitalist whole.

The capitalist state arose as an "organ of oppression of one class by another; it creates 'order' which legalises and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collisions between the classes." At the same time, during the ascension of capitalism, it functioned as an arbiter between the various competing capitalists and capitalist groups. However, the decline of capitalism brings the tendency for the state, from being an instrument of capitalism, standing in the main outside the economic process, to become more and more the direct representative of capitalist exploitation. Bukha-rin wrote:

> "It is true that the state power always reflected the interests of the 'upper strata', but inasmuch as the top layer itself was a more or less amorphous mass, the organised state apparatus fa ced an unorganised class (or classes) whose interests it embodied. Matters are totally different now. The state apparatus not only embodies the interests of the ruling class in general, but also their collectively expressed will. It faces no more atomised members of the ruling class but their organ-isations. Thus the Government is de facto transformed into a 'committee' elected by the representatives of entrepreneurs organisations and it becomes the highest guiding force of the state capitalist trust."

Under nationa lisation by the capitalist state, the process takes a step forward even from the situation outlined above where the state apparatus faces the organisations of the ruling class. The entrepreneurs and their organisations no longer face the state but fuse with it.

Nationalisation is simply one aspect of this growth in significance of the state. Under nationalisation - forced by the "pressure of the productive forces... increasingly compelling the recognition of their social character, which forces the capitalist class itself more and more to treat them as social productive forces", - the process is pushed to the extreme. The utmost limit of expression of the social nature of the productive forces is reached under capitalism. Actions of the state in subsidising industries or agriculture, aiding rationalisations and amalgamations and other interventions, have been increasingly adopted by the capitalist state in the past. There is no fundamental difference between these measures and the measures of nationalisation. All are dictated by the attempts of capitalism to abrogate the laws of the market. The state seeks to iron out the contradictions of a market economy. Particularly with the tremendous growth of military expenditure in this imperialist epoch, there grows the role of the government as the supplier of raw materials and money capital for industry, and the buyer of its products. Between these processes and the process of the state directly taking over the running of industry, is a very thin dividing line.

THE PARTICULAR SITUATION OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM

The decline of British imperialism sharpens the process of statification. That decline was manifested in the transformation of Great Britain from the "Workshop of the world" into a parasitic rentier state. That transformation was accompanied by a decline of industrial enterprises, including the coal mines, - a decline in the basic exports - coal, iron and steel, textiles, a process sharpened by increasing industrialisation of former markets and the outdated methods of production owing to the lack of big investment due to the higher rate of profit to be accrued abroad. With the tremendous loss of investments and the growth of indebtedness during the war, British capitalism is faced with the task of reasserting its industrial supremacy. It is faced with the task of utilising the resources of the "whole nation" to counteract the symptoms of its decline and ensure its preservation as a competitor on the world market.

In the export drive there has been a significant shift from coal, iron and steel. It is finished products - machinery, vehicles, including locomotives, ships and aircraft which are dominant, British capitalism planning an increase in these products 150% over pre-war. The section of the capitalist class interested in these industries, sees state aid as a means of cheapening the raw material of its products - coal, iron, and steel.

The "ECONOMIST" of March 9th, 1946, poses the question for British capitalism:

> "Since the export of these primary industrial products is incapable of much expansion, the increase will have mainly to come from the more socialised and more highly finished industrial products. This policy commends itself on other grounds; for instance, it encourages those industries with the highest output per worker, and thus makes full use of Britain's greatest potential industrial asset - a highly skilled labour force. But it will only be successful if the cost of the preliminary stages of manufacture can be kept down. If both coal and steel are dear, it is next to impossible to produce cheap machinery and cheap automobiles."

The more far-sighted sections of the capitalist class, particularly in the motor and chemical industry have themselves campaigned for the nationalisation of the coal industry, which in their view is necessary to keep down the costs of the preliminary stages of manufacture. During the upswing of capitalism, the nationalised measures of the various capitalist states were confined in the main, to the means of communication. The dominant sector of the economy remained privately owned. Today, on the contrary, the tendency for the state relationships to become dominant, finds its expression in the nationalised measures of the Labour Government, which are directed at the basic industries. The modernisation necessary for the basic materials can only be carried out by the state. The tremendous capital necessary can only be supplied either by outright nationalisation, or by government participation in schemes of monopolisation. Strauss pointed out that the modernisation of the railways is only possible when the state supplies the capital. The nationalisation of transport, electricity, cable and wireless cut production costs and gives to the state a greater possibility of directly running the economy in the interests of competitive struggle. The significance of the nationa lisation measures in these spheres lies in the fact that with the decline of capitalism, the bourgeoisie have lost confidence in the possibilities of individual or even group exploitation of the industries which are the foundation of capitalist economy.

In general, the most powerful sections of the capitalist class have long ago recognised that the days of laissez faire, of free competition, have passed, and that only with the aid of the state, can their system survive. During, and since the economic crisis of 1929, a continuous discussion has raged among the bourgeois economists, industria lists and bankers on the possibilities and methods of a "controlled" and "planned" capitalism. It was the world crisis which gave a tremendous impetus to the role of the state and the bourgeoisie rushed, panic-stricken, for its aid. How far they had progressed from the ideas of laissez faire capitalism, under pressure of the blows at their system, was shown when Sir Josiah Stamp, Chairman of the Board, and Director of L.M.S., as well as Director of the Bank of England, said:

> "State control of industry is imperative... Nothing but a planned regimentation of trade as in Russia will get us out of our dilemna.."
>
> ("DAILY HERALD", 11.9.34)

That the programme of this Labour Government is more "radical" than the last, that it has gone further in the implementation of it, is not the result of a more revolutionary spirit a mong the Labour leaders. The leadership of the Labour Party are reformists, fundamentally no different from those which led to the debacle of 1932. Their programme, however, is on line with the development of capitalism, and the blows of the last two decades have forced large sections of the capitalist class to see the necessity of a greater statification. The more "radical" programme is a reflection of that. Today, even Eden, as leader of the Tory Party, can accept the "inevitability of the state pla ying an increasing part in our economic life."

However, despite the fact that nationalisation is theoretically in line with the development of capitalism; despite the fact that sections of the capitalist industrialists and economists may foresee its necessity, a Tory

government, while it may have nationalised the coal mines, could not have overcome the individualistic tendencies of capitalism sufficiently to carry the process so far as the Labour Government.

It can be said that the Labour Government, in carrying out its programme, is acting objectively as the most conscious section of the ruling class. In the past it was the blows from the economic and financial crisis which forced the measures of statification empirically upon the capitalist class, overcoming their individualistic tendencies. Today, these measures are the result of a conscious recognition of the general crisis of British imperialism, although the sharpest manifestations of that crisis are not immediately felt. It is this recognition which would have led even a Tory Government to attempt to utilise the state to eliminate the internal contradictions of capitalism in the interests of the struggle on the world market. However, two factors make the process relatively deeper under a Labour Government. Firstly, the Labour Government is under pressure of the masses, whose anti-capitalist sentiments are canalised into support for its nationalisation measures. Secondly, the Labour Government has a greater independence from the speculatory, small capitalist, rentier elements, who form part of the support for the Tory party and oppose nationalisation and state control.

THE NATURE OF CAPITALIST OPPOSITION

Having stated that the programme of the Labour Government is in fundamental agreement with the development of British capitalism, the question is automatically posed as to why sections of the capitalist class express opposition to this programme. It is necessary forst of all to understand that this opposition, which hardly passes beyond the parliamentary plane, is not at all of a character that real revolutionary measures, striking at the very existence of capitalism, would arouse. Such measures would result, not only in opposition speeches, articles in the reactionary press, and isolated attempts at sabotage. It would take the form of a concerted attack by the whole capitalist class, expressed in a unified attempt at economic and financial sabotage and the preparation for military struggle. It is evident that much of the opposition, particularly that expressed by Tory party spokesmen, is of a character, born of the necessity for them to maintain the morale of their supporters by the parliamentary and electoral struggle. Many of the utterances of the Tory leaders are of an obviously demagogic character, as in the case of Churchill's speech at the Tory Party Conference, designed to play on the sentiments of the smaller capitalists and sections of the petty bourgeoisie. However, all the opposition is not of this propaganda nature. In any attempt at planning forced on capitalism, all sections of the capitalist class are not benefitting equally. The smaller capitalist struggles against state intervention as an extension of monopolisation.

The general reformist programme is one of saving British capitalism by nationalisation measures, lowering interest rates, controlling speculation and investment, and other measures meant to force modernisation and iron out the "excesses" of capitalism. This general programme cuts accross the interests of the parasitic rentiers looking for a high return to their investments and the interests of the speculatory groups. At the same time, the compensated sections of the capitalists struggle to gain the most generous terms. Nationalisation, while it means that the state guarantees their income and takes over the risks of their industries, also removes the

possibilities that by monopolistic practices, they can receive above the average rate of profit at the expense of other sections of the bourgeoisie. While the leading strata are integrated into the boards controlling the nationalised industries, individual capitalists, reduced to mere rentiers, lose economic and political weight.

There is no doubt that even the most powerful sections of the capitalist class see, that although the Labour Government is an invaluable aid in re-equiping their economy, in utilising the post-war market and preventing a repetition of the stormy period following the 1914-18 war; it has at the same time serious weaknesses for them. The Labour Government has its base in the working class. At a certain stage, this, which represents for the capitalists the strength of the Labour Government, can be its weakness. The workers give a revolutionary interpretation to the state capitalist measures and exert pressure on their leaders to take steps against the capitalist class which in no wise fit in with the plans of either the capitalists or their reformist lackeys. This very basis, which enables the Labour Government to dampen the class struggle, can be a source of weakness for the capitalists when they find it necessary to attack the workers' standards. The Government utilises the trade union bureaucrats, giving them minor positions in the nationalised industries. Of course, there is no semblance here of workers' control. The bureaucrats see their task as being in accordance with the "new role and responsibilities" of the Trade Unions under a "Socia list" government, as outlined by Dukes at the 1946 TUC. However, in the future, (since despite the efforts of the Labour leadership, the struggle will develop), even the minor participation of the bureaucrats can be irksome to the capitalists, as the pressure of the workers makes itself felt among them.

The Labour Government is based on the working class but governs in a capitalist manner. The capitalist class must inevitably struggle against the process of statification going too far under such a government of contradiction.

Under statification, the bourgeoisie finds a stable government all the more necessary. The former owners of the nationalised property become shareholders in "Great Britain, Ltd". The international links of the monopoly groups become of secondary importance as the whole of national economy tends to become one vast company with the state as administrative and managing apparatus.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STATE

Apologists for the Labour Government argue that although its measures are correctly defined as state capitalist, nevertheless, they represent great strides, or even a half-way house towards socialism. The reformists see state intervention as a progressive factor in itself, no matter what the relationship of political and economic factors, no matter what kind of state, whether worker or capitalist , participates in this process. For them the growth in significance of the state is a progressive process, which is going steadily forward. Whatever government is in power, they see their task as being simplysimply to hasten this process.

It is necessary for us to point out in this connection, the supreme importance of the Marxist theory of the state. For the working class the question of what kind of state carries out the nationalisation measures is all important, far more important than the question of compensation, or the degree to which the measures embrace the whole economy. Marxists have never approached the question of buying off the bourgeoisie as a principled one, but from the point of view that, with the decline of capitalism, with the tremendous growth of the state apparatus for the protection of bourgeois property, such a development was unlikely. The Communist Manifesto declares:

> "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state..."

But the questions of which industries to nationalise, whether or not to pay compensation, can only be discussed from the standpoint of the worker, when he has instituted his own state power. The Communist Manifesto states that

> "the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class.."

For us, the important characteristic of the Labour Government's measures is that they take place without smashing the state forms of the bourgeoisie. They take place under the domination of the capitalist state, and not the domination of the state forms of the proletariat organised as the ruling class. The main features of this development remain , as discussed by Engels:

> "And the modern state is only the organisation with which bourgeois society provides itself in order to maintain the general external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against encroachments either by the workers or by individual capitalists. The modern state, whatever its form is an essentially capitalist machine, it is the state of the capitalists the ideal collective body of all capitalists. The more productive forces it takes over the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage earners, proletarians. The capitalist relation is not abolished, it is rather pushed to an extreme."

The taking over of the productive forces by the state represents an economic advance only in the sense that their amalgamation and unification makes easier the building of socialism by the workers' state which replaces the state of the capitalists. In this sense, Lenin pointed out in 1918 that Germany, the "last word in modern large-scale technique and planned organisation" was the embodiment of the "most striking material realisation of the economic, the productive, the social-economic conditions for socialism."

The state capitalist measures of the reformist Government in Britain, lay these economic, productive and social-economic conditions for socialism. But as in Germany, where the material base for socialism was subordinated to Junker-bourgeois imperialism, so in Britain, without the smashing of the capitalist state, it is subordinated to British bourgeois imperialism.

With the progress of statification, the means of production remain as before, under the control of the capitalist class. Production carries on as before, dictated not by the needs of the workers, but by the world market.

HOW FAR CAN THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT NATIONALISE?

It is not possible to say definitely how far the Labour Government will go in its nationalisation programme. It has already retreated to a certain degree in the case of Iron and Steel. But the importance of state measures in this industry to cheapen the production costs of the major commodities of the export drive; the tremendous capital necessary for modernisation; and the opposition of the other sections of the capitalist class to "one of the tightest and most restrictive monopolies this country has ever known" (ECONOMIST, October 5, 1940) - the pressure of the workers -- all these factors will most likely force nationalisation forward.

With the nationalisation of Iron and Steel and the further measures projected, the state will hold 20% of the economy directly in its grasp. It is extremely doubtful whether the process of nationalisation will pass on further than this. Morrison, carried away by the ease with which the Labour Government so far carried out its nationalisation measures, is already reported as saying that in its next term of office will begin the nationalisation of the machine tool industry. It is certain that the bourgeoisie will demand a consolidation of the measures already taken, and will oppose further nationalisation. At this period the La-bour leaders will be finding greater difficulty in holding down the workers, and the capitalists will feel the need of a firmer instrument before the further progress of statifica-tion.

The development of the future crisis of over-production, the extremely sharpened competition, the financial and economic collapse, will completely disrupt the nationalisation programme. The development of the crisis would undoubtedly lead to the bourgeoisie demanding greater aid from the state in the form of subsidies, tarrifs, rationalisation, compulsory cartelisation, etc, but will disrupt completely the long term perspective necessary for further measures of nationalisation. The opposition of the capitalists to any further nationalisations will be tremendously strengthened. The onset of the crisis will shake the confidence of the reformists in their own programme. The deepening class struggle will result in a polarisation towards left and right in the country as a whole and its reflection in the Labour Party will drive the right wing towards the capitalist class, while the left wing, under the pressure of the workers, will make radical demands for a solution of the crisis.

Such a fluid situation must evidently be one of a succession of parliamentary crises, its sharp shifts and changes precluding the possibility of carrying out nationalised measures dependent on a degree of relative stability.

WORKERS CONTROL AND WORKERS' MANAGEMENT

The mass of the workers supporting the Laboour Party believe that the nationalisation measures are steps toward Socialism. These workers will be convinced only on the basis of future experience that the nationalisation measures represent but the substitution of collective for individual capitalist exploitation.

The workers in the nationalised industries become employees of the super-monopoly of British capitalism. The process of monopoly and statification means that, in fighting for even the smallest economic demand, the worker finds himself unable to utilise any temporary competitive antagonisms between individual capitalisms. He now faces the organised might of the whole capitalist class. State capitalism creates the basis for a more intensive exploitation of the workers as the competitive struggle sharpens.

In this respect, the task of differentiating between capitalist nationalisation measures in the interest of the working class, is an important part of our propaganda work. This differentiation can be summed up in the generalised demand for the operation of the nationalised industries under workers' control.

In the industries under the control of individual capitalists the struggle in a pre-revolutionary period will develop in such a way that with the growing self confidence of the workers, they will take measures of control. In a brief period before it reaches its climax in the overthrow of capitalist relationships, the struggle will push the Workers' Committees towards circumscribing the capitalists running of industry, taking measures to inspect the books, to control hiring and firing, to control profits, and like actions, thus giving the workers the experience and preparation necessary for the taking of industry completely into their hands.

Workers' control means, in the finah analysis, "the penetration of the workers' eye into all open and concealed springs of capitalist economy" and can, as we know, develop in various ways. To give an example, as Trotsky pointed out, "the campaign for workers' control can develop, depending upon the circumstances, not from the angle of production but from that of consumption." And in its development, workers' control begins with the individual workshop. "The organ of control is the factory committee. The factory organs of control join together with each other, according to the economic ties of the industries between themselves. On this stage there is no general economic plan as yet. The practice of economic control only prepares the elements of this plan."

But in the nationalised industries the struggle immediately takes on a higher character. While in the unit of production, the rank and file committees will take measures of control, the question of overall national planning is raised immediately before the working class. Not only is the question posed of the workers' committees <u>controlling</u> and <u>supervising</u> the running of individual units of production, but of the complete direction of production. The question is posed of replacing the

nationalisation boards which are expressions of capitalist ownership, by organs of workers' management which represent the directing and planning organs of the future workers' state. Workers' management, which proceeds from above, is inseparable from state power and the general economic plan. Whilst the organs of control are these factory committees, the organs of management are centralised soviets.

Nationalisation brings the workers directly up against the problem of state power. The smallest economic struggles pose, to one degree or another, the question of who is to own and manage industry. This is particularly so when the Government which is nationalising is a Labour Government. As the struggle develops in the next period, particularly in the nationalised industries, bringing the working class into head-on collision with the capitalist state and its organs controlling the nationalised industries, they will become more and more aware of the need to institute their own form of state power and take over the direction of industry themselves. On the basis of their experiences, and with a correct policy on the part of the revolutionary party, the workers will be won away from their illusions in the reformist government. The smashing of the capitalist state power and its replacement by a workers' state in which the working class takes over the direction of industry on the basis of an all-embracing workers' control, is our answer.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

A CAPITALIST BUDGET

Dalton's Budget was received with no great alarm by the City or the capitalist press. Quite the contrary! It was recognised as a Budget which, in general lines, fulfilled the needs of British capitalism. The Stock Exchange took it in its stride; even tobacco shares were only slightly shaken.

The press comment was highly favourable, even agreeably surprised. The most significant statement was that of the "Times" which declared on 18th April:

> "His Budget is indeed a token of the salutary increase of realism in the Government's policy since the fuel crisis, and of the adjustment which is now being made to meet the immediate practical difficulties which can now be clearly seen."

Such comment as the "salutary increase of realism" can only mean that this authoritative organ of British capitalism is recognising that the recent capitalist attacks on the Labour Government as being "pre-occupied with the carrying out of doctrinaire theories" have had some effect and shaken the confidence of the Labour leaders in their own reformist ideas.

Indeed, the Budget contained nothing of the financial theories expounded by Labourism in the past. Even the old plank of the reformist programme - the capital levy - was nowhere in evidence. It is many years since the Labour leaders proposed a capital levy on a graduated scale on all individuals owning capital worth more than £5,000. In 1935, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was writing in "Practical Socialism for Britain:"

> "It is my personal opinion, that once we have made good progress with socialisation, the policy of the capital levy should be brought to the front again, to reduce both the deadweight debt and that a ttached to socialised enterprises."

However, the Labour Government has evidently no intention of following through even the cla ssic. reformist theories to strike at the deadweight national debt by a capital levy on the financial trusts, who are exacting their tribute on the tremendous war expenditure.

The Budget was, in every sense, a capitalist budget. To save dollars, it was aimed not at the imperia list military commitments uphold by the Labour Government, but at the working class by increasing the Tobacco Tax. It is true that while in the final balance, the burden on the workers was increased, certain concessions were made, such as the increase in earned income tax allowance, and the repayment of post-war credits. It was not a "Snowden" Budget imposing drastic sacrifices on the workers by economy cuts. The time is not ripe for that yet. The national finances of British capita-lism are not yet in the dire straights of 1931. However, the Budget of 1947 comes well within the principles of capitalist economics.

THE PROFITS TAX AND THE TASK OF BRITISH CAPITALISM

There is an illusion spread by reformists that the increase to 12½% tax on distributed profits, and 10% on bonus shares, are blows at capitalism. But in fact, these measures do not disturb capitalist relationships one iota. It is not the urge for individual consumption of the investor which is the motive force of capitalist production, but the accumulation of capital. The tax on distributed profits aids that accumulation. That part of pfofit which is placed to reserve, which is utilised to expand production, escapes the increased tax. The Labour Government is therefore, merely aiding the accumulation of ca pital which remains, as before, means of production, separated from the worker and utilised for his exploitation.

The major task facing British capitalism is the recapitalisation of industry. To compete in the coming fierce struggle for markets, its industry must be modernised and expanded, its productivity raised. It is precisely this task which determines the Labour Government's financial programme. Its policy of low interest rates, the tax on distributed profits, its control of capital issues are capitalist measures devised, in the main, to stimulate the development of industry and to guide capital into channels most useful to ensure the survival of British ca pitalism in the struggle for the world market. The capitalist class have no fundamental opposition to this programme, even though the rentier

section living solely from its income from investments, may grumble at the prevailing low interest rates. However, as the "Daily Telegraph" financial correspondent declared :

> "Industrialists will fully endorse Mr. Dalton's aim of preventing excessive amounts of company profits from being distributed as dividends."

So far as the 10% tax on bonus share issues announced by Dalton, was concerned, none of the financial commentators were worried. They had expected far worse. 10% is a negligible rake-off to hand the Government for the profitable transactions and financial manipulations connected with the issue of bonus shares, particularly as Dalton made it clear that it would be easier to gain permission for the issue of such shares in the future.

THE DEPRESSION AND DALTON

In the concluding paragraphs of his Budget speech, Dalton declared:

> "In another year, particularly if a trade depression starts somewhere else in the world, deflation rather than inflation might be our pressing danger. In that case I should not hesitate to ask Parliament and the country to approve a budget deficit."

Such a period of trade depression, of falling prices, of increased competition on the world market, will indeed be a testing time for the Labour Government. It will be a period when the British capitalist class will make every effort to cut their costs of production and maintain their trade in face of falling prices, by a drive against the wages of the workers. It will be a period when, to quote Dalton, "demands would go forth for cuts in wages and social services" and for what he called "indiscriminate and shortsighted economy campaigns of every sort."

Today Dalton glibly talks about budgeting for a deficit in the future, while dismissing any "economy" campaign as "shortsighted." However, it takes no great courage to fight a shadow. The capitalist class are launching no great "economy campaign" at present. The future will be a different matter. In a period of economic crisis when the capitalists drive against wages to lower the costs of production, and more and more sharply demand state subsidies and grants to aid their industries against their competitors; then the brave words of Dalton against economy cuts will be forgotten. To maintain and extend aid to the capitalists in the "interest of the survival of the nation", cuts will be made into the social services and conditions of the working class.

MOSCOW CONFERENCE AND THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

One of the documents already forgotten, which the last war produced, is the Atlantic Charter. Subscribed to by Stalin, along with Churchill and Roosevelt, the Atlantic Charter set forth the alleged war aims of the Allies in language overflowing with high sounding ideals and sentiments. To confound those who might have possibly believed that the war was being fought for anything but pure democracy and freedom, the Charter

declared in its first two clauses:-

"Their countries seek no aggrandisement, territorial or other."

"They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned."

There followed:

They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live."

To see the hypocrisy with which the Allies covered up their real war aims, it is only necessary to review these clauses of the Atlantic Charter in the light of their conferences and decisions since the end of the war. It was symbolical that the sonorous phrases of the Charter for months adorned the walls of London underground stations. Once the war was over, deep underground was the best place for the sentiments expressed in the Charter as far as the ruling class was concerned.

Since their victory, the wranglings of the Allies over the division of the world have proceeded interminably, without a thought for the "freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned." The latest of those wrangles has just ended. From the beginning of March until the end of April, the Council of Foreign Ministers met in Moscow. The reports of the discussions at Moscow made dull and uninteresting reading, as Marshall, Molotov and Bevin continued their endless disputations, their gangster manoeuvering over the heads of the peoples of the world.

THE VICTORS PARCEL GERMANY

The Big Three, who sought no territorial aggrandisement or changes which were not in accord with "the expressed wishes of the peoples concerned", had already agreed to the parcelling out of Germany and the forcible transfer of millions of German people. At Potsdam, the Allies cynically envisaged tearing from Germany in the East, one fifth of ger area and one quarter of her food supplies. There, they agreed to population transfers, which, if carried out, according to M.Bidault, would leave the population of a truncated Germany with a density of 195 persons to the square kilometre, compared with the French figure of 75, and the Polish of 62.

At Moscow, Molotov demanded reparations from shattered German economy to the extent of ten thousand million dollars of goods from current production. Having annexed Lvov and Vilna from Poland, the Stalinist bureaucracy supported as "compensation", the Polish claim for the retention of not only Upper Silesia and Southern East Prussia, but all territory east of the Oder-Neisse line. Molotov supported Tito's claim for annexations from Austrian territory and 150 million dollars in reparations. All, of course, to be taken without one thought for the wishes and the fate of the populations concerned.

In their opposition to the demands of the Stalinist Government, the attitude of Bevin and Marshall was determined not one whit by any desire to aid the peoples of Europe to determine their own form of governments and rebuild their shattered economies. Their concern was to prevent

any strengthening of the military and economic position of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its satellite governments in Europe. Into the bargaining at Moscow, the interests of the masses entered not at all. The Stalinists controlling the major former source of Germany's food, used that control as a bargaining counter in an attempt to force the utmost concessions from the imperialists. The imperialists opposed reparations, afraid that the collossal burden which would be imposed on the masses would lead to a growth of revolutionary activity. Further, the complete denuding of German industry would undercut their plans to use Germany in the future struggle against the Soviet Union.

On this question of reparations, the Stalinist bureaucracy displayed blatantly that in its policy towards the German working class, there is not one grain of Marxist internationalism. At a press conference on April 12th, Vishinsky declared that the success of Russia's plan for the reconstruction of their devastated areas within six or seven years, was dependent on their receiving reparations from current German production. To envisage the rebuilding of Russian economy on the basis of a pauperised and super-exploited German proletariat, toiling to provide reparations from a shattered and suppressed economy, is the antithesis of Communism.

UNITED NATIONS TRADE CONFERENCE - CAPITALISM AND TRADE BARRIERS

It was the development of capitalism which created an all-embracing world trade. Capitalism developed the interdependence of the world; it developed nations industrially and increased their dependence on raw materials brought from beyond their frontiers. In turn, the raw material producing and agricultural nations became dependent on the more industrialised areas.

By utilising the resources of the globe, capitalism made possible a tremendous expansion in the means of production. However, production for profit prevents this tremendous expansion from meeting the needs of the world's population. Capitalist world trade does not operate on the basis of satisfying the needs of the peoples, but has only one aim: the realisation for the capitalist class of the surplus value in their commodities.

While capitalism created an all-embracing world trade, in the present century - the period of its decline - it has increasingly hemmed in that trade and place obstacles in the way of its development. Each capitalist nation, while seeking to maintain and increase its own trade, has attempted more and more - by tariffs, preferences, barter agreements, restrictions and financial manipulations - to cut down the trade of its competitors.

The world slump of 1929 accelerated the process of strangling world trade, as competition intensified, and each capitalist nation erected formidible barriers against the goods of its competitors and attempted to cut accross its dependency on the world division of labour by measures of self-sufficiency. The American Government in 1930 imposed heavy tariff increases which evoked protests from twenty nine governments. British capitalism countered with general protection and the Ottawa Agreement, which was an attempt to erect a barrier around the Empire. France, Germany, and the other capitalist nations raised restrictions. The years following saw the barriers to world trade increase as the capitalists, by the aid of their state, attempted to ensure their survival in the

struggle for markets.

Today, at Geneva, delegates from seventeen capitalist governments are meeting to discuss the freeing of world trade from these "strangling barriers and hindrances." However, despite the oratory at this Conference, its task will remain unfulfilled. The capitalist nations represented at this gathering have an uneven economic development, an unequal economic strength and productivity, and a varying degree of dependence on raw materials produced outside their boundaries. The sum total of these features bequeathed them by history cannot be overcome under capitalism, which by its very nature cannot approach the problem from the point of view of the development of international trade. Each government looks at the problem from the point of view of how best to adapt its economy to defeat its competitors.

Today, the capitalist nations have still a ready market for their commodities. Their concern is, in the main, not with overproduction, but with shortages and under-production. However, with the sure knowledge that over-production must unfailingly develop and, with it, an increasingly fierce competition for markets, they are not prepared to lightheartedly fling overboard all the devices whereby they can bolster up their trade against that of their competitors. The chief Australian delegate declared on April 10th, that "...the moment was propitious for agreement because demand was now at a high level." But he was also careful to add: "Both those seeking tariff reductions from others, and those defending their own tariffs would be less insistent if they could be confident that the present high demand would persist."

THE COMING DEPRESSION AND INCREASED COMPETITION

It is fear of the future increased struggle for markets which determined the approach of the capitalist representatives at this conference. That fear forms an effective barrier to the elimination of the "restrictions and hindrances." That fear is behind the demand of the representatives of the Australian and Indian Governments that they be allowed to protect their new and rising industries by imposing hindrances on foreign competitors, whose commodities would undersell the products of the home capitalists. This fear determines the attitude of all the participants. As the "Times" of April 10th declared, in discussing this second session of the United Nations Conference on World Trade: "Industrial countries ...such as Britain and to a lesser degree, France, were disposed to fear the impact of American competition in export markets in the event of a depression."

British capitalism must already seek to protect itself from the future competition of America. The removal of all trade hindrances, the admittance of America into all markets on the basis of equality, would mean that cheap American products would drive British capitalism out completely. As against American productivity, the prime bargaining weapon of British capitalism, is the vast market it represents. By preferences, bilateral trade agreements, it will seek to maintain its exports to capitalist nations dependent on the British market for selling their commodities. Despite the pressure of American capitalism, despite the high sounding statements on the necessity to remove the barriers to a free flow of world trade, British capitalism has refused to loosen imperial preferences - According to the "Daily Telegraph" of April 12th, Sir Stafford Cripps, at

the Trade Conference, "bluntly told the assembled delegates that Commonwealth trade would flow along traditional channels."

THE PREPONDERANCE OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

American imperialism dominates the Conference. The other capitalist nations are uncomfortably aware that any concessions leading towards a freer world trade must of necessity benefit America. With her raw material resources estimated at 40% of the world total, with a vast home market enabling her to utilise mass production methods, with her superior labour productivity, America represents a nightmare competitor in any free market. It is estimated that U.S. production forms over 60% of the world total. The United States is now the world's foremost money-lender, a mantle which Britain has been sadly forced to cast aside. Instead of sterling, the dollar now dominates the currencies of the world.

Further, the United States is a creditor nation of a different type to Britain, which utilised its tribute from overseas investments to pay for an import surplus. Together with its creditor position, America has an export surplus which amounted to 7.2 billion dollars in 1946. The capitalist economists estimate that the surplus will be greater in 1947. Payment for the exports of American capitalism can only be made by imports, by US capitalism itself financing its debtors by means of loans, or by the debtor nations eating into dollar reserves. Loans, while staving off the problem immediately, obviously only add eventually to the tribute which US capitalism can exact from abroad. The main solution which the other capitalist nations demand, is the increase of imports into America by the lowering of American tariffs. Cripps declared to a Press Conference on April 11th: "American readiness to provide a market for the world's goods was the key to the success of the present conference."

However, as with every other capitalist nation, while US capitalism will demand the elimination of restrictions which aid its competitors, at the same time, where possible, it ensures full protection of its own markets. At the present time, according to Mr. William Clayton, the American delegate to the Trade Conference, the United States is in a position to absorb a great deal more than it is receiving today. Even so, US capitalism is not prepared to face the prospect of unlimited imports. Every agreement on the reduction of US tariffs is subject to an "escape clause", which allows the American Government to terminate the concession when it threatens home industry. The "Times" editorial of April 10th, touched on the problemthat American capitalism represents: "There is at present an unrealistic assumption in European countries that the period in which machinery is exported from the United States for their industrial reconstruction will be followed by a period in which the flow of trade will be reversed, with the United States absorbing not only her own machinery output but large European exports of manufactured goods as well."

As over-production develops within its own boundaries, it is inevitable that American capitalism will seek to cut down the imports of its competitors and seek by highly competitive prices and all the methods of modern imperialism, to force up its exports. By its high tariffs it will exclude imports and thus undercut the very means whereby its debtors can repay their loans or pay for American exports.

NO SOLUTION FOR IMPERIALISM

Turn as they may, the capitalist nations cannot escape the contradictions of world trade under imperialism. Because of the preponderance of America, as they declare, world trade is largely a dollar problem. The flow of American capital in the form of loans can form the basis of an expansion of trade as it did in the 1920s. But this can be no permanent solution. The repayment of these loans demands an increase of imports which in itself would be a blow to American capitalist home industry. Their very dependence on American imperialism will force other capitalist nations to cut American exports in order to conserve their dollar expenditure, thus intensifying the war for markets. That war for markets will inevitably force the trade restrictions higher in the future.

Conference after conference between the First and Second Imperialist Wars, seriously and solemnly passed resolutions calling for a reduction in the restrictions on world trade. No doubt, the Conference now taking place at Geneva will not be the last of these gatherings. As before, the economists, bankers, statesmen, and civil servants will form their delegations, produce their memoranda, and add to the tremendous archives of pious resolutions, and mountains of reports written in the pompous and wordy language of capitalist economists. Meanwhile, outside the Conference chamber, the capitalist world will continue laying the basis for a more intensive tariff war, greater barriers and restrictions, and a further suppression of world trade. The world has become too small for capitalist production. Imperialism, of necessity, maintains the standard of life of the millions of the world's workers and peasants far below the level where they can consume the world's products. Of necessity, it must lead to "overproduction" and an intensifying struggle for markets. Temporarily, the various capitalist nations can make agreements, but only temporarily and partially. Only the establishment of world socialism, the elimination of capitalist trade, can create the basis for the free and unrestricted exchange of products and raw materials for the satisfaction of the needs of the world's population.

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THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN RUSSIA -- By Ajit Roy

George Padmore's recent book "HOW RUSSIA TRANSFORMED HER EMPIRE" is concerned with the National Question inside the Soviet Union. The timeliness of a discussion on the subject is self-evident. At a time when all the great imperialist powers are sorely pressed by the resurgent struggle of the colonial peoples whom they had oppressed through the centuries, it might seem at first glance as if the only great power which was not pressed with a colonial problem of its own, was the Soviet Union. Has Russia got a national problem? If the answer is in the negative, then how was this problem, which loomed so large in Czarist politics, done away with? Any discussion on the National Question today must inevitably come up against these questions.

Under the Czar, Russia was a "great prison-house of peoples." Within this prison lived a great mixture of nationalities ranging from the comparatively advanced European peoples to the nomadic tribes of the Siberian hinterland; all together tied within one state by the chains of Czarist autocracy. With the overthrow of Czarist imperialism, the Bolsheviks had to formulate their own policy on the National Question. Before the revolution, in line with the classical traditions of Marxism, the Bolsheviks had been the most determined champions of the right of complete self determination for subject peoples. They saw in the liberation struggle of oppressed nationalities a powerful ally of the Russian workers for socialism.

After the downfall of the Czarist regime, however, new considerations came to the fore. It was no longer a question of supporting the right of the colonial peoples for freedom against imperialist oppression. Imperialism had been overthrown. The problem now was how to weld a diversity of races at different levels of development, with their differences in culture, into the framework of a single state, taking into account the traditions of Great Russian oppression and the legacy of hatred and separatism which centuries of Czarist oppression had left behind.

The Bolsheviks had never been advocates of small states. Marxism, as Lenin said, "leads to a freer, more fearless and therefore a wider and more universal form of government and unions of government - a phenomenon more advantageous for the masses and more in accord with economic development.". How to reconcile the requirements of a centrally planned economy with the national aspirations of the oppressed nationalities? How to eradicate the legacy of racial prejudices and separatist tendencies? These, then, were the tasks which the Bolsheviks had to face.

Nobody today can dispute the great advances made in the colonial areas of pre-revolutionary Russia in the sphere of economic and cultural relations. With the ending of the power of finance capital which had deliberately retarded the productive forces in the colonial areas, and the nationalisation of the productive resources, the basis was created for a comprehensive economic plan embracing the whole of the Soviet Union. Under the impact of the successive plans, the industrialisation of the backward areas was carried through at a rapid pace. An Asiatic proletariat came into being. In the villages, the collectivisation of agriculture and the introduction

of new methods of farming transformed the old village economy. With industry and collectivisation, came literacy, sanitation, liberation of women, racial tolerance, etc. Science came in to challenge the ancient reign of religion and superstition.

When we contrast these great and progressive achievements of the Soviet Union with the barbarous conditions holding sway in the colonial areas of the imperialist powers, we could say that even if the Russian Revolution had achieved nothing else, it would have fully justified itself by the transformation which it brought about in the economic and social relations in the Asiatic regions.

Having said this, the question remains: Is there a National Question in Russia today under Stalinism?

Only a few months ago, it was reported by the Russian press that the entire populations of the Chechcno-Ingush and the Crimean Republics numbering more than one and a half million men, women and children, had been evicted from their homeland and deported to unnamed parts of Russia. It was alleged that the populations of these two territories had made no effort to resist the traitors who had collaborated with the German invaders. This, of course, was not the first instance when wholesale evictions of ostensibly "autonomous" peoples from their territories had taken place under the Stalin regime. During the war, the entire population of the German Volga Republic had been similarly deported as a "preventative measure of safety." If one were to admit that the allegations of treachery or potential treachery were true, would it not imply that, notwithstanding all the panygerics of Stalinist apologists, the National Question in Russia is far from being solved? If, after all these years under "Soviet democracy", entire communities of national minorities have developed so little regard for the existing regime as to remain indifferent to Nazi aggression or even to express a preference for it, then one must perforce admit that there is something basically wrong with the regime.

From a book entitled "HOW RUSSIA TRANSFORMED HER EMPIRE" one could modestly hope to glean some explanation of these, by no means, ordinary events. But if the author had some explanation, he has certainly not revealed it. To Padmore, the national question in Russia is something that belongs to past history. Today, we have a happy family of nations marching in freedom and equality towards a vista of limitless progress and democracy. If the rate of advance is not as fast as one would desire, if the democracy that exists is "somewhat restricted", the responsibility rests with the capitalist world and its reformist Labour Parties, and not with the Russian leaders. Everything that detracts from this theme is brushed aside. It is no wonder therefore, that with this theme, the author has provided us not with history, but a fairy-tale.

Padmore describes painstakingly the provisions of the Russian Constitutions and its provisions for national and minority rights. But he has failed to carry out the more important task of investigating the actual content of these rights. The realities of life are not infrequently in conflict with constitutional and legal declarations.

To Lenin and the Bolsheviks the key to the solution of the national issues lay not in the formal rights of the constitution and the allowances made in it for national aspirations, but in the proper functioning of the Soviets and the subordination of the state apparatus to control by the popular masses. The conflict between the centralised state and the national aspirations would be reconciled by the increasing subordination of the state to the popular masses organised in the Soviets. Since the elimination of workers' control by the bureaucracy, the Constitution with its vaunted democratic rights for the masses and the minorities, has as little relation with the realities of political relations as the Declaration of Rights of bourgeois constitutions in the capitalist countries.

It is impossible to understand any aspect of Russian life without viewing it against the entire background of the post-revolutionary history of the Soviet Union. It cannot be said that Padmore is entirely ignorant of this history. He was closely associated with the Communist International until he broke with it in the late thirties when that body began to sabotage the colonial liberation movements in order not to hamper the Kremlin's efforts towards the establishment of an Anglo-French-Russian entente. Since then, he has been closely associated with the Independent Labour Party and been a regular contributor to the "New Leader" (now "Socialist Leader"). Nonethe-less, the author goes into ecstasies over "Soviet democracy" in a manner that would do credit to any Pat Sloan or Reg Bishop. It is true, that in one or two places, he refers to the "restrictions of democracy" in Russia, but only the better to explain them away. To him, these "restrictions" (as he calls them) are temporary lapses forced upon the regime by the pressure of world capitalism and the exigencies of the war. He writes:

> "Surrounded by hostile capitalist states ... the Soviet leaders are not altogether to blame for imposing a curtailment of democracy. To a very large extent, this curtailment of democracy was the result of circumstances. Now that the stability of the state has proved itself in course of war, steps will undoubtedly be taken to widen its scope... The signs all point to a progressive increase in democratic rights in the Soviet Union. And the coloured peoples in the Soviet East will share equally with the best of the Soviet Union."

Whatever these "signs" are, the author has not thought fit to reveal them; nor does he tell us concretely what the "restrictions" on democracy amount to in present day Russia. The enslavement of the worker in industry, the reduction of the trade unions into virtual appendages of the state, the liability of entire peoples to be deported by governmental ukase, the denial to the masses of the right to political organisation, the tremendous growth in inequalities in income and privileges, the use of terror and frame-ups as a systematic weapon against political opposition - do these constitute only "restrictions" on democracy, or the dictatorship of a bureaucracy which has completely separated itself from the masses?

Be that as it may, whether you call it bureaucratic dictatorship or prefer the more euphemistic "restricted democracy", you have in this the key to the understanding of the National Question in Russia today. The harmonious and cooperative functioning of a number of races and nationalities which the Bolsheviks envisaged, cannot be secured without the continuous and intimate participation of the masses in all the affairs of administration. The more oppressed the minority in the past, the more backward its culture, the more

it needs to feel the state to be its own. It is not surprising therefore, that t he Stalinist bureaucracy, in its advance to power, met with considerable resistance from the advanced political elements in the old colonial regions. In order to consolidate itself, the burea ucracy was compelled to liquidate the most progressive representatives of the national minorities, viz, the Bolshevik vanguard.

How little Padmore understands the national question in Russia is revealed very clea rly in his complete silence on the numerous Moscow purges in relation to the National Minorities. The weight of the purges was felt with exceptional severity in the National Republics. No less than 30 National Governments were liquidated during the great purge of 1936-38. Vast "Trotskyist-terrorist" plots were discovered in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. "Counter-revolutionary" plots were reported from Tajikistan. A "Trotskyist centre"was discovered in Turkmenistan.

Let us take the case of Armenia in one of the purges:

> "The Central Party organ in the Republic, Khorurtain Hayastan reported in September 1936, wholesale expulsions of counter-revolutionaries. Heads of Government like Leon Vuligegian, Garo Madinian, Hamon Ovanessian, Arshay Gogunze, Roas Vinsberg, Haig Lilalian have fallen under the axe. So has the Secretary of the Pa rty Central Committee, Agosi Kaloian. So has the former Commissar of Education and late director of the Marxist-Leninist Institute in Erivian, Noises Stepanian. So have numerous talented Armenian writers like Trasdamod Simonian, Enzak Ter-Vohanian and Ato Ataian. Officials and workers, in railroad shops, textile and rug mills, tractor stations and repair shops, planning directors -- have been expelled from the Party and arrested by the score."
>
> ("BEHIND THE MOSCOW TRIAL" - Shachtman - Pioneer Press, New York)

It was the same in all the national republics. The purges amounted to a systematic liquidation of all those elements who, by virtue of their past experience might serve to give expression to and lead the opposition of the masses against the totalitarian bureaucracy.

The National question in Russia today is only an aspect of the more fundamental question which faces the Soviet Union as a whole: the continuation of the dictatorship of the bureaucracy, or its replacement by workers' democracy through the Soviets. In the old colonial regions, because of their past history and traditions, bureaucratic misrule revives the feeling of national oppression. National sentiments and oppressions now resurrected are destined to play an increasingly powerful rôle in future Russian politics. They have been strong enough in recent months to call forth denunciatory attacks in "Pravda" against resurgent "bourgeois nationalism."

Some recent post-war amendments to the Russian Constitution deserve notice in this connection. Two of these amendments ostensibly permit the constituent Republics to maintain their own armies and diplomatic representation. Illusory though these concessions are, they provide nevertheless, a measure of the strength of national aspirations in the Soviet Union today. If in the future, the struggle against the bureaucracy develops unevenly in different regions, then the demand for separation and complete independence may once again be developed by individual republics. Under the given conditions,

a struggle on the part of any national minority under the leadership of the proletariat for complete independence would be entirely progressive in its content. Such a struggle in today's Russia would have nothing in common with the separatist movements of the national bourgeoisie in the period of the civil war. The utter impotence of Hitler's agitation for an independent Ukraine shows that the national minorities in Russia today have no desire to exchange the rule of Stalin for imperialist vassalage, whether of the German or Anglo-American type. While opposing the bureaucracy, the Ukrainians or the Armenians have no desire to restore capitalist property relationships, but rather to take under popular control the nationalised property. Such a struggle, however, could only succeed with the active support of the Russian workers as a whole, and as part of the wider struggle of the European proletariat for a socialist Europe.

In discussing the national question in relation to the Ukraine, Trotsky had advanced the idea of an independent Soviet Ukraine, while pointing out that this could be realised by the Ukranian masses only in common struggle with the rest of the Russian workers and with the European workers against the forces of Stalinism and European capitalism.

There are other aspects of Padmore's book which suffer equally from a lack of respect for historical reality. For instance, the author attempts to portray Stalin a s the foremost exponent of the Marxist policy on the National Question. A cursory examination of the history of the Communist International with which Padmore should be familiar, would however, be sufficient to demonstrate the blighting influence of Stalin's intervention in the work of the Comintern as a theoretician on the colonial anti-imperialist movement. It was Stalin who, in complete disregard of the lessons of the Russian Revolution, developed the theory of the "bloc of four classes", which, in the name of "unity", handed over the powerful Chinese Communist movement to the Kuo-Min-Tang leaders during the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27. For the defeat of the revolution and the eventual triumph of Chiang-Kai-Shek, the main responsibility must rest on the sinister role of Stalin as a theoretician. His record as the Commissar of Nationalities was no brighter. Indeed, it was on the national question that his differences with Lenin began to assume the sharpest expression. These differences first came to the fore on the Georgian question which was under the joint supervision of Stalin and Dzerzinsky. Several times the leaders of the Georgian Communist movement, Makharadze and Mdivani had to approach Lenin to curb the bureaucratic excesses of Stalin and his associates. About this time, Lenin wrote a series of notes and an important letter on the National Question which, up to this date, along with his "Testament", have been withheld from publication. In one of these notes to the Central Committee, Lenin wrote:

> "I think that here the hastiness and administrative impulses of Stalin played a fatal role, and also his spitefulness against the notorious 'social-nationalism.' Spitefulness in general plays the worst possible role in politics." Again: "It is, of course, necessary to hold Stalin and Dzerzinsky responsible for all this out-and-out Great-Russian nationalistic campaign."

Those who have taken care to study Lenin's ideas and writings towards the end of his life, his concern w ith the growing bureaucratic tendencies

in the state, would understand that the victory of the Stalinist bureaucracy was not an accident, but is inseparably connected with the bureaucratic excesses and Great Russian nationalism against which Lenin was warning. If Padmore were to devote to Russian history the same painstaking research which he bestows on some of his other studies, he would have to write an entirely new book on the development of national relations in the USSR.

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