

Trotsky Memorial Issue

AUTO MILITANTS PRESERVE
UNION DEMOCRACY

See page 2

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. VI—No. 33

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1942



FIVE (5) CENTS

INDIAN MASSES FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

Mass Actions Spread Despite British Terror

Leon Trotsky Defender of The USSR

By GEORGE COLLINS

The indomitable courage and heroism of the Red Army and of the Soviet workers and peasants in their resistance to the Nazi invaders is the greatest living testimony that only the body of Leon Trotsky was destroyed when Stalin's hired assassin drove a pickax into his skull on August 21, 1940. Trotsky's achievements are imperishable.

The peerless morale of the Red soldiers fighting against overwhelming odds and the great sacrifices stoically endured by the Soviet population at large arise primarily from the fact that they are fighting for the conquests of the October Revolution. The October Revolution gave the Russian masses something to fight for: for the great Russian land seized from an absentee landlord class, for the factories, mines, mills and railroads taken out of the hands of a clique of bankers and industrialists, for the right to determine their own destiny as a free people.

The October Revolution owes its success to the great genius of Lenin and Trotsky, who prepared for it in the long years of Czarist reaction, who organized the forces that could and did take advantage of the war crisis, established the Soviet power and protected and defended it against the combined power of the White Armies and all the imperialists.

Trotsky participated in this unprecedented social transformation as one of the greatest revolutionary leaders in history. As commander-in-chief Trotsky organized and trained an army out of a mass of hungry and poorly-armed remnants of Czarist troops and Red Guards. That army fought its way to victory and laid the basis for the present Soviet Army. The Red soldiers today, because of Stalin's systematic falsification of history, may not understand the role Trotsky played in the organization of their army and the creation of its general staff. But they do know that this army arose from the October Revolution and was built to defend that revolution and its achievements. That alone is a tremendous tribute to Trotsky; it is for his achievements they are dying by the millions on the blood-soaked battlefield of the vast Soviet territory.

The Soviet masses are fighting valiantly for these conquests of the October Revolution but they have been fighting a losing battle because they fight under the leadership and the policies of Stalin, the betrayer of October and the instigator of Trotsky's assassination. That assassination was a high-water mark in a long series of terrible blows by which Stalin undermined the foundations of the October Revolution and which are now culminating in mortal peril for the very existence of the Soviet Union.

Stalin had smashed most of the gains of the revolution of 1917 by the time his agent murdered Leon Trotsky. Seizing the helm of the Bolshevik Party after Lenin's death, Stalin slashed away at its structure until nothing was left of this democratic revolutionary organization but a bureaucratic husk — an instrument for the protection of special privileges and a weapon against the masses. Without their party the masses are leaderless in the present crisis.

To preserve his nationalist "utopia" and above all the privileges of the bureaucracy, Stalin turned his back on the world proletariat and entrusted the fate of the Soviet Union to alliances with the imperialist powers. In Germany, France, Spain and China the revolutionary workers were betrayed again and again by the Stalin regime until their organizations were crushed to the earth. Trotsky called Hitler "super-Wrangel of the world bourgeoisie" and urged the mobilization of the Red Army against him in 1933. Stalin jeered. But eight years later Hitler could invade an unprepared Soviet Union without fear of a working class revolution in Germany or in Europe.

Stalin transformed the Bolshevik Party into a happy hunting ground for job-seekers, robbed the Soviets of their function as the democratic governing organs of the masses, turned the trade unions into helpless tools of the bureaucracy. But he could not rest easy until he had physically annihilated the leading participants of the October Revolution — the Bolshevik Old Guard and the general staff of the Red Army trained by Trotsky. Anticipating a revolution of the masses against him Stalin sought to behead it in advance by the frame-up Moscow Trials and the firing squad. Above all he had to murder Leon Trotsky whose voice and message would have been a herald to the workers of the Soviet Union and the world in the present war. The name of a living Trotsky, though thousands of miles away, would have been a battle-cry of the Red legions not only against the Nazis but against Stalin's treacherous and incompetent bureaucracy as well.

The banner of Trotsky is held aloft today by only a few hands. Tomorrow it will fly at the head of the insurgent masses of India!

As in 1917 the program of Trotsky will be the beacon-light for the masses of the Soviet Union and the whole world illuminating the road to peace and socialism!

TROTSKY'S WORKS LIVE ON IN HEROIC RED ARMY



INDIANS FOLLOW ADVICE CRIPPS GAVE AFRICANS

Sir Stafford Cripps, who tried to negotiate the Indian people out of their demands for independence from British imperialism, spoke differently to the Africans in 1937. In an introduction to "Africa and World Peace" by George Padmore, he wrote:

"Imperialism, whether in its national form or in its League of Nations form, is equally inimical to the interests of the Africans and is equally certain to produce conditions similar to those of 1914 and the war which followed them. The one safety for the common people of this or any other nation is to destroy imperialism and that they cannot do it if they take part, on any side, in imperialist wars. Whether Fascist or Democratic Imperialism emerges victorious from such wars, the problem will remain and the lot of Africans will be much as it is today."

Trotsky is dead but his ideas live on and it is only his ideas and his program which can prevent Stalin from dragging the Soviet Union down into the inevitable doom that awaits him and his bureaucracy.

Trotsky's program was the banner of victory in 1917 and later against the counter-revolutionary armies and the intervention. Trotsky's program can once more be the banner of victory!

That program will cement the alliance between Russian workers and the revolutionary workers of all lands, above all, the German workers, by extending the October Revolution to western Europe, America and Asia.

BUT ORGANIZED STRUGGLE REQUIRED FOR VICTORY

Congress Party Program Cannot Mobilize
Workers Who Must Play Decisive Part

By FELIX MORROW

Under the slogans "Freedom or Death," "Do or Die," the masses of India are fighting and dying for Indian independence as British imperialism attempts to drown the movement in blood.

The All-India Congress party general committee, yielding to the nation-wide demand for immediate action to win independence, endorsed on Saturday, August 8, a resolution for a "civil disobedience" campaign, placing its direction and the date for the beginning of the campaign in the hands of Gandhi. The latter announced that he would first seek further negotiations with the British authorities on the demand for independence.

At dawn the next day Gandhi, Nehru and other Congress leaders were arrested and the Congress was declared outlawed, precipitating the immediate launching of the independence campaign.

No sooner were the first crowds on the streets than British police and troops fired into their midst, while airplanes spewed tear-gas.

With the same police mentality which has characterized all regimes faced by revolution, the British think a blood-bath and arrests of "agitators" will crush the movement. British "democracy" is as blind, facing the doom of its rule, as Czar Nicholas in 1917 or Louis XVI in 1789.

The Congress "agitators" whom it has arrested are in reality being propelled into the struggle by the pressure of the masses. Ever since Britain, without consulting any section of the population, declared India in the war in September, 1940, the tide of colonial revolution has been rising. The masses of India do not want to fight and die in this war in order to maintain British rule in India.

When the war broke out the Congress party was at the head of the provincial governments in eight out of eleven of the British India provinces, collaborating with the British. Widespread protest against India's being involved in the war without its consent forced the Congress ministries to resign.

British Gave Nothing in Negotiations

Since then there have been interminable negotiations with the British, ending with Cripps' "mission" in April of this year. All attempts of the Congress to come to an amicable agreement with the British failed.

Meanwhile the defeats in Malaya, Singapore, the East Indies and Burma had destroyed British prestige in the Far East and had brought to unprecedented heights the national self-confidence of the Indian masses. Cripps had been in India only a year earlier, and had been in close communion with Nehru and other Congress leaders; he came back in April 1942 apparently sure of getting them to accept ministries in a government under control of the Viceroy and the India Office. But that was no longer possible after the collapse of British power in the Far East. No party that sought to keep the support of the masses of India could by then accept the Cripps formula.

In the face of the British refusal to turn the powers of the Viceroy and the India Office over to an Indian government, the least the Congress could do was to launch the "civil disobedience" campaign.

Congress Leaders Merely Seek "Deadlock"

So far as the Congress leaders were concerned, this campaign does not mean the irrevocable launching of a fight to the end for independence. The Congress campaign does not have a plan for actually winning independence by mass seizure of the government buildings and arsenals, arming of the Indian masses, establishment of a provisional government, etc. Neither the pacifist wing of Gandhi nor the Nehru wing think in terms of such methods. Both are united in seeking what they term "a complete deadlock" — sufficient paralysis of governmental and economic activity to dictate to the British a resolution of the "deadlock" by reopening negotiations on the basis of the demand for independence.

That the Congress plan is so narrowly limited — not to speak of the fact that four times previously since 1920 it has launched it only to drop it — is not understood by the great majority of its followers. They look upon the present struggle as a revolutionary fight for independence and in that spirit they are meeting the British police and troops. There is a germ of truth in the British complaint that Gandhi's followers do not emulate his pacifism! They translate it in their own plebeian way into militant mass combat.

Peasant Rebellion Will Soon Start

We can predict with assurance — the same thing happened in the previous "civil disobedience" campaigns — that the events of the first days are no index to the gigantic scope of the mass movement. This time, even more than previously, advance preparations of the Congress leaders appear to have been extremely poor. With the arrests of the leaders the movement gives the

(Continued on Editorial column, page 4)

FOR INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

Statement of Nat'l Committee of Socialist Workers Party

EDITORIAL NOTE
The following statement of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party was received by The Militant and is hereby reprinted for the information of our readers.

The struggle of the Indian people for freedom from British imperialism is now unfolding with full force. Throughout India, millions of workers and peasants are moving into action to smash the shackles of century-old British domination. Through strikes and mass demonstrations and clashes with Imperial police and troops, the workers and peasants are already breaking out of the bounds of the suicidal program of "passive resistance" into which Gandhi hoped to confine this great movement. The people of India are utilizing the war and the crisis it has engendered for British imperialism to strike a powerful blow for their national independence.

For The Right Of Self-Determination!

The Socialist Workers Party supports the struggle of the Indian masses because as a revolutionary socialist party it stands four-square for the rights of all peoples to self-determination. The Socialist Workers Party supports the Indian people because

revolutionary action and victory in India will not only inspire the movement of colonial liberation from Japan in Asia and from Britain in Africa, but by weakening world imperialism it will impel the movement for liberation and socialism by the workers of Europe and America. The capitalist rulers of the world, "democratic" and fascist alike, dread the revolutionary awakening in India. Given the slightest opportunity they would forget their present differences and unite in an attempt to crush it.

Unconditional Support for Independence!

The Socialist Workers Party unconditionally supports the movement for Indian independence even though for the present it is led by the Indian bourgeoisie at the helm of the Congress Party, Gandhi, Nehru and the Executive Committee of the Congress Party have been forced to initiate the present movement by tremendous pressure from India's millions. Forced by this profound sentiment from below, the Congress leaders were obliged for the time to abandon further conciliatory moves with Britain at the risk of being pushed to the sidelines by the popular demand for immediate and unconditional independence.

To avoid the tragic fate of the

Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, the Socialist Workers Party urges upon the Indian workers that while supporting and participating in the present movement under its present leadership, they do not trust their fate to Gandhi and Co. They must organize independently and set up their own organs of struggle. Only under the leadership of the Indian proletariat in alliance with the Indian peasantry can the struggle against imperialism be carried through to victory.

Stop Repressions Against India!

The British imperialists have already thrown off the mask of conciliation which they donned when Cripps tried to drive a hard bargain with the Congress leaders. The very first open action on the part of the Indian masses has brought down upon them the heavy hand of British repression. The Congress party has been outlawed and its leaders thrown into prison. Demonstrating crowds have been fired upon by British police. Large bodies of troops are being brought into action against the masses.

On its first anniversary the "Atlantic Charter" stands exposed as a threadbare curtain behind which the British Empire

hides its tyrannical rule over the colonial masses. The Indian masses are getting their first taste of the "four freedoms" of Churchill-Roosevelt in the form of tear gas and bullets. We demand that the terror and violence against the Indian people be halted immediately!

The self-styled "democrats" who yesterday pleaded with the rulers of Britain that some small concession be thrown to the Indian masses today are denouncing the movement and justifying repressions against it in the name of the war of "democracy against fascism." They merely expose their so-called slogan as counterfeit and themselves as prostituted tools of imperialism.

Stalinists Work for British Imperialism

The Stalinists, who pretend that they favor Indian independence, denounce the actions of the Congress party and of the Indian masses for embarking on action to secure that independence. Instead they plead with Roosevelt-Churchill to stem the movement by offering a "concession." Once again they simply display the fact that Stalin has sold the services of his lackeys to British imperialism.

So-called liberals and labor

(Continued on page 4)

