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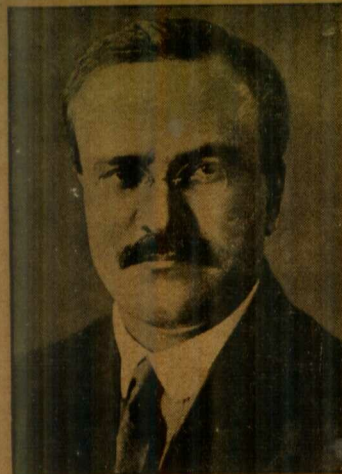
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V. Molotov

**SOVIET
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With a foreword by D. N. Pritt, K.C., M.P. and
a biographical sketch by W. P. & Zelda Coates

1941

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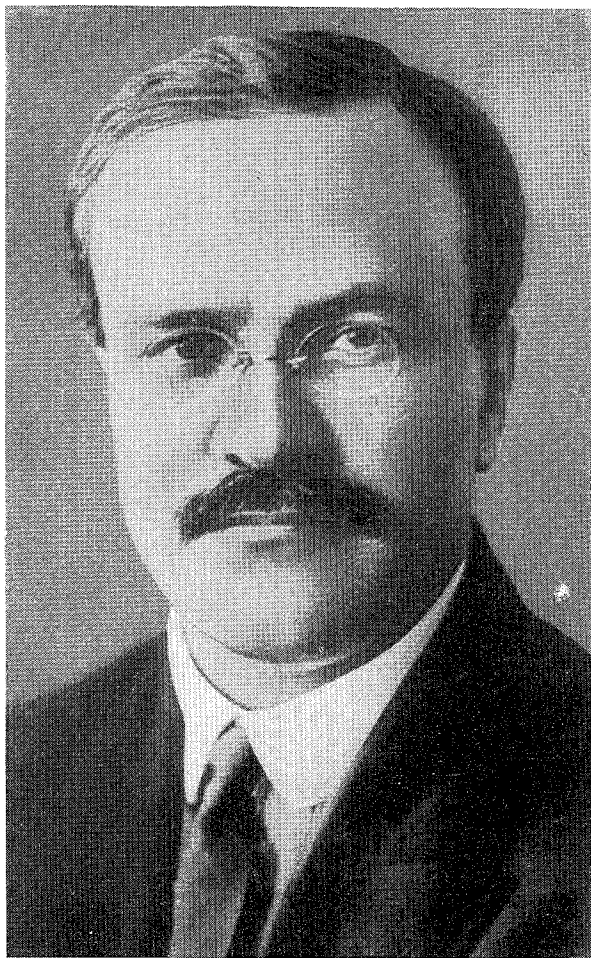
“THE study of the speeches of Mr. Molotov will do much to clear away doubt and confusion in relation to many problems of these troubled and uncertain times. Years of hostile propaganda—and especially of simple suppression of news or of declarations—have built up in the minds of large numbers of people in Great Britain a conception of the U.S.S.R., particularly in its foreign policy, as something mysterious, enigmatic, incomprehensible. But the truth is that its foreign policy, to those who take the opportunity to study the material, has been clear and consistent to a quite unusual degree. The clue to an understanding of Mr. Molotov’s speeches, and with them of the policy which they express, is so simple that it seems almost to take an unfair advantage of our incredulity; it is just that Mr. Molotov says what he means and means what he says. Speech has, it appears, been given to him to declare his thoughts.

I commend these speeches to a wide public.”

from the foreword by

D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

SOVIET PEACE POLICY



V. MOLOTOV

SOVIET PEACE POLICY

Four Speeches by
V. MOLOTOV

With a Foreword by
D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

and

Biographical Sketch by
W. P. AND ZELDA K. COATES

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FOREWORD

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So I commend these speeches to a wide public, to all those who want to understand. Anyone who reads them carefully will finish up with a far clearer grasp than he had before, not only of Soviet policy but also of European politics.

The short biographical sketch, written with great clarity by Mr. and Mrs. Coates, shows that Molotov's life, like his speeches, has been a process of carrying out in action the fight for Socialism—and indeed, of meaning what he says!

D. N. PRITT.

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SPEECH DELIVERED ON AUGUST 31, 1939

I

The speech by M. Molotov on August 31, 1939, was delivered at the Fourth (Special) Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., which sat from August 28 to September 1, 1939.

The speech dealt with the abortive Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations and the Soviet-German Pact of Non-Aggression concluded August 23, 1939.

It will be recalled that ever since 1934, the Soviet Government had striven, in vain, to promote a collective peace front. Unfortunately their efforts failed for reasons now well enough known.

When early in 1939 the British and French Governments were compelled by public opinion to enter into negotiations with the Soviet Government for a Pact of Mutual Assistance they did so in a half-hearted manner.

Unable to conclude, through no fault on their part, an effective mutual assistance Pact with the British and French Governments, which would have assured the general peace of Europe, the Soviet Government had to find the best means for securing peace at least for the peoples of the U.S.S.R. It was with this object in view that they concluded the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, which should not be confused with a mutual assistance Pact.

It may be added that, unlike the British and French Governments, the German Government seized their opportunity with both hands. They realized the international importance of the U.S.S.R. and the necessity of a friendly understanding with her. When the time came to send delegates to the Soviet Union, again unlike the British Government, they sent their most important men, including the German Foreign Secretary himself.

SINCE the third session of the Supreme Soviet the international situation has shown no change for the better. On the contrary it has become even more tense. Steps taken by various governments to put an end to this state of tension have obviously proved inadequate. This is true of Europe. Nor has there been any change for the better in Eastern Asia. Japanese troops continue to occupy principal cities and a considerable part of the territory of China. Nor is Japan refraining from hostile acts against the U.S.S.R. Here, too, the situation has changed in the direction of further aggravation.

In view of this state of affairs the conclusion of a pact of non-aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Germany is of tremendous positive value, eliminating the danger of war between Germany and the Soviet Union. In order more fully to define the significance of this pact I must first dwell on the negotiations which have taken place in recent months in Moscow with representatives of Great Britain and France.

As you are aware, Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations for the conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance against aggression in Europe began as far back as April. True, the initial proposals of the British Government were, as you know, entirely unacceptable. They ignored the prime requisites for such negotiations—they ignored the principle of reciprocity and the equality of obligations. In spite of this the Soviet Government did not reject negotiations and in its turn put forward its own proposals. We appreciated the fact that it was difficult for the Governments of Great Britain and France to make an abrupt change in their policy from the unfriendly attitude towards the Soviet Union, which had existed until quite recently, to serious negotiations with the

U.S.S.R., based on conditions of equality of obligations. However, the subsequent negotiations were not justified by results. The Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations lasted for four months. They helped to clarify a number of questions. At the same time they made it clear to the representatives of Great Britain and France that the Soviet Union had to be seriously reckoned with in international affairs.

But these negotiations encountered insuperable obstacles. The trouble of course did not lie in individual "formulations," or in particular clauses of the draft pact. No, the trouble was much more serious. The conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance against aggression would have been of value only if Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union had arrived at an agreement as to definite military measures against the attack of an aggressor.

Accordingly for some time, not only political but also military negotiations were conducted in Moscow with the representatives of the British and French armies. However, nothing came of the military negotiations. They encountered the difficulty that Poland, who was to be jointly guaranteed by Great Britain, France, and the U.S.S.R., rejected military assistance on the part of the Soviet Union. Attempts to overcome the objections of Poland met with no success. More, the negotiations showed that Great Britain was not anxious to overcome these objections of Poland, but on the contrary encouraged them.

It is clear that, such being the attitude of the Polish Government and its principal ally towards military assistance by the Soviet Union in the event of aggression, the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations could not bear fruit. After this it became evident to us that the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations were doomed to failure.

What have the negotiations with Great Britain and France shown? They have shown that the position of Great Britain and France is characterized throughout by crying contradictions. Judge for yourselves.

On the one hand, Great Britain and France demanded

that the U.S.S.R. should give military assistance to Poland in case of aggression. The U.S.S.R., as you know, was willing to meet this demand, provided the U.S.S.R. itself received like assistance from Great Britain and France. On the other hand, the same Great Britain and France brought Poland on to the scene, and the latter resolutely declined any military assistance on the part of the U.S.S.R. Just try in such circumstances to reach an agreement regarding mutual assistance—when assistance on the part of the U.S.S.R. is declared beforehand to be unnecessary and an intrusion!

Further, on the one hand, Great Britain and France offered a guarantee to the Soviet Union of military assistance against aggression, in return for like assistance on the part of the U.S.S.R. On the other hand they hedged round their assistance with such reservations regarding indirect aggression as might convert this assistance into a myth, and provided them with a formal legal excuse for evading assistance and placing the U.S.S.R. in a position of isolation in face of the aggressor. Just try and distinguish between such a "pact of mutual assistance" and a pact of more or less camouflaged chicanery!

Again, on the one hand, Great Britain and France stressed the importance and gravity of the negotiations for a pact of mutual assistance, and demanded that the U.S.S.R. should treat the matter most seriously and settle very rapidly all questions concerning the pact. On the other hand, they themselves displayed extreme dilatoriness and anything but a serious attitude towards the negotiations, entrusting them to individuals of secondary importance who were not invested with adequate powers. It is enough to mention that the British and French military missions came to Moscow without any definite powers and without the right to conclude any military convention. Furthermore, the British military mission arrived in Moscow without any mandate at all and it was only on the demand of our military mission that, on the very eve of the breakdown of negotiations, they presented written credentials. But even these credentials were of the vaguest kind, *i.e.* credentials without proper

weight. Just try and distinguish between this light-hearted attitude towards the negotiations on the part of Great Britain and France, and frivolous make-believe negotiations designed to discredit the whole business of negotiations!

Such were the intrinsic contradictions in the attitude of Great Britain and France which led to the breakdown of negotiations with the U.S.S.R. What is the root of these contradictions in the position of Great Britain and France? In a few words, it can be put as follows:

On the one hand the British and French Governments fear aggression, and for that reason would like to have a pact of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union, in so far as it would strengthen them—Great Britain and France. But on the other hand the British and French Governments are afraid that the conclusion of a real pact of mutual assistance with the U.S.S.R. may strengthen our country—the Soviet Union—which it appears does not answer their purpose. One cannot but see that these fears outweighed other considerations. Only in this way can we understand the position of Poland, which has been acting on the instructions of Great Britain and France.

I shall now go on to the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact.

The decision to conclude a non-aggression pact between the U.S.S.R. and Germany was adopted after military negotiations with France and Great Britain had reached an impasse owing to the insuperable difficulties I have mentioned. As the negotiations had shown that the conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance could not be expected, we could not but explore other possibilities of ensuring peace and eliminating the danger of war between Germany and the U.S.S.R. If the British and French Governments refused to reckon with this, that is their affair. *It is our duty to think of the interests of the Soviet people, the interests of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*—all the more because we are firmly convinced that the interests of the U.S.S.R. coincide with the fundamental interests of the peoples of other countries.

But that is only one side of the matter. Another circumstance was required before the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact could come into existence. It was necessary that in her foreign policy Germany should make a turn towards good neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union. Only when this second condition was fulfilled, only when it became clear to us that the German Government desired to change its foreign policy so as to secure an improvement of relations with the U.S.S.R., was a basis found for the conclusion of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact.

Everybody knows that during the last six years, ever since the National-Socialists came into power, political relations between Germany and the U.S.S.R. have been strained. Everybody also knows that, despite the differences of outlook and political systems, the Soviet Government has endeavoured to maintain normal business and political relations with Germany.

There is no need just now to revert to individual incidents in these relations during recent years—and indeed they are sufficiently well known to you, comrades. I must, however, recall the explanation of our foreign policy given several months ago at the Eighteenth Party Congress. Speaking of our tasks in the realm of foreign policy, Comrade Stalin defined our attitude to other countries as follows:

“(1) To continue a policy of peace and of strengthening business relations with all countries;

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

As you see, Comrade Stalin declared in these conclusions that the Soviet Union stands for strengthening business relations with all countries. But at the same time he warned us against warmongers who were anxious in their own interests to involve our country in conflicts with other countries. Exposing the hullabaloo raised in the British, French, and North American press about Germany's “plans” for the seizure of Soviet Ukraine, Comrade Stalin said:

“It looks as if the object of this suspicious hullabaloo was to incense the Soviet Union against Germany, to poison the atmosphere and to provoke a conflict with Germany without any visible grounds.”

As you see, Comrade Stalin hit the nail on the head when he exposed the machinations of West European politicians who were trying to set Germany and the Soviet Union at loggerheads. It must be confessed that there were some short-sighted people also in our country who, carried away by an over-simplified anti-Fascist propaganda, forgot about this provocative work of our enemies. Mindful of this, Comrade Stalin even then suggested the possibility of different, unhostile, and good neighbourly relations between Germany and the U.S.S.R.

It can now be seen that, on the whole, in Germany they understood correctly these statements of Comrade Stalin, and they have drawn practical deductions from them. The conclusion of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact shows that Comrade Stalin's historical foresight has been brilliantly confirmed.

In the spring of this year the German Government made a proposal for the resumption of commercial and credit negotiations. Negotiations were resumed soon after. By making mutual concessions we succeeded in reaching an agreement. As you know, this agreement was signed on August 19, 1939. This was not the first commercial and credit agreement concluded with Germany under her present Government.

But this agreement differs favourably not only from that concluded in 1935, but also from all previous agreements, not to mention the fact that we have never had any equally advantageous economic agreement with Great Britain, France, or any other country. The agreement is advantageous to us because of its credit conditions (a seven-year credit) and because it enables us to order a considerable additional quantity of the equipment we need. By this agreement the U.S.S.R. undertakes to sell to Germany a

definite quantity of our surplus raw materials for her industry, which fully answers to the interests of the U.S.S.R.

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

At the same time, when the German Government expressed a desire to improve political relations as well, the Soviet Government had no grounds for refusing. It was then that the question of concluding a non-aggression pact arose. Voices are now being heard which show a lack of understanding of the most simple reasons for the improvement in the political relations between the Soviet Union and Germany which has begun.

For example, people ask, with an air of innocence, how could the Soviet Union consent to improve its political relations with a State of a Fascist type? Is that possible, they ask. But they forget that it is not a question of our attitude towards the internal régime of another country but of foreign relations between two States. They forget that our position is that we do not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, and correspondingly do not tolerate interference in our own internal affairs. Furthermore, they forget an important principle of our foreign policy which was formulated by Comrade Stalin at the Eighteenth Party Congress as follows:

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

The meaning of these words is quite clear. The Soviet Union strives to maintain good neighbourly relations with all non-Soviet countries, in so far as these countries maintain a like attitude towards the Soviet Union. In our foreign policy towards non-Soviet countries we have always been guided by Lenin's well-known principle of the peaceful co-existence of the Soviet State and capitalist countries.

Many examples might be quoted to show how this principle has been carried out in practice; but I will confine myself to only a few. We have for instance a Non-Aggression and Neutrality Treaty with Fascist Italy ever since 1933. It has never occurred to anybody as yet to object to this treaty: and that is natural. Inasmuch as this pact meets the interests of the U.S.S.R., it is in accord with our principle of the peaceful co-existence of the U.S.S.R. and capitalist countries. We have non-aggression pacts also with Poland and with certain other countries, whose semi-Fascist system is well known. These pacts have not given rise to any misgivings either.

Perhaps it would not be superfluous to mention the fact that we have not even treaties of this kind with certain other non-Fascist, bourgeois democratic countries—with Great Britain herself, for instance. But that is not our fault.

Since 1926 the political basis of our relations with Germany has been the Treaty of Neutrality which was prolonged by the present German Government in 1933. This Treaty of Neutrality remains in force to this day. The Soviet Government considered it desirable even before this to take a further step towards improving political relations with Germany, but circumstances have been such that this has become possible only now.

It is true that, in the present case, we are dealing *not with a pact of mutual assistance*, as in the case of the Anglo-Soviet-Soviet negotiations, but *only with a non-aggression pact*. Nevertheless, conditions being what they are it is difficult to overestimate the international importance of the Soviet-German

pact. That is why we favoured the visit of the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, Herr von Ribbentrop, to Moscow.

August 23, 1939, the day the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was signed, is to be regarded as a date of great historical importance. The non-aggression pact between the U.S.S.R. and Germany marks a turning point in the history of Europe, and not of Europe alone. Only yesterday German Fascists were pursuing a foreign policy hostile to us. Yes, only yesterday we were enemies in the sphere of foreign relations. To-day, however, the situation has changed and we are enemies no longer.

The art of politics in the sphere of foreign relations does not consist in increasing the number of enemies for one's country. On the contrary, the art of politics in this sphere is to reduce the number of such enemies and make the enemies of yesterday good neighbours, maintaining peaceable relations one with the other. History has shown that enmity and wars between our country and Germany have been to the detriment of our countries, not to their benefit.

The countries which suffered most of all in the war of 1914-18 were Russia and Germany. Therefore, the interests of the peoples of the Soviet Union and Germany do not lie in mutual enmity. On the contrary, the peoples of the Soviet Union and Germany stand in need of peaceable relations. The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact puts an end to the enmity between Germany and the U.S.S.R. and this is in the interests of both countries. The fact that our outlooks and political systems differ must not and cannot be an obstacle to the establishment of good political relations between both States, just as like differences are no impediment to the good political relations which the U.S.S.R. maintains with other non-Soviet capitalist countries.

Only the enemies of Germany and the U.S.S.R. can strive to create and foment enmity between the peoples of these countries. We have always stood for amity between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and Germany, and for the growth

and development of friendship between the peoples of the Soviet Union and the German people.

The chief importance of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact lies in the fact that the two largest States of Europe have agreed to put an end to enmity between them, to eliminate the menace of war and to live at peace one with the other, making narrower thereby the zone of possible military conflicts in Europe.

Even if military conflicts in Europe should prove unavoidable the scope of hostilities will now be restricted. Only instigators of a general European war, only those who under the mask of pacifism would like to ignite a general conflagration in Europe, can be dissatisfied at this position of affairs.

The Soviet-German Pact has been the object of numerous attacks in the British, French, and American Press.

Particularly zealous in this respect have been certain "Socialist" journals—servitors of "their" national capitalism, servitors of those of their masters who pay them pretty well. Naturally, one cannot expect the real truth from these gentlemen.

Attempts are being made to spread the fiction that the conclusion of the Soviet-German Pact disrupted negotiations with Britain and France for a mutual assistance pact. This lie has already been nailed in the interview given by Voroshilov. In reality, as you know, the very reverse is true. The Soviet Union signed the non-aggression pact with Germany, amongst other things, because negotiations with France and England had come to a deadlock owing to insuperable differences and had ended in failure through the fault of the ruling classes of Britain and France.

Further, they go so far as to blame us because the pact, if you please, contains no clause providing for its denunciation in case one of the signatories is drawn into war under conditions which might give someone or other the external pretext to qualify this particular country as an aggressor. But strange to say they forget that such a clause and such a reservation is not to be found either in the Polish-German non-aggres-

sion pact signed in 1934, and annulled by Germany in 1939 against the wishes of Poland, or in the Anglo-German declaration on non-aggression signed only a few months ago. The question arises: Why cannot the U.S.S.R. permit itself the same privilege as Poland and Britain allowed themselves long ago?

Finally, there are wiseacres who construe from the pact more than is written in it. For this purpose all kinds of conjectures and hints are mooted in order to cast doubt on the pact in one or other country. But all this merely demonstrates the hopeless impotence of the enemies of the pact who are exposing themselves more and more as enemies of both the Soviet Union and Germany, striving to provoke war between these countries.

In all this we find fresh corroboration of Comrade Stalin's warning that we must be particularly cautious with warmongers who are accustomed to have other people pull their chestnuts out of the fire. We must be on our guard against those who see some advantage to themselves in bad relations between the U.S.S.R. and Germany, in enmity between them, and who do not want peace and good neighbourly relations to exist between Germany and the Soviet Union. We can understand why this policy is being pursued by out-and-out imperialists.

But we cannot pass over the fact that certain leaders of the Socialist parties of Britain and France have displayed quite exceptional zeal in this respect. And, indeed, so flustered have these gentlemen become that they have gone the whole hog, and no mistake. These people demand that the U.S.S.R. should without fail be drawn into the war on the side of Britain against Germany. Have these rabid warmongers completely taken leave of their senses?

Is it really difficult for these gentlemen to understand the purpose of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact on the strength of which the U.S.S.R. is not obliged to involve itself in war either on the side of Great Britain against Germany or on the side of Germany against Great Britain?

Is it really difficult to comprehend that the U.S.S.R. is pursuing, and will continue to pursue, its own independent policy based on the interests of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., and only these interests? If these gentlemen have such an uncontrollable desire to fight, let them do their own fighting without the Soviet Union. We would see what fighting stuff they are made of.

In our eyes, in the eyes of the entire Soviet people, these are just as much enemies of peace as all the other instigators of war in Europe. Only those who desire a grand new slaughter, a new holocaust of nations, only they want to set the Soviet Union and Germany at loggerheads; they are the only people who want to destroy the incipient restoration of good neighbourly relations between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and Germany.

The Soviet Union signed the pact with Germany fully assured that peace between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and Germany is in the interests of all peoples, in the interests of universal peace. Every sincere supporter of peace will realize the truth of this. This pact corresponds with the fundamental interests of the working people of the Soviet Union and cannot weaken our vigilance in defence of those interests. This pact is backed by firm confidence in our actual forces, in their complete preparedness to meet any aggression against the U.S.S.R.

This pact (like the unsuccessful Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations) proves that no important questions of international relations, and still less questions in Eastern Europe, can be settled without the active participation of the Soviet Union; that any attempts to shut out the Soviet Union and decide such questions behind her back are doomed to failure.

The Soviet-German non-aggression pact spells a new turn in the development of Europe; a turn towards the improvement of relations between the two largest States of Europe. This pact not only eliminates the menace of war with Germany, narrows down the zone of possible hostilities in Europe, and serves thereby the cause of universal peace; it

must open to us new possibilities of increasing our strength, further consolidation of our positions, and the further growth of the influence of the Soviet Union on international developments.

There is no need to dwell here on the separate clauses of the pact. The Council of Peoples' Commissars has reason to hope that the pact will meet with your approval as a document of cardinal importance to the U.S.S.R. The Council of Peoples' Commissars submits the Soviet-German non-aggression pact to the Supreme Soviet and proposes that it be ratified.

SPEECH DELIVERED ON OCTOBER 31, 1939

II

When M. Molotov delivered his speech on October 31, 1939, at the Extraordinary Fifth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Poland as a separate State had ceased to exist.

Within less than three weeks of the German invasion of Poland the German mechanized armies, powerfully assisted by their Air Force, had succeeded in breaking her effective resistance. Poland collapsed even more quickly than military experts had predicted. At the same time Britain and France, for all their guarantee, were unable, or at any rate did not give the Poles any help.

When it became evident that the Polish State had ceased to exist the Soviet Government marched its troops into Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia in order to save the people from the ravages of war and to unite them with the main body of the Ukrainian and Belorussian peoples from whom they were torn in 1920 by the combined efforts of Poland, Britain and France, during the period of civil war and intervention when the Soviet State was in a weakened condition.

The Ukrainians, Belorussians, Jews and others (who had been cruelly oppressed by the Polish capitalists and landlords) as well as many Polish workers, peasants and intelligentsia welcomed the Red Army. On September 28, 1939, a "Soviet-Germany Treaty of Amity and Delimitation of Frontiers" was concluded, whereby the new U.S.S.R. frontier was fixed roughly at the line drawn by Lord Curzon in 1920.

The Soviet Government thus incorporated only such territory as had a population overwhelmingly Ukrainian or Belorussian, i.e. territory which formed an ethnological part of the U.S.S.R. and should by general consent never have been severed from her.

In his speech M. Molotov explained the attitude of the U.S.S.R. in regard to the present world war in general, and to Poland in particular.

The speech also dealt at some length with the Mutual Assistance Pacts concluded by the U.S.S.R. with Estonia (September 28, 1939), Latvia (October 5, 1939) and Lithuania (October 10, 1939); with the negotiations which were at that time proceeding with Finland, as well as with the relations of the U.S.S.R. with other countries.

THERE have been important changes in the international situation during the past two months. This applies above all to Europe but also to countries far beyond the confines of Europe. In this connection we have to bear in mind three principal circumstances which are of decisive importance. Firstly, mention should be made of changes that have taken place in the relations between the Soviet Union and Germany. Since the conclusion of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact on August 23, an end has been put to the abnormal relations that have existed between the Soviet Union and Germany for a number of years. Instead of the enmity which was fostered in every way by certain European powers, we now have a *rapprochement* and the establishment of friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and Germany.

The further improvement of these new and good relations, found its reflection in the German-Soviet Treaty on amity and frontier fixation signed in Moscow on September 28. This radical change in the relations between the Soviet Union and Germany, two of the biggest States in Europe, was bound to have its effect on the entire international situation. Furthermore events have entirely confirmed the estimation of the political significance of the Soviet-German *rapprochement* given at the last Session of the Supreme Soviet.

Secondly, mention must be made of such a fact as the military defeat of Poland and the collapse of the Polish State. The ruling circles of Poland boasted quite a lot about the "stability" of their State and the "might" of their army. However, one swift blow to Poland, first by the German Army and then by the Red Army, and nothing was left of this ugly offspring of the Versailles Treaty which had existed by oppressing non-Polish nationalities. The "traditional

policy" of unprincipled manoeuvring between Germany and the U.S.S.R., and the playing off of one against the other has proved unsound and has suffered complete bankruptcy.

Thirdly, it must be admitted that the big war that has flared up in Europe has caused radical changes in the entire international situation. This war began as a war between Germany and Poland and turned into a war between Germany on the one hand, and Britain and France on the other. The war between Germany and Poland ended quickly owing to the utter bankruptcy of the Polish leaders. As we know neither British nor French guarantees were of help to Poland. To this day in fact nobody knows what these "guarantees" were. The war between Germany and the Anglo-French *bloc* is only in its first stage and has not yet really developed. It is nevertheless clear that a war like this was bound to cause radical changes in the situation in Europe and not in Europe alone.

In connection with these important changes in the international situation certain old formulas, formulas which we employed but recently, and to which many people are so accustomed, are now obviously out of date and inapplicable. We must be quite clear on this point so as to avoid making gross errors in judging the new political situation that has developed in Europe. We know, for example, that in the past few months such concepts as "aggression" and "aggressor" have acquired new concrete connotation, new meaning. It is not hard to understand that we can no longer employ these concepts in the sense we did, say three or four months ago. To-day, as far as the European great Powers are concerned, Germany is in the position of a State which is striving for the earliest termination of war and for peace, while Britain and France, which but yesterday were declaiming against aggression, are in favour of continuing the war and are opposed to the conclusion of peace. The rôles as you see are changing.

The efforts of the British and French Governments to justify this new position of theirs on the ground of their

undertakings to Poland are, of course, obviously unsound. Everybody realizes that there can be no question of restoring old Poland. It is, therefore, absurd to continue the present war under the flag of restoration of the former Polish State.

Although the Governments of Britain and France understand this they do not want war stopped and peace restored but are seeking new excuses for continuing the war with Germany. The ruling circles of Britain and France have been lately attempting to depict themselves as champions of the democratic rights of nations against Hitlerism and the British Government has announced that its aim in the war with Germany is nothing more nor less than the "destruction of Hitlerism." It amounts to this, that the British and with them the French supporters of the war have declared something in the nature of an "ideological" war on Germany, reminiscent of the religious wars of olden times. In fact religious wars against heretics and religious dissenters were once the fashion. As we know they led to dire results for the masses, to economic ruin and the cultural deterioration of nations. These wars could have no other outcome. But they were the wars of the Middle Ages. Is it back to the Middle Ages, to the days of religious wars, superstition and cultural deterioration that the ruling classes of Britain and France want to drag us?

In any case under the "ideological" flag there has now been started a war of even greater dimensions and fraught with even greater danger for the peoples of Europe and of the whole world. But there is absolutely no justification for a war of this kind. One may accept or reject the ideology of Hitlerism as well as any other ideological system, that is a matter of political views. But everybody should understand that an ideology cannot be destroyed by force, that it cannot be eliminated by war. It is therefore, not only senseless but criminal to wage such a war as a war for the "destruction of Hitlerism" camouflaged as a fight for "democracy."

And, indeed, you cannot give the name of a fight for

democracy to such actions as the banning of the Communist Party of France, the arrest of Communist Deputies of the French Parliament, or the curtailing of political liberties in Britain or the unremitting national oppression in India, etc. Is it not clear that the aim of the present war in Europe is not what it is proclaimed to be in official statements which are intended for the broad public in France and Britain? That is, it is not a fight for democracy but something else of which these gentlemen do not speak openly.

The real cause of the Anglo-French war with Germany was not that Britain and France have vowed to restore the old Poland, and not, of course, that they decided to undertake a fight for democracy. The ruling circles of Britain and France have of course other and more actual motives for going to war with Germany. These motives do not lie in any ideology but in their profoundly material interests as mighty colonial powers.

Great Britain with a population of 47,000,000 possesses colonies with a population of 480,000,000. The colonial Empire of France, whose population does not exceed 42,000,000, embraces a population of 70,000,000 in the French colonies. The possession of these colonies, which makes possible the exploitation of hundreds of millions of people, is the foundation of the world supremacy of Great Britain and France. It is the fear of Germany's claims to these colonial possessions that is at the bottom of the present war of Britain and France with Germany, a fear that has become substantially stronger lately as the result of the collapse of the Versailles Treaty. It is the fear of losing world supremacy that dictates to the ruling circles of Great Britain and France a policy of fomenting war with Germany.

Thus the imperialist character of this war is obvious to anyone who wants to face realities and does not close his eyes to facts. One can see from all this who is interested in this war that is being waged for world supremacy. Certainly not the working class. This war promises nothing to the working class but bloody sacrifice and hardship. Well, now judge for

yourselves whether the meaning of such concepts as "aggression" and "aggressor" has changed recently or not.

It is not difficult to see that the use of these words in their old meaning—that is, the meaning attached to them before the recent decisive turn in political relations between the Soviet Union and Germany, and before the outbreak of the great imperialist war in Europe—can only create confusion in people's minds, and must inevitably lead to erroneous conclusions. To avoid this we must not allow an uncritical attitude towards old concepts, which are no longer applicable in the new international situation. That has been the course of international affairs in the recent period.

I shall now pass to the changes that have taken place in the international position of the Soviet Union herself. Here the changes have been of no small significance; but if we confine ourselves to essentials, the following must be admitted, namely, that thanks to our consistently pursued peaceful foreign policy we have succeeded in considerably strengthening our position and the international weight of the Soviet Union. As I have said, our relations with Germany have radically improved. Here development has proceeded along the line of strengthening our friendly relations, extending our practical co-operation and rendering Germany political support in her efforts for peace.

The Non-Aggression Pact concluded between the Soviet Union and Germany bound us to maintain neutrality in case of Germany participating in a war. We have consistently pursued this course, which was in no wise contradicted by the entry of our troops into the territory of former Poland, which began on September 17. It will be sufficient to recall the fact that on that same day, September 17, the Soviet Government sent a special note to all States with which it maintains diplomatic relations, declaring that the U.S.S.R. would continue her policy of neutrality in her relations with them.

As is well known our troops entered the territory of Poland only after the Polish State had collapsed and had actually

ceased to exist. Naturally we could not remain neutral towards these facts, since as a result of these events we were confronted with urgent problems concerning the security of our State. Furthermore, the Soviet Government could not but reckon with the exceptional situation created for our brothers in Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, who had been abandoned to their fate as a result of the collapse of Poland.

Subsequent events fully confirmed that the new Soviet-German relations were based on a firm foundation of mutual interest. After the Red Army units entered the territory of the former Polish State serious questions arose relating to the delimitation of the State interests of the U.S.S.R. and Germany. These questions were promptly settled by mutual agreement. The German-Soviet Treaty on amity and delimitation of the frontiers between the two countries which was concluded at the end of September has consolidated our relations with the German State.

Relations between Germany and other Western European bourgeois States have in the past two decades been determined primarily by Germany's efforts to break the fetters of the Versailles Treaty whose authors were Great Britain and France with the active participation of the U.S.A. This it was which in the long run led to the present war in Europe.

The relations between the Soviet Union and Germany have been based on a different foundation which had no interest whatever in perpetuating the post-war Versailles system. We have always held that a strong Germany is an indispensable condition for durable peace in Europe. It would be ridiculous to think that Germany could be "simply put out of commission" and struck off the books. The Powers which cherish this foolish and dangerous dream ignore the deplorable experience of Versailles, they do not realize Germany's increased might and fail to see that any attempt at a repetition of Versailles in the present state of international affairs which differs radically from that of 1914, may end in disaster for them.

We have consistently striven to improve our relations with Germany and have wholeheartedly welcomed similar strivings in Germany herself. To-day our relations with the German State are based on friendly relations, on our readiness to support Germany's efforts for peace, and at the same time on the desire to contribute in every way to the development of Soviet-German economic relations to the mutual benefit of both States. Special mention should be made of the fact that the change that has taken place in Soviet-German political relations has created favourable conditions for the development of Soviet-German economic relations. Recent economic negotiations carried on by the German delegation in Moscow and the present negotiations being carried on by the Soviet Economic Delegation in Germany are preparing a broad basis for the development of trade between the Soviet Union and Germany.

Permit me now to dwell on events directly connected with the entry of our troops into the territory of the former Polish State. There is no need for me to describe the course of these events. They have been reported in detail in our Press, and you, comrade Deputies, are well acquainted with the facts. I shall only dwell on what is most essential. There is no need to prove that, at the moment when the Polish State was in a condition of complete collapse our Government was obliged to extend a helping hand to our brother Ukrainians and Byelorussians inhabiting the territory of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia. That is what it did.

When the Red Army marched into these regions it was greeted with general sympathy by the Ukrainian and Byelorussian population who welcomed our troops as liberators from the yoke of the gentry, from the yoke of the Polish landlords and capitalists. As the Red Army advanced through these districts there were serious encounters in some places between our troops and the Polish troops, and consequently there were casualties. These casualties were as follows: On the Byelorussian front counting both commanders and the rank and file of the Red Army, there were 246 killed and

503 wounded, or a total of 749. On the Ukrainian front there were 491 commanders and rank and file killed, and 1,359 wounded, or a total of 1,850. Thus the total casualties of the Red Army on the territory of Byelorussia and Western Ukraine were: 737 killed and 1,862 wounded, or a total of 2,599.

As for our trophies in Poland, they consisted of over 900 guns, over 10,000 machine-guns, over 300,000 rifles, over 150,000,000 rifle cartridges, over 1,000,000 artillery shells, about 300 aeroplanes, etc.

The territory which has passed to the U.S.S.R. is equal in area to a large European state. Thus the area of Western Byelorussia is 108,000 square kilometres, and its population is 4,800,000. The area of Western Ukraine is 88,000 square kilometres, and its population 8,000,000. Hence together the territory of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia which has passed to us has an area of 196,000 square kilometres, and a population of about 13,000,000, of whom there are more than 7,000,000 Ukrainians, more than 3,000,000 Byelorussians, over 1,000,000 Poles, and over 1,000,000 Jews.

The political significance of these events can scarcely be overrated. All reports from Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia show that the population greeted their liberation from the yoke of the gentry with indescribable enthusiasm, and rapturously hailed this great new victory of the Soviet power. The recent elections to the National Assemblies of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, conducted for the first time in the history of those territories on the basis of universal direct equal suffrage and secret ballot, have shown that at least nine-tenths of the population of these regions have long been ready to rejoin the Soviet Union. The decision of the National Assemblies of Lvov and Byelostok with which we are all now familiar, testify to the complete unanimity of the people's representatives on all political questions.

I shall now pass on to our relations with the Baltic countries. As you know important changes have taken place in this sphere as well. Relations of the Soviet Union with

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, are based on the Peace Treaties concluded with the respective countries in 1920. By these Treaties Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania became independent States, and ever since then the Soviet Union has invariably pursued a friendly policy towards these newly created small States. This was a reflection of the radical difference between the policy of the Soviet Government and the policy of Tsarist Russia which brutally oppressed the small nations, denied them every opportunity of independent national and political development and left them with most painful memories of itself.

It must be admitted that the experience of the past two decades of the development of Soviet-Estonian, Soviet-Latvian, and Soviet-Lithuanian friendly relations has created favourable conditions for the further consolidation of political and all other relations between the U.S.S.R. and its Baltic neighbours. This has also been revealed in the recent diplomatic negotiations with the representatives of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania and in the Treaties which were signed in Moscow as a result of these negotiations.

As you know the Soviet Union has concluded Pacts of Mutual Assistance with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which are of major political significance. The principles underlying all these Pacts are identical. They are based on mutual assistance between the Soviet Union on the one hand and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the other, and they include military assistance in case of any of these countries being attacked. In view of the special geographical position of these countries, which form a kind of approach to the U.S.S.R., particularly from the Baltic, these Pacts allow the Soviet Union to maintain naval bases and aerodromes at specified points of Estonia and Latvia, and in the case of the Pact with Lithuania, provides for the defence of the Lithuanian borders jointly with the Soviet Union.

The creation of these Soviet naval bases and aerodromes on the territory of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the stationing of a certain number of Red Army units to protect

these bases and aerodromes ensure a reliable defence base not only for the Soviet Union but also for the Baltic States themselves and thereby contribute to the preservation of peace, which is to the interest of our peoples. Our recent diplomatic negotiations with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have shown that we have sufficient confidence in each other and a proper understanding of the necessity of adopting these measures of military defence in the interest both of the Soviet Union and of these States themselves. The negotiations have revealed fully the anxiety of the parties concerned to preserve peace and safeguard the security of our peoples who are engaged in peaceful labour. It was all this that ensured the successful completion of the negotiations and the conclusion of Pacts of Mutual Assistance which are of great historical importance.

The special character of these Mutual Assistance Pacts in no way implies any interference of the Soviet Union in the affairs of Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania, as some foreign newspapers are trying to make out. On the contrary, all these Pacts of Mutual Assistance strictly stipulate the inviolability of the sovereignty of the signatory States and the principle of non-interference in each other's affairs. These Pacts are based on mutual respect for the political, social, and economic structure of the contracting parties and are designed to strengthen the bases for peaceful neighbourly co-operation between our peoples. We stand for the scrupulous and punctilious observance of the Pacts on the basis of complete reciprocity, and we declare that all the spreading of the nonsense about Sovietizing the Baltic countries is only to the interest of our common enemies, and of all anti-Soviet provocateurs.

In view of the improvement in our political relations with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the Soviet Union has gone a long way to meet the economic needs of these States, and has concluded Trade Agreements with them. Thanks to these economic agreements, trade with the Baltic countries will become several times as great as formerly, and there are favourable prospects for its further growth. At a time when

all European countries, including neutral States, are experiencing tremendous trade difficulties, these economic agreements between the U.S.S.R. and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are of great positive importance to them. Thus the *rapprochement* between the U.S.S.R. on the one hand and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the other will contribute to a more rapid progress of their agriculture, industry, and transport and in general to the national well-being of our Baltic neighbours.

The principles of Soviet policy towards small countries have been demonstrated with particular force by the Treaty providing for the transfer of the city of Vilno and the Vilno region to the Lithuanian Republic. The Lithuanian State with its population of 2,500,000 thereby considerably extends its territory, increases its population by 550,000 and receives the city of Vilno, whose population is almost double that of the present Lithuanian capital.

The Soviet Union agreed to the transfer of the city of Vilno to the Lithuanian Republic not because Vilno has a predominantly Lithuanian population. No, the majority of the inhabitants of Vilno are not Lithuanian. But the Soviet Government took into consideration the fact that the city of Vilno which was forcibly wrested from Lithuania by Poland ought to belong to Lithuania as a city with which are associated on the one hand the historical past of the Lithuanian State, and on the other hand, the national aspirations of the Lithuanian people.

It has been pointed out in the foreign press that there has never been a case in world history of a big country handing over, of its own free will, such a big city to a small state. All the more strikingly, therefore, does this act of the Soviet State demonstrate its good will.

Our relations with Finland are of a special character. This is to be explained chiefly by the fact that in Finland there is a greater amount of outside influence on the part of third Powers. Any impartial person must admit, however, that the same problems concerning the security of the Soviet

Union and particularly of Leningrad which figured in the negotiations with Estonia, also figure in the negotiations with Finland. In a certain sense it may be said that in this case the problem of the Soviet Union's security is even more acute inasmuch as Leningrad, which after Moscow is the most important city of the Soviet State, is situated at a distance of only 32 kilometres from the Finnish border. This means that the distance of Leningrad from the border of a foreign State is less than that required for modern long-range guns to shell it. On the other hand the approaches to Leningrad from the sea also depend to a large extent on whether Finland, which owns the entire northern shore of the Gulf of Finland and all the islands along the central part of the Gulf of Finland, is hostile or friendly towards the Soviet Union. In view of this, as well as in view of the present situation in Europe, it may be expected that Finland will display the necessary understanding.

What has been the basis of the relations between the Soviet Union and Finland during all these years? As you know the basis of these relations has been the Peace Treaty of 1920, which was on the pattern of our Treaties with our other Baltic neighbours. Of its own free will the Soviet Union ensured the separate and independent existence of Finland. There can be no doubt that only the Soviet Government which recognises the principle of the free development of nationalities could take such a step. It must be said that none but the Soviet Government in Russia could tolerate the existence of an independent Finland at the very gates of Leningrad. This is eloquently testified by Finland's experience with the "democratic" government of Kerensky and Tsereteli, not to mention the government of Prince Lvov and Miliukov, let alone the Tsarist government. There can be no doubt that this important circumstance should serve as a sound premise for an improvement in Soviet-Finnish relations, in which it is clear Finland is no less interested than the Soviet Union.

The Soviet-Finnish negotiations were begun recently on

our initiative. What is the subject of these negotiations? It is not difficult to see that in the present state of international affairs, when in the centre of Europe war is raging between the most powerful States—war fraught with great surprises and dangers for all European States—the Soviet Union is not only entitled but obliged to adopt serious measures to increase her security. It is natural for the Soviet Government to display particular concern with regard to the Gulf of Finland which is the approach to Leningrad from the sea, and also with regard to the land border which dominates Leningrad some 30 kilometres away. I must remind you that the population of Leningrad has grown to 3,500,000, which almost equals the entire population of Finland, amounting to 3,650,000.

There is scarcely any need to dwell on the tales spread by the foreign press about the Soviet Union's proposals in the negotiations with Finland. Some assert that the U.S.S.R. "demands" the city of Vipuri (Viborg) and the northern part of Lake Ladoga. Let us say for our part that this is a sheer fabrication and a lie. Others assert that the U.S.S.R. "demands" a cession of the Aaland Islands. This is also a fabrication and a lie. There is also nonsensical talk about some alleged claims of the Soviet Union against Sweden and Norway. But these unpardonable lies are hardly even worth refuting. Actually our proposals in the negotiations with Finland are extremely modest, and are confined to that minimum without which it is impossible to safeguard the security of the U.S.S.R. and to put on a firm footing friendly relations with Finland.

We began negotiations with the Finnish representatives, MM. Paasikivi and Tanner sent for this purpose by the Finnish Government to Moscow, by proposing the conclusion of a Soviet-Finnish Pact of Mutual Assistance approximately on the lines of our Pacts of Mutual Assistance with the other Baltic States: but inasmuch as the Finnish Government declared that the conclusion of such a Pact would contradict its position of absolute neutrality, we did not insist on

our proposal. We then proposed that we proceed to discuss concrete questions in which we are interested from the standpoint of safeguarding the security of the U.S.S.R. and especially of Leningrad, both from the sea—in the Gulf of Finland—and from land, in view of the extreme proximity of the border to Leningrad.

We proposed that an agreement be reached to shift the Soviet-Finnish frontier on the Isthmus of Karelia a few dozen kilometres further to the north of Leningrad. In exchange for this we proposed to transfer to Finland a part of Soviet Karelia, double the size of the territory which Finland would transfer to the Soviet Union.

We further proposed that an agreement be reached for Finland to lease to us for a definite term a small section of her territory near the entrance to the Gulf of Finland where we might establish a naval base. With a Soviet naval base at the southern entrance to the Gulf of Finland, namely, at Baltiski port as provided for by the Soviet-Estonian Pact of Mutual Assistance, the establishment of a naval base at the northern entrance to the Gulf of Finland would fully safeguard the Gulf of Finland against hostile attempts on the part of other States. We have no doubt that the establishment of such a base would not only be in the interests of the Soviet Union but also of the security of Finland herself.

Our other proposals, in particular our proposal as regards the exchange of certain islands in the Gulf of Finland, as well as parts of Rybachi and Sredni Peninsulas, for territory twice as large in Soviet Karelia, evidently do not meet with any objections on the part of the Finnish Government. Differences with regard to certain of our proposals have not yet been overcome, and concessions made by Finland in this respect, as for instance, the cession of part of the territory of the Isthmus of Karelia, obviously do not meet the purpose.

We have further taken a number of new steps to meet Finland half-way. We declared that if our main proposals were accepted we should be prepared to drop our objections to the fortification of the Aaland Islands, on which the Finnish

Government has been insisting for a long time. We only made one stipulation: we said that we would drop our objection to the fortification of the Aaland Islands on condition that the fortification is done by Finland's own national forces without participation of any third country, inasmuch as the U.S.S.R. will take no part in it.

We also proposed to Finland the disarming of the fortified zones along the entire Soviet-Finnish border on the Isthmus of Karelia, which should fully accord with the interests of Finland. We further expressed our desire to reinforce the Soviet-Finnish Pact of Non-Aggression with additional mutual guarantees. Lastly, the consolidation of Soviet-Finnish political relations would undoubtedly form a splendid basis for the rapid development of economic relations between the two countries. Thus we are ready to meet Finland in matters in which she is particularly interested.

In view of all this we do not think that Finland will seek a pretext to frustrate the proposed agreement. This would not be in line with the policy of friendly Soviet-Finnish relations and would, of course, work to the serious detriment of Finland. We are certain that Finnish leading circles will properly understand the importance of consolidating friendly Soviet-Finnish relations, and that Finnish public men will not yield to anti-Soviet influence, or to instigation from any quarter.

I must, however, inform you that even the President of the United States of America considered it proper to intervene in these matters which one finds it hard to reconcile with America's policy of neutrality. In a message to Comrade Kalinin, the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, dated October 12, Mr. Roosevelt expressed the hope that the friendly and peaceful relations between the U.S.S.R. and Finland would be preserved and developed. One might think that matters are in better shape between the United States and, let us say, the Philippines or Cuba, who have long been demanding freedom and independence from the United States and cannot get them, than between the Soviet Union and Finland who has long ago obtained both freedom and

state independence from the Soviet Union. Comrade Kalinin replied to Mr. Roosevelt's message as follows:

"I consider it proper to remind you, Mr. President, that the state independence of the Republic of Finland was recognized by the free will of the Soviet Government on December 31, 1917, and that the sovereignty of Finland was secured to her by the Treaty of Peace between the R.S.F.S.R. and Finland of October 14, 1920. These acts of the Soviet Government define the fundamental principles governing the relations between the Soviet Union and Finland. It is in conformity with these principles that the present negotiations between the Soviet Government and the Government of Finland are being conducted.

"Contrary to tendentious versions spread by circles who are evidently not interested in European peace, the sole object of these negotiations is to consolidate relations between the Soviet Union and Finland, and to strengthen the peaceful co-operation of the two countries in the matter of safeguarding the security of the Soviet Union and Finland."

After this plain reply by the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., it should be quite clear that, granted good will, the Finnish Government will meet our proposals which are minimal ones and which—far from militating against the national and state interest of Finland—will enhance her security and form a broad basis for the further extensive development of political and economic relations between our countries.

Now a few words about our negotiations with Turkey. All kinds of tales are being spread abroad regarding the substance of these negotiations. Some allege that the U.S.S.R. demanded the cession of the districts of Ardagan and Kars. Let us say for our part that this is a sheer fabrication and lie. Others allege that the U.S.S.R. has demanded changes in the international convention concluded at Montreux and a privileged position as regards the Straits. That is also a fabrication and a lie.

As a matter of fact the question at issue was the conclusion of a bilateral Pact of Mutual Assistance limited to the regions

of the Black Sea and the Straits. The U.S.S.R. considered firstly that the conclusion of such a Pact could not induce her to actions which might draw her into armed conflict with Germany; secondly, that the U.S.S.R. should have a guarantee that in view of the war danger Turkey would not allow warships of non-Black Sea Powers through the Bosphorus to the Black Sea. Turkey rejected both these stipulations of the U.S.S.R. and thereby made the conclusion of a Pact impossible.

The Soviet-Turkish negotiations did not lead to the conclusion of a Pact but they did help to clear up, or at least to explore, a number of political questions that interest us. In the present international situation it is particularly important to know the true face and the policy of the States, relations with whom are of serious importance. Many things pertaining to the policy of Turkey have now become much clearer to us both as the result of the Moscow negotiations and as the result of recent acts of the Turkish Government in the sphere of foreign policy.

As you know the Government of Turkey has preferred to tie up its destinies with a definite group of European Powers who are belligerents in the present war. It has concluded a Pact of Mutual Assistance with Great Britain and France, who, for the past two months, have been waging war on Germany. Turkey has thereby definitely discarded a cautious policy of neutrality, and has entered the orbit of the expanding European war. This is highly pleasing to both Great Britain and France who are bent on drawing as many neutral countries as possible into their sphere of war. Whether Turkey will not come to regret it we shall not try to guess. It is only incumbent upon us to take note of these new factors in the foreign policy of our neighbour and to keep a watchful eye on the development of events.

If Turkey has now to some extent tied her hands and has taken the hazardous line of supporting one group of belligerents, the Turkish Government evidently realizes the responsibility it has thereby assumed. But that is not the

foreign policy which the Soviet Union is pursuing and thanks to which she has secured not a few successes in the sphere of foreign policy. *The Soviet Union prefers to keep her hands free in future as well, to go on consistently pursuing her policy of neutrality and not only not to assist the spread of war, but to help to strengthen whatever strivings there are for the restoration of peace.*

We are confident that the policy of peace which the U.S.S.R. has been consistently pursuing also holds out the best prospects for the future. And this policy we will pursue in the region of the Black Sea, too, confident that we shall fully ensure its proper application as the interests of the Soviet Union and of the States friendly to the Soviet Union demand.

Now as regards our relations with Japan. There has recently been a certain improvement in Soviet-Japanese relations. Symptoms of this improvement have been observable since the recent conclusion of the Moscow agreement as a result of which the well-known conflict on the Mongolia-Manchuria border was liquidated. For several months or, to be more precise, in May, June, July, August, and up to the middle of September, hostilities took place in the Nomankhan district in the vicinity of the Mongolian-Manchurian border, between Japanese-Manchurian and Soviet-Mongolian troops. During this period all kinds of arms, including airplanes and heavy artillery were engaged in action, and battles were sometimes of a very sanguinary character.

This absolutely unnecessary conflict exacted rather heavy casualties on our side and casualties several times heavier on the Japanese-Manchurian side. Finally, Japan made proposals to terminate the conflict and we willingly met the Japanese Government's wishes. As you know the conflict arose owing to Japan's endeavour to appropriate part of the territory of the Mongolian People's Republic, and thus forcibly to change the Mongolian-Manchurian border in her own favour. Such a unilateral method of action had to meet with resolute rebuff, and it has once again demonstrated

its utter futility when applied to the Soviet Union or its allies.

While the example of luckless Poland has recently demonstrated how little Pacts of Mutual Assistance signed by some of the European Great Powers are sometimes worth, what happened on the Mongolian-Manchurian border has demonstrated something quite different. It has demonstrated the value of Pacts of Mutual Assistance to which is appended the signature of the Soviet Union. As for the conflict in question it was liquidated by the Soviet-Japanese agreement concluded in Moscow on September 15, and peace has been fully restored on the Mongolian-Manchurian border. Thus the first step was made towards the improvement of Soviet-Japanese relations.

The next step is the formation of a joint frontier commission consisting of representatives of the Soviet-Mongolian and Japanese-Manchurian sides. This commission will have to examine certain questions in dispute regarding the frontier. There is no doubt that if good will is displayed not alone on our part, then the method of businesslike examination of frontier questions will yield good results. In addition the possibility has been established of starting Soviet-Japanese trade negotiations.

It must be recognized that the development of Soviet-Japanese trade is in the interest of both countries. Thus we have reason to speak of the beginnings of an improvement in our relations with Japan. It is difficult as yet to judge how far we may reckon on the rapid development of this tendency. We have not yet been able to ascertain how far the ground for it has been prepared in Japanese circles. For our part I must say that we look with favour on Japanese overtures of this kind and we approach them from the standpoint of our fundamental political position and our concern for the interests of peace.

Finally, a few words about war contraband and the export of arms from neutral countries to belligerent countries. The other day the Soviet Government's note in reply to Great

Britain's notes of September 6 and 11 was published. Our note explains the views of the U.S.S.R. on the subject of war contraband and states that the Soviet Government cannot regard as war contraband foodstuffs, fuel for non-combatant population, and clothing, and that to prohibit the import of articles of mass consumption is to condemn children, women, old people, and sick to suffering and starvation.

The Soviet Government declares in this note that such questions cannot be settled by a unilateral decision as Great Britain has done, but must be settled by common consent of the Powers. We expect that neutral countries, as well as public opinion in Great Britain and France will recognize the correctness of our position, and will take measures to prevent the war between the armies of belligerent countries from being turned into a war against children, women, old people, and sick. In any event our country as a neutral country which is not interested in the spread of war, will take every measure to render the war less devastating, to weaken it, and to hasten its termination in the interests of peace.

From this standpoint the decision of the American Government to lift the embargo on the export of arms to belligerent countries raises justified misgivings. It can scarcely be doubted that the effect of this decision will not be to weaken the war and hasten its termination, but on the contrary to intensify, aggravate and protract it. Of course this decision may ensure big profits for the American war industries, but one asks, can this serve as any justification for lifting the embargo on the export of arms from America? Clearly it cannot.

Such is the international situation at the present moment. Such are the principles of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

SPEECH DELIVERED ON MARCH 29, 1940

III

M. Molotov's speech at the Sixth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on March 29, 1940, dealt with Soviet-Finnish relations, the reaction in other countries, particularly in France and Great Britain, to the Soviet-Finnish hostilities, the international position of the U.S.S.R. generally, and the firm determination of the U.S.S.R. to pursue a policy of neutrality and for the restoration and maintenance of world peace whilst herself preparing economically and militarily to meet all eventualities.

It may be recalled that the Soviet-Finnish negotiations had started on October 12, 1939. The object of the Soviet Government, as repeatedly stated by the latter, had been to ensure the security of Leningrad and to safeguard the strategic position of the U.S.S.R. in the Baltic and the Arctic without in any way impinging upon the sovereign State independence of Finland.

In the course of the negotiations the Soviet Government modified some of their original proposals in the hope of coming to an amicable arrangement with Finland. The Soviet Government was, of course, not afraid of Finland herself, but of the use which others might make of her territory with or without the consent of the Finnish Government; the very intransigence shown by the Finnish Government towards the Soviet proposals helped to convince the Soviets that others were actually at the back of Finland instigating her opposition and that the danger of Finland being used sooner or later as a jumping-off ground for an attack against the Soviets (as it had been used before) was very real. This the Soviet Government was determined to prevent at all costs. However, the Finnish Government refused to accept the Soviet proposals. This was made clear publicly by M. Cajander, then Finnish Prime Minister, in a speech November 23, 1939.

On November 26, 1939, an incident occurred in which Finnish artillery fired on Soviet troops. This brought things to a head. The demands of the Soviet Government for the withdrawal of Finnish troops a certain distance from the Soviet-Finnish frontier was refused by the Finns. Similar incidents occurred during the next couple of days and finally, on November 28, 1939, the Soviet Government denounced the 1932 Soviet-Finnish Non-Aggression Pact and at midnight, November 29, 1939, M. Molotov in a broadcast to the Soviet people announced the rupture of diplomatic relations with Finland. Definite hostilities broke out between the two countries on December 1, 1939, and after a decisive victory by the Soviet forces peace was concluded on March 12, 1940.

In reading M. Molotov's speech one should bear in mind not only the above facts, but also the frenzied agitation and wordy attacks made on the U.S.S.R. in the press of Britain, France, U.S.A. and other countries during the three months of the Soviet-Finnish hostilities—the lies told in that press about the progress of the campaign, the open hostility of the Governments of the bourgeois democracies and their boasts of the official and unofficial help being given to or organized for the Finns. (See the official admissions by Chamberlain, in the House of Commons on March 19, 1940, and Daladier, in the French Chamber of Deputies, on March 12, 1940, as to the amount of help they had actually sent and were prepared to send to Finland.)

Finally, one must also remember the demands made by some leaders of the extreme Right and the more Left sections, particularly in France, for increasing such help whatever the consequences, the hints dropped about the possibility of bombing the Baku oil wells, etc. It might also be well to remember that when in February 1940, the Finns sued for peace and the Soviet Government, no doubt as a friendly gesture, gave the British Government an opportunity to co-operate in the restoration of peace, the then British Government refused this chance of establishing more friendly relations with the U.S.S.R.

FIVE months have elapsed since the last session of the Supreme Soviet. In this brief interval events have occurred which are of first-rate importance in the development of international relations. It, therefore, behoves us at this session of the Supreme Soviet to examine questions relating to our foreign policy. Recent events in international life must be examined first of all in the light of the war which broke out in central Europe last autumn. So far there have been no big battles in the war between the Anglo-French bloc and Germany, action having been confined to isolated engagements, chiefly on sea, and also in the air. It is known, however, that the desire for peace expressed by Germany last year was declined by the Governments of Great Britain and France, and as a result preparations for the expansion of the war were further intensified on both sides.

Germany, which has latterly come to unite about 80 million Germans, which has brought certain neighbouring States under her sway, and which has in many respects strengthened her military might, has evidently become a dangerous competitor to the principal imperialist Powers in Europe—Great Britain and France. The latter therefore declared war on Germany under the pretext of fulfilling their obligations towards Poland. It is now clearer than ever how far the real aims of the Governments of these Powers are removed from the purpose of defending disintegrated Poland or Czecho-Slovakia. This is shown if only by the fact that the Governments of Great Britain and France have proclaimed that their aim in this war is to smash and dismember Germany, although this aim is still being concealed from the masses of the people under the cover of such slogans as the defence of “democratic” countries and the “rights” of small nations.

Inasmuch as the Soviet Union refused to become an abettor of Great Britain and France in this imperialist policy towards Germany, their hostility towards the Soviet Union became still more pronounced, vividly showing how profound are the class roots of the hostile policy of the imperialists towards the Socialist State. And when war began in Finland, the British and French imperialists were prepared to make it the starting-point of war against the U.S.S.R. in which not only Finland herself but also the Scandinavian countries—Sweden and Norway—were to be used. The attitude of the Soviet Union to the war developing in Europe is well known. Here, too, the peaceable policy of the U.S.S.R. has been quite definitely displayed. The Soviet Union at once proclaimed that its position is one of neutrality and it has unswervingly adhered to that policy throughout this period.

A radical change for the better in the relations between the Soviet Union and Germany found its expression in the Non-Aggression Pact signed last August. These new, good relations between the U.S.S.R. and Germany have been tested in practice in connection with events in former Poland and their strength has been sufficiently proved. The development of economic relations which was envisaged even then, last autumn, found concrete expression already in the August, 1939, Trade Agreement, and subsequently in the February, 1940, Trade Agreement. Trade between Germany and the U.S.S.R. began to increase on the basis of mutual economic advantage and there is ground for its further development.

Our relations with Britain and France have taken a somewhat different course. Inasmuch as the Soviet Union did not wish to become the tool of British and French imperialists in their struggle for world hegemony against Germany, we have encountered at every step the profound hostility of their policy towards our country. This has gone farthest of all in connection with the Finnish question on which I shall dwell later. But in the past few months there has been quite a number of other instances of hostility towards the U.S.S.R.

on the part of French and British policy. Suffice it to mention that a couple of months ago the French authorities found nothing better to do than to effect a police raid on our Trade Representation in Paris.

In spite of their efforts to pick on every trifle, the search of the Trade Representation premises yielded no result. It only brought disgrace on the initiators of this preposterous affair and showed that there were no real grounds whatever for this hostile action towards our country.

As we see from the circumstances connected with the recall of comrade Souritz, our Ambassador to France, the French Government is seeking artificial pretexts to stress its unfriendly attitude towards the Soviet Union. In order to make it clear that the Soviet Union is no more interested in the relations between the two countries than France we have recalled comrade Souritz from the post of Ambassador to France.

Or take such instances of hostility towards the U.S.S.R. as the seizure by British warships in the Far East of two of our steamers proceeding to Vladivostok with goods purchased by us in America and China. If to this we add such facts as the refusal to fulfil old orders for industrial machinery placed by us in Britain, the attachment of funds of our Trade Representation in France, and many others, the hostile nature of the actions of the British and French authorities with regard to the Soviet Union becomes still more manifest.

Attempts have been made to justify these hostile acts towards our foreign trade on the ground that by trading with Germany we are helping her in her war against Britain and France. It does not take much to see that these arguments are not worth a brass farthing. One has only to compare the U.S.S.R., say, with Rumania. It is known that Rumania's trade with Germany constitutes half her total foreign trade and that, moreover, the proportion of Rumania's national production borne by her exports to Germany of such basic commodities, for example, as oil products and grain, far exceeds the proportion of the Soviet national production borne

by the exports of the U.S.S.R. to Germany. Nevertheless, the Governments of Britain and France do not resort to hostile acts against Rumania, nor do they think it feasible to demand that Rumania should cease her trade with Germany. Quite different is their attitude to the Soviet Union. Hence the hostile acts of France and Britain towards the Soviet Union are to be explained not by the fact that the U.S.S.R. is trading with Germany, but by the fact that the plans of the British and French ruling circles to utilize our country in the war against Germany have been frustrated, and as a result they are pursuing a policy of revenge towards the Soviet Union.

It should be added that Britain and France have resorted to all these hostile acts even though the Soviet Union has so far not carried out any unfriendly acts against these countries. As to the fantastic plans attributed to the Soviet Union of a Red Army "march on India," a "march on the East," and the like, they are such obvious absurdities that one must completely have lost his senses to believe such ridiculous lies. This is not the point, of course.

The point evidently is that the Soviet Union's policy of neutrality is not to the liking of the British and French ruling circles. What is more, their nerves do not seem to be quite in order. They want to force us to adopt a different policy—a policy of enmity and war against Germany, a policy which would afford them an opportunity of utilizing the U.S.S.R. for their imperialist aims. It is time these gentry understood that *the Soviet Union never has been and never will be the tool of the policy of others, that the U.S.S.R. has always pursued its own policy and always will pursue it, irrespective of whether these gentry in other countries like it or not.*

I shall now pass to the Finnish question. What was the meaning of the war that has taken place in Finland during the last nearly three and a half months? As you know the meaning of these events lay in the necessity for safeguarding the security of the north-western frontiers of the Soviet Union, and above all the safeguarding of the security of

Leningrad. All through October and November of last year the Soviet Government discussed with the Finnish Government proposals which, in view of the existing international situation—a situation that was growing more and more inflammable—we considered absolutely essential and urgent for safeguarding the security of our country, and especially of Leningrad. Nothing came of these negotiations because of the unfriendly attitude adopted by the Finnish representatives. The decision of the issue passed to the field of war.

It may safely be said that had Finland not been subjected to foreign influences, had Finland been less incited by certain third States to adopt a hostile policy towards the U.S.S.R., the Soviet Union and Finland would have arrived at a peaceful understanding last autumn, and matters would have been settled without war. But in spite of the fact that the Soviet Government reduced its request to a minimum, a settlement could not be reached by diplomatic means.

Now that hostilities in Finland have ceased and a peace treaty between the U.S.S.R. and the Republic of Finland has been signed, it is necessary and possible to judge the significance of the war in Finland in the light of incontrovertible facts. And these facts speak for themselves. They show that in the neighbourhood of Leningrad, all over the Karelian Isthmus to a depth of fifty to sixty kilometres, the Finnish authorities had erected numerous powerful ferro-concrete and granite and earth fortifications armed with artillery and machine-guns. The number of these fortifications ran into many hundreds. These fortifications, especially the ferro-concrete structures, attaining a high degree of military strength, connected by underground thoroughfares, surrounded by anti-tank trenches and granite anti-tank obstacles and supported by countless minefields, together constituted what was known as the "Mannerheim Line" which was built under the supervision of foreign experts on the model of the "Maginot Line" and the "Siegfried Line."

It should be mentioned that until recently these fortifications were considered impregnable, that is, such as no army

had ever broken through before. It should also be mentioned that the Finnish military authorities had endeavoured beforehand to convert every little village in this area into a fortified position supplied with arms, radio antennæ, and fuel stations, etc. In many parts of the south and east of Finland strategic railways and highways of no economic importance whatever had been built leading right up to our frontier. In short, hostilities in Finland have shown that already by 1939 Finland, and especially the Karelian Isthmus, had been converted into a *place d'armes* ready for an attack by third Powers on the Soviet Union, for an attack on Leningrad.

Incontrovertible facts have shown that the hostile policy which we encountered on the part of Finland last autumn was no fortuitous thing. Forces hostile to the Soviet Union had prepared in Finland such a *place d'armes* against our country and in the first place against Leningrad, which, should a foreign situation arise unfavourable to the U.S.S.R., was to play its part in the plans of the anti-Soviet forces of the imperialists and their allies in Finland. Not only has the Red Army smashed the Mannerheim Line and thereby covered itself with glory as the first army to force its way under most difficult conditions through a deep, powerful zone of perfectly modern military fortifications, not only has the Red Army together with the Red Fleet destroyed the Finnish *place d'armes* which had been made ready for an attack on Leningrad, but it has also put an end to certain anti-Soviet plans which some third countries had been hatching during the past few years.

How far the enmity towards our country had gone on the part of the Finnish ruling and military circles who had prepared a *place d'armes* against the Soviet Union, is also seen from the numerous cases of exceptionally barbarous atrocities perpetrated by the Finnish "Whites" on wounded Red Army men who had fallen into their hands. For example, when in one of the districts north of Lake Ladoga, the Finnish "Whites" surrounded our hospital dug-outs where 120 severely wounded men were lying, they killed them all to a

man. Some were burnt, others were found with shattered skulls, while the rest had been bayoneted or shot. Although they had mortal wounds, large numbers of men who died there and in other places were also found to have been shot in the head or finished off with rifle butts, while some of the men who had been shot were found to have knife stabs in the face. Some of the corpses had been beheaded, and heads could not be found.

As to our medical nurses who fell into the hands of Finnish "Whites," they were subjected to special atrocities and incredible brutalities. In some cases corpses were found tied to trees, head down. All these barbarities and countless atrocities were the fruit of the policy of the Finnish "White" Guards who had fanned hatred towards our country among their people. Such is the true face of these Finnish champions of "western civilization."

It is not difficult to see that the war in Finland was not merely an encounter with Finnish troops. No, the matter was more complicated than that. It was not merely Finnish troops whom our troops encountered here but the combined forces of the imperialists of a number of countries, including British, French, and others who assisted the Finnish bourgeoisie with every form of weapon, especially artillery and aircraft as well as with men in the guise of "volunteers," with gold and every kind of supplies, and with their frenzied propaganda all over the world for the purpose of instigating war against the Soviet Union in every way.

To this should be added that amidst this furious howling of the enemies of the Soviet Union, always loudest of all were the shrill voices of all those prostituted "Socialists" of the Second International—all those lackeys of capital who have sold themselves body and soul to the warmongers.

Speaking in the Commons on March 19, Mr. Chamberlain, the British Premier, not only expressed his malicious regret at having failed to prevent the termination of war in Finland, thus turning his "peace-loving" imperialist soul inside out for all the world to see, but he also made something

in the nature of a sum total of how and in what way British imperialists had endeavoured to help to fan the war in Finland against the Soviet Union. He made public a list of war materials that had been promised and dispatched to Finland: 152 aeroplanes were promised, 101 sent; 223 guns promised, 114 sent; 297,000 shells were promised, 185,000 sent; 100 Vickers guns were promised, 100 sent; 20,700 air bombs were promised, 15,700 were sent; 20,000 anti-tank mines were promised, 10,000 were sent; and so on.

Without the least embarrassment Mr. Chamberlain stated that "preparations for an expedition were carried on with all rapidity, and at the beginning of March an expeditionary force of 100,000 men was ready to leave—two months before Mannerheim had asked for it to arrive. This was not necessarily the last force." Such, on his own admission, is the true face of this "peace-loving" British imperialist.

As to France we learn from the French Press that she dispatched to Finland 179 aeroplanes, 472 guns, 795,000 shells, 5,100 machine-guns, 200,000 hand grenades, etc. On March 12, M. Daladier, then French Premier, declared in the Chamber of Deputies that "France has taken the lead among the countries which have agreed to supply munitions to Finland, and in particular at the request from Helsinki she has just dispatched ultra-modern bombing planes to Finland." M. Daladier announced that "a French expeditionary corps stood ready and equipped since February 26. A large number of vessels were ready to sail from two large ports in the Channel and Atlantic coast." He further declared that the Allies "would help Finland with all the forces promised." These hostile statements of M. Daladier towards the Soviet Union speak for themselves.

Mention should also be made of Sweden's part in the Finnish war. From reports printed in all the Swedish newspapers during the war against the Soviet Union Sweden supplied Finland with "a certain quantity of aircraft, roughly equal to one-fifth of Sweden's total air force at the time. The Swedish War Minister stated that the Finns had received

from Sweden 84,000 rifles, 575 machine-guns, over 300 artillery guns, 300,000 grenades, and 50 million cartridges. All this material, as the Minister declared, was of the very latest pattern.

Nor was Italy behindhand in her efforts to fan the war in Finland to which, for example, she dispatched fifty military planes. Finland also received military aid from such a devotee of "peace" as the United States of America. According to incomplete information at our disposal, the total of munitions of all kinds sent to Finland by other countries during the war period alone amounted to not less than 350 aeroplanes, about 1,500 guns, over 6,000 machine-guns, about 100,000 rifles, 650,000 hand grenades, 2½ million shells, 160 million cartridges, and much else.

There is no need to cite other facts to show that what was going on in Finland was not merely our collision with Finnish troops. It was a collision with the combined forces of a number of imperialist States, most hostile towards the Soviet Union. By smashing these combined forces of our enemies the Red Army and the Red Fleet have added another glorious page to their history, and have shown that the springs of valour, self-sacrifice, and heroism among our people are inexhaustible.

The war in Finland has exacted heavy sacrifices both from us and from the Finns. According to the estimates of our General Staff, on our side the number killed and those who died of wounds was 48,745, or somewhat less than 49,000 men and the number wounded 158,863. Attempts are being made on the part of the Finns to minimize their losses, but their casualties were considerably bigger than ours. Our General Staff places the number of Finnish killed at not less than 60,000, without counting those who died of wounds, and the number of wounded at not less than 250,000. Thus, considering that the strength of the Finnish Army was not less than 600,000 men, one must admit that the Finnish Army lost in killed and wounded over one-half of its total strength. Such are the facts.

The question remains why did the ruling circles of Great Britain and France and of several other countries, too, take such an active part in this war on the side of Finland against the Soviet Union? It is well known that the British and French Governments made desperate efforts to prevent the termination of the war and the restoration of peace in Finland, although they were not bound by any obligations towards Finland. It is also well known that some time ago even though there existed a Pact of Mutual Assistance between France and Czecho-Slovakia, France did not come to the aid of Czecho-Slovakia. Yet both France and Britain positively forced their military aid upon Finland, doing their very best to prevent the termination of the war and the restoration of peace between Finland and the Soviet Union. Hired pen pirates, scribes who specialize in fraudulent news and sensation mongering are trying to attribute this conduct of Anglo-French circles to their great solicitude for "small nations."

But to attribute this policy of Britain and France to their particular solicitude for the interests of small countries is simply ridiculous. To attribute it to their obligations towards the League of Nations, which, it is alleged, demanded protection for one of its members, is also quite absurd. In fact it was hardly a year ago that Italy seized and destroyed independent Albania which was a member of the League of Nations. Well? Did Britain and France come to Albania's defence? Did they even raise a feeble voice in protest against Italy's predatory action in forcibly subjugating Albania without the least regard for its population of over a million people, and completely ignoring the fact that Albania was a member of the League of Nations?

No, neither the British nor French Governments, nor yet the United States of America, nor the League of Nations—which had lost every vestige of prestige, because it is dominated by these very Anglo-French imperialists—even raised a finger in this case. For twelve whole months these "protectors" of small nations, these "champions" of the rights

of members of the League of Nations, have not dared to raise the question of Italy's seizure of Albania in the League of Nations, although this seizure occurred last April. More, they have virtually sanctioned this conquest. Consequently it is not the protection of small nations and not the protection of the rights of members of the League of Nations that explain the support rendered to Finland by the ruling circles of Britain and France against the Soviet Union.

This assistance is to be explained by the fact that in Finland they had a *place d'armes* ready for an attack upon the U.S.S.R. whereas Albania occupied no such a place in their plans. As a matter of fact the rights and interests of small countries are just so much small change in the hands of the imperialists. *The Times*, leading newspaper of the British imperialists, and *Le Temps*, leading newspaper of the French imperialists, not to mention other British and French bourgeois newspapers, have during these last months been openly calling for intervention against the Soviet Union without the least regard for the fact that so-called normal diplomatic relations exist between Britain and France on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other.

In step with these leading bourgeois newspapers, and even a little ahead of them, are speeches from the servants' hall that has now been instituted in every "respectable" bourgeois State for "Socialists" who are doing their utmost to fan and spread the flames of war.

In the speeches of the Anglo-French imperialist Press and of these its "Socialist" henchmen, we hear that same voice of infuriated imperialism which hates the Socialist State and with which we have been familiar from the earliest days of the Soviet Union. As far back as April 17, 1919, the London *Times* wrote: "If we look at the map we shall find that the best approach to Petrograd is from the Baltic and that the shortest and easiest route is through Finland whose frontiers are only about thirty miles distant from the Russian capital. Finland is the key to Petrograd and Petrograd is the key to Moscow." If proofs were needed that the British and French

imperialists have not yet discarded these hare-brained plans, recent events in Finland have dispelled all doubt on this score.

These plans have again been thwarted, not because of lack of zeal on the part of the anti-Soviet forces in Britain and France and not merely because at the last moment leading circles in Finland and also in Sweden and Norway showed, at last, some glimmerings of reason. These plans were thwarted by the brilliant successes of the Red Army, particularly on the Karelian Isthmus. But recent events have reminded us all of the necessity of continuing steadily to increase the might of our Red Army and of all the defences of our country.

At the beginning of February the Finns made practical moves for the termination of the war in Finland. We learned through the Swedish Government that the Finnish Government desired to ascertain our terms upon which the war could be brought to a close. Before deciding this issue we approached the People's Government of Finland for their opinion on this question. The People's Government expressed the view that in order to put an end to bloodshed and to ameliorate the condition of the Finnish people, a proposal to terminate the war should be welcomed. Thereupon we proposed our terms which soon after were accepted by the Finnish Government.

I must add that a week after negotiations with the Finns were opened, the British Government also expressed a desire to ascertain whether there was any possibility of mediation, ostensibly with the object of stopping war in Finland, but when comrade Maisky, our Ambassador in Britain, informed London of our proposals which were subsequently adopted in their entirety, by Finland, the British Government refused to co-operate in stopping the war and restoring peace between the U.S.S.R. and Finland. Nevertheless, agreement was soon reached between the U.S.S.R. and Finland. The results of the agreement to terminate hostilities and establish peace are contained in the Peace Treaty signed on March 12. In this connection the question arose of the People's Government dissolving itself, which it did.

You are familiar with the terms of the Peace Treaty. This Treaty has changed the southern and partly the eastern frontiers of Finland. The whole of the Karelian Isthmus together with Viborg and Viborg Bay, the whole of the western and northern shore of Lake Ladoga, together with Kexholm and Sortavala have passed to the Soviet Union. In the region of Kandalaksha where the Finnish frontier approached particularly close to the Murmansk railway the frontier has been pushed further back. Finland ceded to the Soviet Union small sections of the Sredny and Rybachy Peninsula which belonged to her in the north, and a certain group of islands in the Gulf of Finland together with the island of Hogland.

In addition the Soviet Union has acquired on a thirty years' lease in return for the annual payment of eight million Finnish marks the Peninsula of Hangoe and adjacent islands where we shall build a naval base as a protection against aggression at the entrance to the Gulf of Finland. Furthermore, the Treaty facilitates the transit of goods between Sweden and Norway and the Soviet Union. At the same time the Peace Treaty provides for the mutual abstention from aggression and from participation in hostile coalitions.

Attempts have been made in the British and French Press to depict the Soviet-Finnish Treaty, and particularly the transfer of the Karelian Isthmus to the Soviet Union, as a "destruction" of the independence of Finland. This, of course, is absurd and a downright falsehood. Finland still comprises territory nearly four times as large as Hungary, and over eight times as large as Switzerland. If no one has any doubt that Hungary and Switzerland are independent States how can there be any doubt that Finland is independent and sovereign?

The British and French Press also wrote that the Soviet Union wants to convert Finland into a mere Baltic State. That, too, is absurd, of course. It is sufficient to point to the fact that after having occupied during the war the region of

Petsamo on the Arctic coast, the U.S.S.R. voluntarily restored this region to Finland, considering it necessary to let Finland have an ice-free ocean port. From this it follows that we regard Finland also as a northern and not merely a Baltic country. There is no truth in these fabrications of the British and French newspapers which are old hands in the art of forgery in their anti-Soviet propaganda. The truth lies elsewhere: it is that *the Soviet Union, having smashed the Finnish army, and having every opportunity of occupying the whole of Finland, did not do so and did not demand any indemnities for her war-expenditure as any other Power would have done, but confined her demands to a minimum and displayed magnanimity towards Finland.*

What is the basic idea of the Peace Treaty? It is that it *properly ensures the safety of Leningrad and of Murmansk and the Murmansk railway.* This time we could not confine ourselves merely to the desires we expressed last autumn, acceptance of which by Finland would have averted war. After the blood of our men had been spilt, through no fault of our own, and after we had become convinced that the hostile policy of the Finnish Government towards the Soviet Union had gone very far indeed, we were obliged to put the question of the security of Leningrad on a more reliable basis, in addition we could not but raise the question of the security of the Murmansk railway and Murmansk which is our only ice-free ocean port in the west and is therefore of extreme importance for our foreign trade and for communication between the Soviet Union and other countries generally.

We pursued no other object in the Peace Treaty than that of safeguarding the security of Leningrad, Murmansk, and the Murmansk railway. But we considered it necessary to settle this problem on a reliable and enduring basis. The Peace Treaty is based on the recognition of the principle that Finland is an independent State, recognition of the independence of her home and foreign policy, and at the same time, on the necessity of safeguarding the security of Leningrad and the north-western frontiers of the Soviet Union.

This the object we set out to obtain has been achieved,

and we may express our complete satisfaction with our Treaty with Finland. Political and economic relations with Finland are now fully restored. The Government expresses the conviction that normal and good neighbourly relations will develop between the Soviet Union and Finland.

We must, however, utter a warning against attempts to violate the Peace Treaty just concluded that are being made by certain circles in Finland as well as in Sweden and Norway under the pretext of forming a military defensive alliance between these countries. In the light of the speech recently delivered by M. Hambro, President of the Norwegian Storting, in which referring to historical examples, he called upon Finland "to reconquer the frontiers of her country" and declared that a peace like the one that Finland had concluded with the U.S.S.R. "cannot last for long"—in the light of this and similar utterances it is easy to understand that attempts to form a so-called "defensive alliance" of Finland, Sweden, and Norway, are directed against the U.S.S.R. and are unwisely fostered by the ideology of a military *revanche*.

The formation of a military alliance of this kind in which Finland participated would not only run counter to Article 3 of the Peace Treaty which forbids either of the contracting parties to join any coalitions hostile to the other, but to the Peace Treaty as a whole, which firmly defined the Soviet-Finnish frontier. Loyalty to this Treaty is incompatible with Finland's participation in any military *revanche* alliance against the U.S.S.R. As to the participation of Sweden and Norway in such an alliance, this would imply that these countries had abandoned their policy of neutrality and had adopted a new foreign policy from which the Soviet Union could not but draw the proper conclusions.

Our Government, on its part, considers that the Soviet Union has no points of dispute with Sweden and Norway and that Soviet-Swedish and Soviet-Norwegian relations should develop on the basis of friendship. *As to rumours that the Soviet Union is demanding ports on the west coast of Scandinavia, claiming*

Narvik, etc., these rumours are spread for anti-Soviet purposes and are so wild that they need no refutation.

Efforts of "Socialist" gentry like Hoeglund in Sweden and Tranmael in Norway to spoil relations between these countries and the Soviet Union should be branded as the efforts of sworn enemies of the working class.

The conclusion of the Peace Treaty with Finland consummates the task we set ourselves last year of safeguarding the security of the Soviet Union in the direction of the Baltic. This Treaty is a necessary complement to the three Pacts of Mutual Assistance concluded with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania respectively. Our experience during the six months that have elapsed since these Pacts of Mutual Assistance were concluded has enabled us to draw very definite positive conclusions concerning these Treaties with the Baltic countries. It is quite clear that the Treaties concluded by the Soviet Union with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have served to strengthen the international position both of the Soviet Union and of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

In spite of the scare raised by imperialist circles hostile to the Soviet Union, the State and political independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania has not suffered in any way, while economic intercourse between these countries and the Soviet Union has begun to increase markedly. The Pacts with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are being carried out in a satisfactory manner and this creates premises for a further improvement in relations between the Soviet Union and these countries.

Recently the foreign Press has been devoting great attention to the relations between the Soviet Union and its neighbours on the southern borders, particularly on the Trans-Caucasian border and with Rumania. Needless to say the Government sees no ground for any deterioration in our relations with our southern neighbours either. True, in Syria and in the Near East generally extensive and suspicious activity is on foot in the creation of Anglo-French, mainly colonial, armies headed by General Weygand.

We must exercise vigilance in regard to attempts to utilize these colonial and non-colonial troops for purposes hostile to the Soviet Union. Any such attempt would evoke on our part counter-measures against the aggressors, and the danger of playing with fire in this way must be perfectly obvious to the Powers hostile to the U.S.S.R. and to those of our neighbours who might become tools of such an aggressive policy against the U.S.S.R.

As to our relations with Turkey and Iran, they are determined by our existing Pacts of Non-Aggression and by an unswerving desire of the Soviet Union for the observance of mutual obligations arising out of them. Our relations with Iran in the economic sphere are regulated by the Soviet-Iran Trade Treaty just concluded.

Of the southern neighbouring States I have mentioned, Rumania is one with which we have no Pact of Non-Aggression. This is due to the existence of an unsettled dispute, the question of Bessarabia whose seizure by Rumania the Soviet Union has never recognized although we have never raised the question of recovering Bessarabia by military means. Hence there are no grounds for any deterioration in Soviet-Rumanian relations. True it is now some time since we have had a Minister in Rumania and his duties are being performed by a Chargé d'affaires. But this has been due to certain specific circumstances of the recent past.

If we are to deal with this question we must recall the dubious rôle played by the Rumanian authorities in 1938 in relation to Butenko, who was then Soviet Acting Minister in Rumania. It is well known that later in some mysterious way he disappeared not only from the Legation but from Rumania, and to this day the Soviet Government has been unable to obtain any authentic information about his disappearance and what is more, we are expected to believe that the Rumanian authorities had nothing to do with this scandalous and criminal affair. Needless to say things like this should not happen in a civilized State or in any well-ordered country for that matter. After this the reason for

the delay in appointing a Soviet Minister to Rumania will be clear. It is to be assumed, however, that Rumania will understand that such things cannot be tolerated.

In our relations with Japan we have, not without some difficulty, settled several questions. This is evidenced by the conclusion on December 31 last of the Soviet-Japanese Fisheries Convention for the current year and also by Japan's consent to pay the last instalment for the Chinese-Eastern railway which had long been overdue. Nevertheless, we cannot express great satisfaction in regard to our relations with Japan. To this day, for example, notwithstanding the prolonged negotiations between the Soviet-Mongolian and Japan-Manchurian delegates, the important question of determining the frontier line on the territory in the area of the military conflict of last year has remained unsettled.

The Japanese authorities continue to raise obstacles in the way of normal utilization of the last instalment for the Chinese-Eastern Railway which Japan has paid. In many cases the treatment of employees of Soviet organizations in Japan and Manchuria by the Japanese authorities is quite abnormal. It is time it was realized in Japan that under no circumstances will the Soviet Union tolerate any infringement of her interests. Only if Soviet-Japanese relations are understood in this way can they develop satisfactorily.

In connection with Japan I should like to say a word or two on one, so to speak, unbusinesslike proposal. The other day a member of the Japanese Parliament put the following question to his Government: "Ought we not to consider how to put an end once and for all to the conflicts between the U.S.S.R. and Japan as, for example, by purchasing the maritime region and other territories?" The Japanese Deputy who put this question and is interested in the purchase of Soviet territory which is not for sale must be a jovial fellow. But in my opinion his stupid question will not help to raise the prestige of his Parliament. If, however, the Japanese Parliament is so keen on trading, why should not its members raise the question of selling South Sakhalin?

I have no doubt that purchasers would be found in the U.S.S.R.

As regards our relations with the United States of America, they have not grown any better lately nor, for that matter, have they grown any worse if we disregard the so-called "moral embargo" against the U.S.S.R. which is perfectly meaningless, especially after the conclusion of peace between the U.S.S.R. and Finland. Our imports from the U.S.A. have increased as compared with last year and they might increase still more if the American authorities did not put obstacles in the way.

Such on the whole is the international situation as a consequence of events of the past five months.

From all that I have said the main tasks of our foreign policy in the present international situation will be clear. Stated briefly, *the task of our foreign policy is to ensure peace between the nations, and the security of our country.* The conclusion that must be drawn from this is that *we must maintain our position of neutrality and refrain from participating in the war between the big European Powers.*

This position is based on the Treaties we have concluded, and it fully corresponds to the interests of the Soviet Union. At the same time this position serves as a restraining influence in preventing the further extension of the war in Europe, and it is therefore in the interests of all nations that are anxious for peace and are already groaning under the new and enormous burden of privations caused by the war.

In summing up the events of this past period we see that as regards safeguarding the security of our country we have achieved no mean success. And it is this that makes our enemies furious. Confident, however, in our cause and in our strength we will continue consistently and unswervingly to pursue our foreign policy.

SPEECH DELIVERED ON AUGUST 1, 1940

IV

In the period which elapsed between M. Molotov's speech at the sixth session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on March 29, 1940, and his speech at the seventh session on August 1, 1940, events of tremendous importance had occurred both as regards the European war and in regard to matters concerning the U.S.S.R.

One thing alone had changed but little, i.e. the frigidity of British-Soviet relations, and this fact should be borne in mind when reading M. Molotov's speech. The only change for the better had been the appointment, after considerable delay, of Sir Stafford Cripps as British Ambassador to the U.S.S.R.

As regards the war, Germany had overrun Norway and Denmark on April 9, 1940, and Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg on May 10, 1940. On June 10, 1940, Italy declared war on Britain and France and soon after came the amazing débâcle of France.

All these events, as well as Soviet relations with Germany, Italy, Turkey, Iran, Japan, and the U.S.A. are dealt with and form the background of M. Molotov's speech.

As for the Soviet Union herself, M. Molotov could register some very important achievements.

A dispute with Rumania which had lasted for twenty-two years, e.g. the restoration to the U.S.S.R. of Bessarabia, which Rumania had seized forcibly at a time when Soviet Russia was too weak to withstand the robbery, was settled on June 28, 1940. At the same time Northern Bukovina, of great strategic importance, and whose population are mainly the blood brothers of the people of Soviet Moldavia and the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, was also ceded by Rumania to the U.S.S.R.

In the meantime, important historical events were happening in Estonia,

Latvia and Lithuania. These States had for centuries been part of the Russian Empire to which they were of the utmost strategic and economic importance. After the November Revolution (1917), both Germany and the Allies, for their own ends, compelled the severance of these three States from Soviet Russia; subsequently capitalist régimes were set up in the three Baltic States which in later years developed into virtually Fascist régimes.

However, between June 17-21, 1940, the Fascist or semi-Fascist Governments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania fell, and left-wing Governments were set up. Elections held in all three States on July 14, 1940, were by secret ballot, and never before had such a large proportion of the population voted—81.6 per cent. in Estonia; 94.7 per cent. in Latvia; 95.5 per cent. in Lithuania.

The new Governments of the three States decided unanimously to form Socialist Soviet Republics and on July 21, 1940, the Parliaments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania applied for incorporation in the Soviet Union as constituent republics of the U.S.S.R.

Such a step insured them on the one hand security against attack by any of the Big Powers and, on the other, free development of their national economy and national culture.

By joining the U.S.S.R. they became equal partners in the Union on an equality with all the other nationalities, with an equal voice in framing both the internal and foreign policy of their joint Fatherland.

At the same time it meant a great accession of strength to the Soviet Union which not only gained strategic bases and ice-free ports in the Baltic, but, as M. Molotov pointed out in his speech, could now speak in the name of a population of over 193,000,000 souls.

THE four months that have passed since the Sixth Session of the Supreme Soviet are highly important because of the events that have occurred in Europe. As a result of the military operations pursued by Germany, first in Norway and Denmark, then in Belgium and Holland, and lastly in the territory of France, the war in Europe has assumed wide dimensions. On June 10 Germany was joined by Italy who declared war on Great Britain and France. Thus the fourth largest European Power has entered the war. Since last spring the war has been developing rapidly.

Without dwelling on the events that took place in Norway, Denmark, Belgium, and Holland, I want particularly to note the rapid defeat and capitulation of France. In the matter of a month or six weeks the German army not only broke the resistance of France but compelled her to sign an armistice, under the terms of which the greater part of her territory, including Paris, remains in the occupation of German troops. Nevertheless, although she has obtained an armistice France has not yet obtained peace. Nothing is known as yet about the peace terms. Of the two Allies that confronted Germany and Italy only Great Britain has remained, and she has decided to continue the war relying on the assistance of the United States.

There is no need to dwell here on all the causes that brought about the defeat of France who revealed her exceptional weakness in the war. Clearly the cause lay not alone in the bad military preparedness, although this cause has now become universally known. Of considerable importance was also the fact that, *unlike Germany, leading circles in France treated too lightly the rôle and weight of the Soviet Union in European affairs.* Events in the past months have clearly demon-

strated something more. They have shown that the ruling circles of France were not in touch with the French people and, far from relying on the support of the latter, they feared them—a people which deservedly are famed as liberty-loving with glorious revolutionary traditions. That was one of the serious causes of France's weakness that has now revealed itself.

The people of France are now faced with the difficult task of healing wounds inflicted by the war and, following this, the task of regeneration which cannot, however, be realized by the old methods. In her war against the Allies Germany achieved great successes but she has not yet achieved her principal objective—the termination of the war on terms which she considers desirable.

On July 19, the Reich's Chancellor of Germany again addressed Britain with an appeal to come to terms with regard to peace, but the British Government, as we know, rejected this proposal. The British Government interpreted this proposal as a demand for Britain's capitulation and stated in reply that it would continue the war until Britain had attained victory. It even went so far as to break off diplomatic relations with France, its ally of yesterday. This means that the Government of Great Britain does not wish to give up colonies which Britain possesses in all parts of the globe and declares that she is prepared to continue the war for world supremacy despite the fact that after the defeat of France and Italy's entry into the war on the side of Germany this struggle involves considerably greater difficulties for Britain.

The first year of the European war is drawing to a close but the end of the war is not yet in sight. It is more probable that we are now on the eve of a new stage of intensification of the war between Germany and Italy on the one side and Britain assisted by the United States on the other. All these events have not caused a change in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. True to her policy of peace and neutrality, the Soviet Union is not taking part in the war.

Our relations with Germany, which underwent a turn nearly a year ago, remain entirely as laid down in the Soviet-

German Agreement. This Agreement, strictly observed by our Government, removed the possibility of friction in Soviet-German relations when Soviet measures were carried out along our Western frontier and at the same time it has assured Germany a calm feeling of assurance in the East. The course of events in Europe, far from reducing the significance of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, on the contrary, emphasized the importance of its existence and further development.

Lately foreign and particularly the British and Anglo-philic Press has been frequently speculating on the possibility of disagreements between the Soviet Union and Germany and has been attempting to intimidate us by the prospect of the growth of Germany's might. These attempts have been exposed more than once by ourselves as well as by Germany and have been swept aside as worthless. We can only reiterate that in our opinion the good neighbourly and friendly relations that have been established between the Soviet Union and Germany are not based on fortuitous considerations of a transient nature, but on the fundamental interests of both the U.S.S.R. and Germany.

It must also be noted that our relations with Italy have lately improved. An exchange of views with Italy has revealed that there is every possibility for our countries to ensure mutual understanding in the sphere of foreign policy. There is also every ground to expect an extension of our trade relations.

As regards Soviet-British relations, no essential changes have lately occurred. It should be recognized that after all the hostile acts committed by Britain against the U.S.S.R. of which we have had occasion to speak more than once at the Supreme Soviet, it was difficult to expect that Soviet-British relations would develop favourably, although the appointment of Sir Stafford Cripps as Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. does, possibly, reflect a desire on the part of Britain to improve relations with the Soviet Union.

Permit me now to turn to those problems of our foreign

policy, the successful solution of which have recently brought about a considerable expansion of our territory and greatly augmented the strength of the Soviet Union.

There is no need to dwell here in detail on the way in which the incorporation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina in the Soviet Union was effected. The relevant documents were published in full on June 28. The representation which I made to M. Davidescu, the Rumanian Minister in Moscow, contained the following proposals: firstly, that Bessarabia be restored to the Soviet Union; secondly, that the northern part of Bukovina be transferred to the Soviet Union. As you know the Rumanian Government accepted our proposal and the conflict between the Soviet Union and Rumania which had lasted for twenty-two years was settled peacefully.

The Ukrainians and Moldavians who mainly populate Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina obtained the opportunity of joining the united family of Soviet nations and now start a new life, the life of a people liberated from the rule of the Rumanian boyars, landlords and capitalists. We now know with what tremendous joy the population of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina joined the ranks of Soviet citizens.

Thus the territory of the Soviet Union has been enlarged by the addition of Bessarabia which has an area of 44,500 square kilometres, and a population of 3,200,000, and of Northern Bukovina, which has an area of 6,000 square kilometres and a population of over 500,000.

As a result the frontiers of the Soviet Union have shifted to the west and reached the Danube which, next to the Volga, is the biggest river in Europe and one of the most important commercial routes for a number of European countries. You are aware, comrades, that the whole of the Soviet people welcomed the successful and long-awaited settlement of the Bessarabian question with great joy and satisfaction. On the other hand our relations with Rumania should now take a quite normal course.

I now come to our relations with Lithuania, Latvia, and

Estonia. Since the Mutual Assistance Pacts concluded with Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia had not produced the expected results, the problem of the relations of the Soviet Union with the Baltic countries has lately taken a new turn. The conclusion of these Pacts did not lead to a rapprochement between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia respectively, and the Soviet Union, as might have been expected, because this was opposed by the ruling bourgeois groups of the Baltic countries.

Far from taking the road of rapprochement with the Soviet Union as we had some right to expect after the conclusion of the Mutual Assistance Pacts, these ruling groups took the road of an intensification of hostile activities against the Soviet Union, pursuing them secretly and behind the back of the U.S.S.R. For this purpose the so-called Baltic Entente was utilized in which formerly only Latvia and Estonia were united in a military alliance against the U.S.S.R., but which, at the end of last year, was converted into a military alliance comprising Lithuania as well as Latvia and Estonia. It is thus clear that the ruling bourgeois groups of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were incapable of honestly carrying out the Mutual Assistance Pacts concluded with the Soviet Union; that on the contrary, they even extended their hostile activities against the Soviet Union.

Facts proving that the Governments of these countries were grossly violating the Mutual Assistance Pacts concluded with the U.S.S.R. kept piling up. It became utterly impossible to tolerate such a state of affairs any longer, particularly in the present international situation. This was the reason why the Soviet Government presented the demands of which you are aware concerning changes in the Governments of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and the dispatch of additional Red Army units to these countries. You know the results of these steps taken by our Government.

The most important measure carried out by the Governments friendly to the Soviet Union that were set up in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, was the holding of free par-

liamentary elections. In July democratic elections were held for the Lithuanian Diet, the Latvian Diet, and the Estonian State Duma. The elections proved that the ruling bourgeois cliques of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia did not express the will of their peoples but represented only a small group of exploiters.

The Diets of Lithuania and Latvia and the State Duma of Estonia were elected on the basis of universal direct and equal suffrage and secret ballot and have already expressed their unanimous opinion on fundamental political questions. We can note with satisfaction that the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania voted solidly for their representatives who unanimously pronounced in favour of introducing the Soviet system and the incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Thus relations between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and the Soviet Union must be placed on a new basis. The Supreme Soviet will examine the question of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia joining the Soviet Union as Union Soviet Socialist Republics of the U.S.S.R. There is not the slightest doubt that the affiliation of these Republics to the Soviet Union will assure their rapid economic development and the flourish of their national culture in every way; their entry into the Soviet Union will, moreover, greatly enhance their strength and assure their security, and at the same time, still further increase the might of the great Soviet Union.

As a result of the affiliation of the Baltic countries to the U.S.S.R., the population of the Soviet Union will be augmented by 2,880,000 population of Lithuania, 1,950,000 population of Latvia, and 1,120,000 population of Estonia. Thus, with the populations of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina the population of the Soviet Union will be increased by approximately 10,000,000. If to this we add over 13,000,000 population of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, the increase in the population of the Soviet Union during the past year will exceed 23,000,000. It should be noted that nineteen-twentieths of this population pre-

viously formed part of the population of Soviet Russia, but had been forcibly torn from her by the Western imperialist Powers when Soviet Russia was militarily weak. Now this population has been reunited with the Soviet Union.

As the figures of the population show, *the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will now be able to speak in the powerful voice, in the name of a population of 193,000,000 not counting the natural increase in the population of the U.S.S.R. in 1939 and 1940. The fact that the frontier of the Soviet Union will now be shifted to the Baltic coast is of first-rate importance for our country. At the same time we shall now have ice-free ports in the Baltic of which we stand so much in need.*

The successes of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union are all the more significant in that we have achieved them all by peaceful means, that the peaceful settlement of questions both with the Baltic countries and Bessarabia was achieved with the active co-operation and support of the broad masses of the people of these countries.

It must also be said that great responsibility rests on the Government of the Soviet Union for carrying out practical measures in a proper and organized manner for the political and economic reconstruction of the new Soviet Republics.

At the last Session of the Supreme Soviet I reported on the Peace Treaty with Finland. Over four months have passed since this Treaty was concluded and, on the whole, it is being carried out in a satisfactory manner. Since then a Trade Agreement has also been concluded with Finland, and we think that the prospects of the development of economic relations between our two countries are favourable.

The Finnish Government also accepted our proposal to demilitarize the Aaland Islands and to set up a Soviet Consulate there. The further development of Soviet-Finnish relations to the mutual interests of both countries depends mainly on Finland herself. Naturally if certain elements in the Finnish ruling circles do not cease their persecution of elements in Finland which are striving to strengthen good

neighbourly relations with the U.S.S.R., then relations between the U.S.S.R. and Finland may suffer.

Our relations with the Scandinavian countries, Norway and Sweden, cannot but depend on the situation prevailing there. Nothing definite can be said about Norway at present in view of her special position. As for Sweden, the particularly important point to be noted is that both our countries are interested in a considerable development of trade and economic relations. The economic negotiations now being conducted with Sweden should, I hope, result in an agreement that will be of no little benefit to both sides.

As for the Balkan countries, it is necessary to note first of all the fact that diplomatic relations have been established with Yugo-Slavia. While it may be said that the absence until then of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Yugo-Slavia was not our fault, it was on the proposal of the government of Yugo-Slavia, willingly accepted by the Soviet Union, that such relations were established. It may be hoped that gradually our economic relations with Yugo-Slavia will also develop.

Our relations with Bulgaria may be considered normal. It may be added that there are no outstanding questions between the Soviet Union and Bulgaria which might hinder further improvement in our relations.

No important changes have taken place in our relations with Turkey. It must be pointed out, however, that the documents recently published in the German "White Paper" have shed an unpleasant light on certain aspects of the activities carried on in Turkey. The subsequent explanations of Massigli, the French Ambassador to Turkey, could not change anything as regards the nature of these documents. In this connection I must say that as far back as the beginning of April, the Soviet Government pointed out to Turkey the impermissibility of the following occurrence. What happened was that at the beginning of April a foreign aeroplane coming from Turkish territory flew over the district of our city Batumi, where there are many oil refineries.

On the part of Turkey an attempt was made at first to deny that any such aeroplane had come from Turkish territory. Subsequently, however, Turkey promised to adopt measures to prevent flights of this kind in future. After the publication in Germany of the above-mentioned documents it is obvious what kind of aeroplane it was. Hence it follows that the representation we made to the Turkish Government really was fully justified.

As regards Iran, there are no new developments to note. However, in mentioning Iran we also cannot pass by one impermissible fact. At the end of March in the area of Baku—just as was the case somewhat later in the area of Batumi—two foreign aeroplanes which came from the direction of Iran were sighted. The Iran Government deemed it necessary to deny this fact.

But in this case, too, the above-mentioned documents published in the German "White Paper" provide sufficient explanation. It must be stated that any repetition of the dispatch of such foreign reconnaissance aeroplanes could lead to nothing but complications in our relations with our neighbours.

As for the uninvited visits of the above-mentioned aeroplanes to Baku and Batumi, we interpreted them to mean that in future we must also intensify our vigilance on these southern Soviet frontiers.

With regard to Japan it may be said that our relations of late have begun to assume a somewhat more normal character. In particular, on June 9, an agreement was reached concerning the exact demarcation of the frontier area where last year's conflict on the Khalkhingol river occurred. This fact is all the more important since until lately the protracted delay in the settlement of this question had an unfavourable effect on the regulation of relations between the U.S.S.R. and Japan as well as those between the Mongolian People's Republic and Manchukuo. In a few days the mixed Commission of representatives of the Mongolian People's Republic and Manchukuo will begin work to demarcate the border

on the spot. It may be admitted that, in general, there are certain indications of a desire on the part of Japan to improve relations with the Soviet Union.

Granted mutual recognition of the interests of both parties, and providing both of them will understand the necessity of removing certain obstacles which are no longer important, such an improvement in Soviet-Japanese relations is feasible. It must, however, be admitted that there is still much that is obscure in the programme of the new Japanese Government, concerning the establishment of the "new political structure."

It is apparent that the southward expansion of which the Japanese papers are making such ado is attracting the attention of leading circles in Japan to an ever greater extent particularly in view of the fact that the changes which have occurred in Europe cannot but have their reverberations in the districts in which these Japanese circles are interested. But the real political aspirations of these circles are still unclear in many respects. This refers also to Soviet-Japanese relations.

I will not dwell on our relations with the United States of America if only for the reason that there is nothing good that can be said about them.

We have learned that there are certain people in the United States who are not pleased with the successes of Soviet foreign policy in the Baltic countries. But we must confess we are little concerned over this fact inasmuch as we are coping with our tasks without the assistance of these disgruntled gentlemen. However, the fact that the authorities in the United States unlawfully placed an embargo on the gold which our State Bank recently purchased from the Banks of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, meets with the most energetic protest on our part. In this case we can only remind both the Government of the United States and the Government of Great Britain, which adopted the same procedure, of their responsibility for these illegal acts.

As regards our relations with great National China, who is

fighting for her existence, they are, as ever, good-neighbourly and friendly in conformity with the Soviet-Chinese Non-Aggression Pact. With this, permit me to wind up my remarks referring to our relations with individual countries.

There only remains for me to say a few words about the general prospects of the development of international events. The changes which have occurred in Europe as a result of the great successes secured by German arms are by no means such as might already promise a speedy termination of the war. The upshot of events is that one side, particularly Germany, has grown considerably stronger as a result of its military successes, while the other side no longer represents a single whole.

Great Britain is faced with new and great difficulties in continuing the war while France, which is out of the war, is passing through a severe crisis following her defeat. The strengthening of one warring side and the weakening of the other causes serious reverberations not only in Europe, but in other parts of the world. In addition to France the countries that have suffered defeat include Belgium and Holland with large colonial possessions which they can no longer defend with their former strength. As a result of this, the question of a redivision of the colonies is becoming ever more acute.

Imperialist appetites are growing not only in distant Japan but also in the United States where there are not a few people who like to conceal their imperialist designs behind their well-advertised "concern" for the interests of the entire "Western hemisphere," which these gentlemen are prepared to turn into their property with all its numerous Republics and with the colonial possessions of other countries on islands in the neighbourhood of the American continent.

All this harbours the danger of a further extension and fanning of the war and of its transformation into a world imperialist war. Under these conditions the Soviet Union must enhance her vigilance in regard to her external security as well as in regard to strengthening all her positions both at

home and abroad. We have introduced an eight-hour working day instead of a seven-hour day and have carried out other measures, for we consider it our duty to ensure the further necessary successes for the Soviet Union, we must and economic capacity of the country; we must ensure a serious enhancement of discipline among all our working people, and work intensely to raise the productivity of labour in our country.

We have had many new successes, but we do not intend to rest content with what we have achieved. In order to ensure further indispensable successes for the Soviet Union, we must always bear in mind Stalin's words that "*We must keep our entire people in a state of mobilization, preparedness in the face of the danger of military attack so that no 'accident' and no tricks of our foreign enemies could catch us unawares.*" If we all remember this, our sacred duty, no events will catch us unawares, and we will achieve new and even more glorious successes for the Soviet Union.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

By W. P. and ZELDA K. COATES

“As a Communist my first object has always been and still is the mastery of the teachings of Marx and Lenin, and my active participation in the practical application of these teachings in every-day life.”

MOLOTOV, December 1933.

THE above quotation aptly summarizes Molotov's activities since 1906. An adequate account of his life would have to treat of the whole history of the Bolshevik Party since 1905, as well as the history of pre- and post-revolutionary Russia; here, however, we can only deal with a few of the more outstanding facts.

Molotov, whose full real name is Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Scriabin, was born in Kukarka (now Sovietsk) in Viatka Province, on March 9, 1890. He first went to school at Nolinsk, where he was noted for his excellent abilities, and later attended a Kazan secondary school. In 1905, he became deeply interested in social questions, and took an active part in the then illegal revolutionary Marxist youth circle of Kazan. It was not long before the workers of Kazan also came to know very well this slender, dark-haired boy in school uniform, for he was tireless in distributing revolutionary leaflets and proclamations in the factories, every entrance and exit of which he knew thoroughly. When he came home for his holidays, he soon used to be busy distributing leaflets at Nolinsk, and later (in 1907) he addressed secret meetings of workers there.

In 1906, when only 16 years of age, he joined the Bolshevik section of the Russian Social Democratic Party. In that and the following years reaction, after the initial successes of the 1905 revolution in Russia, was in full swing. The representatives of the Liberal bourgeoisie were thoroughly frightened at the spectre of the rise of the working class and were ready enough to make their peace with Tsardom, however unsubstantial the crumbs of constitutional liberty the autocracy might offer them. At the same time a number of the Socialist intelligentsia and former revolutionary leaders

also dropped all idea of further determined revolutionary work and prepared to settle down to the status of a comfortable legal opposition.

The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, contended that the real revolution had only just begun. They had no wish to become merely a respectable "Opposition" in the thoroughly unrepresentative Tsarist Duma, but intended to fight the Tsardom, the bureaucracy, nobility and bourgeoisie for all they were worth with every weapon, legal or illegal, at their disposal.

When the young Scriabin (Molotov) joined the Bolsheviks in 1906, he knew what awaited him—prison, exile, suffering. But with the understanding, logic and courage so characteristic of him throughout his career he deliberately chose that difficult path because he considered that it alone would lead to his goal—the emancipation of the working class and the establishment of Socialism. And to this course he has remained faithful throughout his life.

According to the report of the Tsarist Secret Police (published subsequently by the Soviets) it was V. M. Scriabin, under the pseudonym "Dyadya" (Uncle), who "directed the affairs of the Kazan revolutionary youth organization," and it was he, too, who "was empowered to maintain relations with the revolutionary youth organizations of other towns."

When he first joined the Kazan revolutionary youth circle the latter was conducted by Victor Tikhomirnov, at whose house the circle met. Molotov had a good excuse for his visits to Tikhomirnov as he was coaching the young nine-year-old brother of Victor for his entrance examination to the secondary school. He was an excellent teacher and the boy passed his examinations, although he nearly failed in the paper on religious instruction.

These youth organizations were not merely self-educational circles, for they not only undertook the serious study of the works of Marx and Engels, Lenin, Plekhanov, Dobroliubov, Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Belinsky, Mehring, etc., but

they also did much propaganda work among the students, workers, and peasants.

A proclamation drafted by Molotov and issued by the Kazan revolutionary youth organization, in January 1909, throws a vivid light on the spirit of these young people:

"This is not the first year we have lived through such bad times. After our breath of freedom in 1905 there followed ever more bitter years of reaction. . . . The Tsarist Government with its hordes of parasites derides all that is best in Russian public life. It is striving to seize by the throat and crush every living manifestation of freedom . . . but we feel we have sufficient strength to hold up our heads, not to bend them, not to bow down slave-like to every one of their gibes. . . . They have succeeded in destroying many good honest fighters for the people. . . . But the future will wipe them out—the Tsardom and its hangers-on—as mere dirty scum. . . . The time is not far distant when a new wave of revolution will strike a powerful blow for a new life. . . . Form revolutionary organizations! Make ready for a new social upsurge so that you may not be caught unprepared when it comes."

In the spring of 1909, a few months before the matriculation examinations, young Scriabin, together with other members, was arrested. Subsequently he was sentenced to two years' exile to the Vologda Province, being sent first to Totma, a small town in the forests far from a railway station, and a few months later to Solvychevodsk, where the conditions under which the exiles were forced to live were particularly vile.

It is interesting to learn that in reply to an appeal for clemency by the parents of the students, the notorious Russian Prime Minister, Stolypin, declared: "Had they been workers I would have let them go abroad because it is hopeless to try and reform workers. We simply have to rid ourselves of worthless workers. But since they are students, members of the intelligentsia, exile, the quiet North, pure air, etc., may cure them, and they may still be of use to the State."

Stolypin evidently had some understanding of the realities of class antagonism and its effect on psychology, but although a number of the intelligentsia did indeed prove morally too weak to withstand the rigours of Tsarist persecution and exile, this was by no means true of all of them; and it was emphatically untrue of Molotov.

Whilst in exile, Molotov continued his theoretical studies of Marx and Engels, as well as of Bolshevik publications in which appeared the writings of Lenin, Stalin and other Bolshevik leaders. He also read deeply in history, science, and general literature. At this time, as his letters to his friends reveal, he was full of hope and vigour, and he continued to prepare himself for matriculation to the University. Indeed, after much insistence, the authorities gave him permission to go to Vologda, in the spring of 1910, to sit for this examination as an external student. He passed it and remained in Vologda up to the end of his sentence of exile in the middle of June 1911.

While there he succeeded in establishing close secret contact with the railway workers of the town, and soon became known amongst them as a leading propagandist and a brilliant organizer. At the same time he was able to carry on a constant struggle against the Constitutional Democrats (Cadets), Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and anarchists, who were also exiles, and who were striving to win over the working class to their own parties or sections. Indeed, it has frequently been said by the workers in Vologda that it was in large measure due to Molotov's work there in these earlier years, that the town made so firm a stand in support of the Soviet revolution in November 1917. Moreover, his influence was fully understood at the time by the police, who recognized him for what he was. "The exile, Scriabin," states a Vologda police report of those days, "is distinguished by his knowledge of the Social-Democratic Programme and literature and is a remarkable organizer."

At the termination of his exile, Molotov went to Petersburg, where he entered the Polytechnical Institute. Peters-

burg, the capital, was then the centre of the revolutionary movement, in which Molotov was soon taking an active part. He was one of the leading spirits of the illegal students' circles, wrote stirring proclamations for them, spoke at meetings, led students' strikes. He also did much organizing and propaganda work among the Petersburg workers, visiting factories and receiving visits from workers. From the beginning of 1912 he was also a constant contributor to the Bolshevik journal, *Zvezda* (*Star*).

Zvezda, and later even more *Pravda* (*Truth*), served as centres for the revolutionary movement of the working class and the Bolshevik Party, and here Molotov showed a special aptitude for attracting workers to participate actively in the organization, printing and distribution of these journals, as well as in organizing a body of workers' correspondents who contributed valuable material to the paper in the form of letters and articles. Indeed, he played an active part in founding *Pravda* (May 5, 1912) and, as secretary-in-chief to the editorial committee, contributed many articles under various nom-de-plumes—Mikhailov, Ryabin, Zvanov. During that time he was frequently in touch with Lenin, then living abroad, though as yet only by correspondence, and it was also while working on *Pravda* that he made the personal acquaintance of Stalin—an acquaintance which soon ripened into an intimate and enduring friendship.

In April 1913, Molotov was again arrested and forbidden to live in Petersburg. Nothing daunted, however, he settled in various small towns in the vicinity, working on *Pravda* as well as doing propaganda work for the Bolshevik Party, and in spite of several subsequent arrests he continued his illegal work for the Party in Petersburg until March 1915. He was then sent by the Petrograd branch of the Party to Moscow, where, according to the report of the Tsarist secret police, "after the arrival of Scriabin and his comrades there was a very distinct increase in revolutionary activity." Here he helped in organizing the Moscow Party Conference in 1915, of which, the police reported, "Scriabin was the soul."

In the summer of 1915, however, Molotov was once more arrested and this time sentenced to three years' exile to Irkutsk. But though the village of Manzurka, to which he was sent, was as miserable and primitive a place as most villages in Siberia then were, Molotov did not lose heart: he was able to continue his studies and his room became a meeting-place for his fellow exiles.

In a letter written soon after his arrival at Manzurka, Molotov said:

"The Irkutsk administration is horrible and stupid. I have been here a month and have so far received 4 roubles 20 kopecks [at the then rate of exchange, about 8s. 2.] for food. . . . The local 'public' library has been closed . . . and I am terribly in need of books."

He described the painful journey (by "etap," i.e. mostly on foot) to Irkutsk, the squalid conditions in which the exiles lived, both on the journey and later in Irkutsk, and the brutality of many of the officials and guards. The one thing that buoyed them up was the warm comradeship of the exiles amongst themselves and, he added:

"I look hopefully towards the future. My spirits are good, particularly now that I have heard from many dear friends, and I have no intention at all of getting ill. . . . Now there are 12 of us at Manzurka, mostly excellent fellows. . . . My aim is to use the next few months for the benefit of my mind."

In addition to books he asked for information as to the working-class movement in Russia, the temper of the workers, their attitude towards the latest arrests and the rise in the cost of living. He also wanted to know the details of a big strike in Petrograd he had heard about. Finally he expressed disgust at the pro-war, patriotic speeches being made by Plekhanov¹ and Alexinsky² and once again empha-

¹ G. V. Plekhanov. A noted Russian Marxist who has been regarded as the father of Russian Social-Democracy. He has to his credit a number of very fine works but, although he fought those in the European Labour Movement who sought to "revise" Marx, he himself later committed a number of grave

sized how interested he was in the Marxist press and how delighted he would be if they could send him books and journals.

In June 1916, Molotov succeeded in escaping from Irkutsk and, in order to cover his traces and to take a much-needed rest, he spent a couple of months with the Tikhomirnovs at their country cottage on the Volga, near Kazan. Here he continued his assiduous reading and study, but in company with the Tikhomirnovs he also spent much time fishing, of which he was very fond, particularly night fishing. Having enjoyed his rest he returned to active secret party work in Petrograd, and in the autumn of 1916, he became a member of the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which, on the eve of and during the March Revolution, was at the head of the whole practical work of the party organizations. Thus between 1914-17, Molotov played a most important part in the Russian Bolshevik organization, Lenin being at that time abroad and Stalin, as well as Sverdlov and others, being for the most part in exile. Throughout this period Molotov carried out the anti-war, revolutionary Socialist line laid down by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party.

After the March revolution Molotov became once again one of the leading members of the Bolshevik Petrograd Com-

errors in his estimation of tendencies and events in Russia. Lenin, whilst appreciating Plekhanov's earlier works, criticized his attitude towards the Russian peasantry, the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the working class, etc.

In the war of 1914-18 Plekhanov took up a "patriotic" attitude. On returning to Russia after the March 1917 revolution he was a determined opponent of the Bolsheviks, but after the November revolution he refused to join in any "White" Guard activities against the Soviets. He died in 1918.

Although his mistakes are pointed out and analysed, Plekhanov's works are published and read widely in the U.S.S.R.

² G. A. Alexinsky. A member of the Second Duma, he was at one time a member of the Bolshevik Party, but broke with the latter in 1909. At the outbreak of the war in 1914, he became a rabid supporter of the war, and bitterly opposed the revolution in 1917, making slanderous attacks on Lenin and the Bolsheviks. He was arrested by the Soviet authorities in 1918 but was soon after released on parole. He escaped and subsequently became an avowed monarchist.

mittee, a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and one of the leaders of the Bolshevik Party in the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. It was on his initiative that, in March 1917, the soldiers' garrisons in Petrograd elected their own deputies to the Soviets (this practice was soon copied in other towns) and that the Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies formed joint Soviets. This was an important step in winning over the soldiers to the support of the revolution.

The Petrograd Soviet, of which Molotov was one of the outstanding leaders, never ceased to prepare for the moment when the Soviets could seize power and establish a Soviet workers' and peasants' government. Together with Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, Molotov was a member of the Military Revolutionary Committee which directed the preparation for and the carrying out of the November 1917 Revolution as well as the consolidation of the latter in the months immediately following. He supervised the formation of Red Guards among the factory workers and was at the head of the propaganda work amongst the masses, and there can be little doubt that his work in this field was an important factor in establishing the success of the November 1917 Revolution.

During the civil war Molotov filled a number of important Party and Soviet posts and carried out many responsible and dangerous tasks; amongst others he played an important part in the organization of the Red Army.

At the beginning of 1918, he was for the first time appointed to an economic post, viz. Chairman of the Council of National Economy of the Northern District—a very important part of Russia, including the Petrograd Province. Here, although he had hitherto had no practical economic experience, he was nevertheless in a position to show his ability for applying his Socialist principles in practice. He directed the carrying out of a number of measures nationalizing industry, establishing workers' control and training the workers in the administration of their industries.

Speaking later in the year on his experience during the

short time he had worked in the economic field, he said, very characteristically:

“Only now at last we see that we have the opportunity of realizing in actual life all those ideas of which we at one time dreamt, of which we spoke in very guarded terms in our circles, in our secret organizations.”

In 1919, he was at the head of a party of leading Bolsheviks, including N. K. Krupskaya (Lenin's wife), on a propaganda voyage along the Volga in the vessel *Krassnaya Zvezda*, the purpose of which was to give Bolshevik instruction to members of the Soviets and the Party in the towns and villages along the Volga and Kama Rivers. Amongst other activities this expedition published a periodical journal, in one issue of which they informed the population that “The voyage of the *Krassnaya Zvezda* has been organized by the Soviet Government in order to help the workers and peasants in the districts of the Volga and Kama to arrange their lives better and to consolidate the gains of the October (November) Workers' and Peasants' Revolution.”

Early in 1920 he was appointed Chairman of the Nizhni-Novgorod Provincial Executive Committee. Here he applied his energy to the restoration of the national economy of the Province, which had been devastated by the civil war. To help him in his task he organized and inspired an army of voluntary workers. In a proclamation he called upon them “to devote their voluntary labour for the building and defence of Socialism in the same spirit as the freedom of the country had been defended in the first months of the revolution by the volunteers of the Red Army—the most important thing is work for the common good, for the happiness of our Soviet country.” Molotov was also one of those who inspired the members of the Communist Party and others to give their labour voluntarily during holidays in order the sooner to complete urgent tasks for the restoration and upbuilding of the national economy.

Later, when it was decided to start the mechanization of the Donetz, Molotov became Secretary of the Donetz Pro-

vincial Committee and towards the end of 1920 he was elected Secretary of the Communist Party of the Ukraine.

In 1921, at the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, he was elected a member and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party, and from that date up to 1930, he was mainly occupied in Party work. Since 1924 he has also been a member of the Political Bureau of the Party; in 1927 he became a member of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the R.S.F.S.R.¹; and in 1929 a member of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.

Molotov did tremendous work in consolidating and unifying the Party and was tireless in revealing the real anti-Marxist and anti-Leninist nature of the Trotskyites as well as of other opposition platforms, both of the "Left" and "Right." He took a leading part in clearing the Party of all doubtful and unreliable elements and in increasing the authority of, and respect and love for, the Party among the masses of the workers and peasants of Russia. Whenever there were special difficulties to overcome there Molotov was sent. Thus in 1926, together with Kirov, Kalinin, Voroshilov and others he went to Leningrad to combat the Party opposition there. In 1928-9, when difficulties arose in the Moscow organization, Molotov took up the secretaryship of the Moscow Party Committee and soon smoothed things out. His organizing talent, particularly his ability to choose the right man for the right job, was of the utmost importance in this sphere. He demanded honest, devoted work from his colleagues and subordinates, but he was always ready to give advice, sympathy and practical help when necessary. He never shirked difficulties but, on the contrary, undertook many journeys through the whole length and breadth of the country in order to help local organizations smooth out their knotty problems. During this period he wrote numerous

¹ R.S.F.S.R. is the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic. It includes what is usually termed Russia proper, and is the largest of the Republics which constitute the Soviet Union.

articles and gave many lectures on questions of party organization.

Molotov's appointment to the position of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars in 1930, was no chance thing. It was the logical consequence of all his previous activities, his fine organizing talent, his success in overcoming obstacles whether of a political or economic nature.

It will no doubt be recalled that in 1930 the Soviet Government was coping with many exceptional difficulties. The carrying out of the First Five-Year Plan which aimed at laying the foundation for the industrialization of the country, the further development of agriculture and the organization on a larger scale than hitherto of the small and middle peasant farms into large collective farms which could conveniently be mechanized, the extension of the educational system, etc.—all this was, of course, in itself a tremendous task in a backward country which but a few years ago had emerged from the ravages of the world and civil wars, foreign armed intervention and blockade and one of the worst famines in Russian history. Apart from the inherent difficulties of the tasks, the Soviets had to cope with the faint-heartedness amongst some of their own adherents, the still prevalent bourgeois psychology of very large sections of the peasantry, not to speak of the hostility of the various remnants and hangers-on of the former propertied classes in the towns and villages of Soviet Russia. Added to all this, or perhaps more correctly because of it, sabotage and wrecking raised their ugly heads in almost every branch of the national economy. The carrying out of the Five-Year Plan necessarily required many sacrifices. The production and importation of goods for consumption were reduced to a minimum in order to spend as much energy and time as possible on the production of capital goods. In 1930-32, all the resulting privations were felt at their maximum whilst, on the other hand, there had not yet been time for the long-term benefits of this policy to make itself felt. Hence every hostile element at home and abroad started working overtime to influence

the timid, short-sighted and ignorant, and to put as many spokes as possible in the still creaking machinery of the Soviet national economy.

In such a situation, none but the best organizer was good enough to be head of the national economy, and Molotov was chosen—this fact speaks for itself.

It is characteristic that when he was appointed to the position of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars he declared: "Up to now I have been engaged mainly in Party work, but I declare to you, comrades, that in taking up my duties in the Council of People's Commissars I do so as a Party worker, as one who will carry out the will of the Party and its Central Committee."

Exactly. His principles and Party membership and work had not been simply a stepping stone to high office but, on the contrary, he looked upon this high office as an opportunity to put his principles and the Party programme into practice. It is this which has permeated all his work on the Council of People's Commissars as elsewhere.

As the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Molotov is often regarded abroad as connected mainly with the industrialization of the country. Undoubtedly he has contributed much in this sphere, but his work in the agricultural field has been no less important. Actually, even when still mainly a Party worker, much of his attention was given to work in the villages and this in Soviet Russia did not mean simply organizing the Bolshevik Party there—it meant an intimate study of the organization of agriculture and the everyday conditions of life of the peasants.

In 1924, and subsequent years, he spent months in the rural areas studying the economic position of the peasants, their political outlook, the work of the rural Soviets, co-operatives, etc., and as a result of these studies he suggested various measures for helping the poor and middle peasants, for the development of rural trade and co-operation and for the organization of associations for the collective working of the soil, collective use of machinery, etc. In the teeth of

fierce Trotskyite and other opposition, Molotov also devised ways and means of organizing the poor, as well as the middle, peasants for joint action against the kulaks.

Under Molotov's leadership the rural Party organizations were made the centre of all these activities, thus paving the way for the Socialist re-organization of agriculture and strengthening the bond between the workers and the peasantry. Subsequently in 1927, under the guidance of Stalin, ably seconded by Molotov, a more detailed plan was adopted for the consolidation and extension of the *kolkhozy* (collective farms) and *sovkhozy* (State farms), calculated to put an end to the slow progress of agriculture in comparison with that of industry.

Of course, the difficulties in the organization of Soviet agriculture could not be overcome by the mere adoption of a plan. Much ignorance and sheer stupidity, prejudice, backward psychology, narrow self-interest, dishonesty, sabotage and wrecking had to be overcome. Molotov's grasp of both theoretical and practical questions, as well as his knowledge of men, were invaluable in dealing with all these difficulties. Whenever in any area sowing, harvesting, or State grain collection went badly Molotov would arrive to investigate matters on the spot, interview Soviet and Party officials as well as many peasants and in practically every case was able to put his finger on the weak spot. In many cases he revealed direct sabotage; in others, inefficiency was due to errors in judgment, ignorance, want of energy or a bureaucratic approach to urgent problems. In all cases Molotov was able to devise measures to overcome the difficulties, patiently explaining their causes, and the imperative need to deal with the latter promptly and energetically. In this way not only did he often convert chaos into order, but he was able to train Soviet and Party officials, and also the peasants, in the right methods of approach to problems, to enhance their political horizon and increase their respect for the Party and for the Soviet Government.

All those who have worked with Molotov or had dealings

with him—workers, managers, scientists, aviators, writers, peasants, Party comrades—all bear testimony to his remarkable grasp of the essence, as well as of the important details, of every question he has had to tackle. He never takes a decision until it has been well thought out in consultation with experts, and he demands from his colleagues and subordinates the same serious and thorough approach to every question as he gives himself. He pays very special attention to the constant verification of how the work assigned to subordinates is being fulfilled and, after he became Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, a special committee was formed for the verification of the fulfilment of Party and Soviet decisions. In this way many idlers and bureaucrats were exposed and eliminated from the State Machine.

He hates bureaucracy, and he has brought to his work in the economic field the same sympathy and understanding of men which stood him in such good stead during the years he worked as a Party official. As in those years, so in his economic work since 1930, he has never shirked difficulties, but accepted them as things to be overcome by hard work, well thought-out plans and sympathy.

An interesting sidelight is thrown on Molotov's attitude towards the work of people in managerial positions by a story told by the agronomist, N. Tsitsin. After an interesting interview on various scientific agricultural questions, Molotov offered him the post of Director of the Moscow Agricultural Exhibition. Tsitsin was diffident, and said he hardly thought himself sufficiently experienced for such an important position. "That's all right," replied Molotov, "I shall do everything possible to help you." Then as Tsitsin was leaving, Molotov said, laughing: "Now don't worry, act boldly. You have broad shoulders and your head seems to be screwed on the right way."

During the organization of the Exhibition, Molotov indeed took a deep interest in every detail and gave much valuable advice and help. Later when Tsitsin and he had gone the

round of the Exhibition Molotov said, half jokingly: "There is one thing I don't like. Nobody has any complaints against you." "But surely," Tsitsin replied with amazement, "that's not a bad thing?" "Well, you see, it is both good and bad," Molotov explained. "You evidently satisfy everybody and so there are no complaints. This may lead to too much self-satisfaction and in this way one may well come to slur over quite serious deficiencies in one's work. . . ."

"And," adds Tsitsin, very justly, in relating this episode, "what care for the training of workers is shown by this warning, this precept."

Molotov is very far removed from the traditional idea foreigners have of Russians. He never leaves letters or requests unanswered, is very punctual in all his appointments, and when statistics are given him by the department he insists on the strictest accuracy. The most noteworthy thing about his speeches and articles is the fact that they are permeated by a deep and serious understanding of the subject with which he is dealing. He never uses words, as so many statesmen do, to conceal thought. On the contrary, one would search his writings in vain for any obscure paragraph. All his articles, speeches and reports are worded simply, so that every worker, every peasant can understand him—there is no room for lawyers' interpretations in any of the reports or decrees which Molotov has had a hand in drafting.

In May 1939, without relinquishing his post as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Molotov was also appointed People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs. As this booklet gives his principal speeches since this appointment it is not necessary to dwell here on his activities in this sphere. We need only remark that in his foreign policy, as in his Party and economic work, he has remained true to his Socialist principles, to Marxist-Leninist teaching.

Himself a highly cultured man, Molotov has always taken a keen interest in the progress of Soviet education and has not grudged his time in giving advice and help when necessary to students. One extract from the speech he delivered

on November 6, 1940, at a mass meeting of the Moscow Soviet in celebration of the Twenty-second Anniversary of the November 1917 revolution may be quoted here as revealing his attitude towards culture.

After giving a sketch of the cultural progress made by the various nationalities comprised in the U.S.S.R., Molotov declared:

“The profoundly revolutionary character of this new [Socialist] culture does not, however, mean that we deny the cultural achievements of the past, or reject the cultural heritage of other nations. On the contrary, all the really great cultural achievements of the past, however distant, are highly valued in the Socialist State and are now revealed in all their true ideological splendour to all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. The Bolsheviki are not the sort to forget their kinship with the people. We, Bolsheviki, have come from the very heart of the people, and value and love the glorious deeds recorded in the history of our people as well as those of all other peoples. We know well that real progress, which is possible only on the basis of Socialism, must rest upon the entire history of the peoples and upon all their achievements in past ages, that it must reveal the true meaning of the history of the peoples in order to insure a glorious future for one's own people, and at the same time a bright future for all peoples.”

In spite of his manifold duties, Molotov loves various sports, including tennis and skiing. He is deeply interested in, and has a fine appreciation of, literature, music, and art, and himself plays the violin very well. He never misses a good film and frequently visits the theatre, opera and concerts. His favourite Russian author is Gorki, and next comes Chekhov. He is, of course, also well acquainted with foreign literary classics.

Molotov loves children and children love him and after the first few moments with him even the shyest child is at ease. Whenever he goes for a holiday to the Crimea he invariably visits the pioneers' holiday camp “Artek,” where the welcome he gets is noisy, joyous and sincere, and only such as children are ready to give to one they love and who,

they feel, instinctively loves them. Sometimes he invites a party of children to visit him at his Dacha (country home) near Moscow; and there he is at his happiest. He sings with them their favourite songs, plays their games, goes swimming with them, tells them interesting stories and also listens attentively to theirs, drawing them on to talk about their own ideas, their problems, their hopes and plans for the future.

This, in brief, is the story of the man who is at the head of the Soviet Government and who now also conducts the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R.