

## TORY BLUE-PRINT OF POST-WAR EMPIRE

WHAT are the objects of the British Imperialist class which is directing this 'sacred war against Fascism?' For some time past these political objectives have been made the subject of detailed plans. The design of the post-war world in relation to the Colonies was worked out by the Tories long before the military issue in Europe had been determined and the enemy defeated. For example, the directors of the London Tin Corporation, a company which has large interests in Far East mines, especially in Malaya, are calling for an international consultative body for the industry to take the place of the pre-war International Tin Restriction Committee, which was run by the producers. The Corporation "has supplied the necessary information for resuming production to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the broad basis of the group of companies as a whole," says the chairman, Mr. J. Ivan Spens.<sup>1</sup> So much for the industrial aspect of colonial development.

What might be termed the Tory political blue-print of post-war Colonial Imperialism has been put forward by Field Marshal Smuts, who was the strategist of the Mandates System of Colonial redistribution at the 1918 peace.<sup>2</sup> It was he who was mainly responsible for drafting the clauses which made it possible for South Africa to annex the mandate of South West Africa, and for other British Dominions to put in a claim for nearby Colonies formerly in the possession of defeated enemies. The Mandates System was a screen which, in the words of the noted historian, H. A. L. Fisher, draped the crudity of conquest in the veil of morality. It

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*: October 20, 1944.

<sup>2</sup> In formulating the Mandates System, Smuts was aided by Lord Lothian then Mr. Philip Kerr, Lloyd George's Private Secretary. See Parker T. Moon, *Imperialism and World Politics*.

was a complete blind, which managed to hoodwink quite a large section of popular opinion, even British Socialists. As Marshal Smuts put it himself so very recently, "The mandatory system was introduced to solve the difficult question of annexation. The Senate will remember that after the last war there was a strong feeling against the annexation of territories, and to overcome this difficulty the mandatory system was introduced. There is a feeling in many quarters that the mandatory system has outlived its time, and that another arrangement must be made that will have to be decided in the future. As far as South Africa is concerned, there is a mandate in South West Africa, and I have been asked whether the Government intended to incorporate that territory and whether there is any objection to that course. Personally I do not believe that there is any constitutional difficulty, even under existing mandate conditions."<sup>1</sup>

*Smuts on Regionalism.*

But to safeguard against any such difficulty, Marshal Smuts's newly formulated Imperialism bases itself upon a kind of condominium, which will supersede mandates. Briefly, his plan is to group British Colonial regions into federal units according to their geographical position. For example, the Caribbean territories, including British Guiana and British Honduras, will be united into a kind of West Indian Federation under a joint Anglo-American Commission, in which Canada will also participate. The West African Colonies of Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Nigeria, together with adjoining French regions, will be brought into a West African federation. Here again America will be offered certain interests in view of the proximity of points like Dakar and Bathurst, Freetown and Monrovia, to the South American countries (Brazil in particular). In East Africa, a similar group will comprise Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, British, French and Italian Somaliland and part of the Abyssinian, Somali and Ogaden provinces, under South African and British control. The native territories of Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland, now British protectorates, will be incorporated into the Union of South Africa; and the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland, with the

<sup>1</sup> Address to the South African Senate, April 3, 1944.

Belgian Congo and the Portuguese territory of Mozambique, will be linked up to form a Central African bloc. This would provide new lands for the increased white population which the South African Governments intend to promote as a means of augmenting the present white minority population, to counter the vast black populations in these regions. They will also provide an internal market for the Union industries which have come into being since the outbreak of this war, and which will have to be turned over to peace-time manufactures in order to stave off unemployment and economic collapse.

A similar scheme is envisaged for the islands of the Pacific and the regions of East Asia. In that part of the world, England and America, Australia and New Zealand, will operate as joint partners. Certain territorial concessions may be made to China, but Britain still intends to hold Hong Kong and also sole control of India and Burma.

This, in very simplified outline, is the Tory plan for post-war Empire, and viewed realistically, this scheme of 'regional' administration of Colonial territories will provide easy opportunity for the annexations for which the Mandates System has prepared the way. Nevertheless, there are a number of primary considerations which the scheme does not entirely manage to co-ordinate.

Let us take first the question of sovereignty, a fundamental one. For political control reserves the right to the Colonial Power to place its own nationals on the administration and gives it economic prerogatives. A principle of Marshal Smuts's scheme is that the possessing Powers shall retain political control of their Colonies. His suggested Regional Councils are to be purely consultative and shall have no administrative or executive powers. Representation on these Councils will be allowed to States having interests of an economic or strategic nature in the region concerned, even though they may not actually have Colonies there. This provision will allow a voice to British Dominions and America in areas in which they consider themselves to have interests.

United States' representation on a number of the Councils is a concession to America's dominant imperialist position in world affairs today. Production potential in the U.S.A. has

increased enormously during the war, so that even the vast continental domestic market will be unable to absorb her industrial output. Wall Street is accumulating greater and greater financial reserves, for which it must seek avenues of investment abroad. Marshal Smuts believes that, the participation of America in his 'Regional' set-up would offer her appropriate markets for capital goods and machinery. All of this will be a welcome necessity to settlers in South Africa and the Rhodesias, who have not themselves the resources with which to expand their industries.

It is quite true that American Big Business does not seem anxious to acquire political control of Colonies, at any rate in Africa. Dollar diplomacy can secure to the United States all the advantages it seeks without the responsibilities of policing overseas territories with Marines. This attitude is not evidence of any unique aversion of American Imperialism from expanding territorially, but is rather the outcome of its world economic superiority. America stands today in that same position which Britain occupied in the middle of the last century, when she was the workshop of the world, its banker and shipper; when Disraeli could say: "Colonies are millstones around our neck." Today America has wrested from Britain her former industrial and financial supremacy, and it is Mr. Truman and not Mr. Churchill who can describe Colonies as "millstones around our neck." Shortly before his death, Mr. Roosevelt was able to declare for Philippines independence before the due date of 1946. He also recommended to Congress that self-government be extended to Puerto Rico as a step towards either complete 'independence' or inclusion as another state within the U.S.A. When you are rich you can afford to be generous.

Whether, however, America participates in any scheme of international co-operation or resumes her inter-war role of isolationism is all one as far as her world economic dominance is concerned. In an imperialistic age, America, the greatest Imperialist Power, must play lead, and all other interests will finally be subordinated to hers.

International co-operation such as that envisaged in Marshal Smuts's proposal will, there is no doubt, provide a means of satisfying the 'Open Door' policy and the 'Most Favoured Nation' principle which leading Americans are

demanding, although others, in particular the late Wendell Willkie, look upon any retention of political Empire as standing in the way of Yankee interests. Mr. Willkie represented that point of view which believes that if Colonial territories are free from the political control of European Governments, especially Britain, the native capitalists are more likely to turn to Wall Street than to the City of London for the capital machinery and financial assistance that they will require to establish some kind of modern industry in their new sovereign States. This is the motive of Mr. Willkie's advocacy of Colonial independence, which is a very clever manoeuvre.

Because it is not unlikely that the co-operation of America in exploiting the natural resources of Africa and other parts of the British Empire will to a very great extent suit the interests of Yankee capitalism and British colonisers, there is a busy attempt to popularise the new idea of 'Regionalism.' It is accompanied by a new dictionary of euphemisms. 'Regionalism' is substituting 'mandates' and 'partnership' will oust 'trusteeship.'

Association of natives on the Regional Council is one of the proposals, behind which can be detected a very tricky device to put off self-government of those territories which are considered to be almost 'ripe' for it at the present time, while the need of independence of more backward countries cannot possibly have any *raison d'être* in a regionally constituted world. The British Tories intend to meet the national aspirations of the native peoples, which have been stimulated and reinforced by the lofty ideals embodied in the Atlantic Charter and Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, by offering very minor representation through members of their intelligentsia on councils, commissions and legislative bodies, and a wider participation in local administrative services, hitherto exclusively reserved for Britishers. In this way it is hoped to placate public opinion both in Britain and the Colonies themselves, but there should be no shadow of doubt that administrative control will not be transferred to the Colonial peoples. The Governor will always be there to exercise his powers of determination and veto. Even where a wider democracy is permitted through the Constitution (Jamaica has been given universal suffrage) the ultimate result will be

the same as it is in Ceylon, which has the most advanced Constitution of all the British Colonies. The Governor's veto decided affairs in the final resort, and in most instances the wishes of the people come to nothing.

Viewed pragmatically, Marshal Smut's scheme provides possibilities for meeting the post-war needs of British capitalism in the Colonial sphere. Even as the Mandates System carried over British Imperialism between the First and Second World Wars, 'Regionalism' will contrive to carry it over into the Third World War.

Almost fifty years ago, Cecil Rhodes, that greatest of Empire builders, maintained that the Empire "is a question of the stomach. If you do not want civil war, you must become imperialists." This attitude has been re-stated very lately by none other than the Dominions Secretary, Viscount Cranbourne. Talking to the Scottish Unionist Association in Edinburgh on October 22, 1943, he told the Tories that those people who could not look beyond their personal interests should remember that their employment and standard of living depended mainly on the existence of the Empire. "The vital trade with the Dominions and Colonies," he said, "amounts approximately to nearly half of the whole of Britain's trade with the rest of the world. Without it there would be no future for Britain. We would degenerate into a small, insignificant over-populated island." It is not accidental that Lord Cranborne was the representative of the United Kingdom Government on the Colonial Committee at San Francisco. The colonial interests of the Tories was safe in his hands.

#### *Labour and the Empire.*

Tory thinking on Empire is realistic. Its policy, therefore, is a quite definite one. The Labour Party, the organised expression of the British workers, on the other hand, has no individual Colonial policy. Regarding its existence, as it does, to be bound up with the continuation of Empire, it supports the Imperialist policy of the Tories. British Imperialism has had the support of the leaders of organised labour by sharing with them some of the spoils of its Colonial exploitation, which makes Labour the defender of British Imperial interests whenever they are threatened.



Engels commented upon this pro-imperialist outlook of British Labour as far back as 1882 in a letter to Kautsky, when he wrote: "You ask me what the English workers think of colonial policy? Exactly the same as they think about politics in general, the same as what the bourgeoisie think. There is no working class party here, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers merrily devour with them the fruits of the British colonial monopoly and of the British monopoly of the world market." While to Marx he wrote even earlier (1858), "The British working class is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat as well as a bourgeoisie. Of course, this is to a certain extent justifiable for a nation which is exploiting the whole world."<sup>1</sup>

This prophecy of Engels' has been fulfilled to the letter. Today the British Labour Movement stands as the expression of a bourgeois proletariat. And particularly on Imperial and Colonial questions it has no definite programme of its own to set against that of the Right. Take, for example, the recent debate on Burma. On June 1, 1945, Mr. Amery on behalf of the Tories came before the House of Commons with a Bill in which he demanded dictatorial powers for the Governor during the transition years from military administration to the restoration of the form of government the country enjoyed before the Japanese invasion. The policy envisaged under the Bill is definitely a reactionary one unlikely to find approval among even moderate Burmese political leaders. After a number of Tory members had given their blessings to Mr. Amery for preserving their imperial interests in that part of the Empire, Mr. W. G. Cove, a left-wing Labour member, had the courage to criticise strongly the proposals outlined in the Bill, declaring that "it was a tragedy that at this juncture in world affairs Mr. Amery should be Secretary of State, because he (Mr. Amery) had said in 1931 that we could not object to Japanese aggression in Manchuria because if we did we would condemn our control and government of India and Burma." At this stage of the debate, Mr. A. Creech Jones, the Labour

<sup>1</sup> Lenin *On Britain*, p. 65. Marxist-Leninist Library, Vol. XVIII.

Party Colonial Affairs spokesman, intervened and dissociated himself from his colleague's remarks. He informed the Tories that he was instructed to endorse Mr. Amery's Bill on behalf of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

To understand properly this bankruptcy of the Labour Party it is necessary to review briefly its historical background. Unlike the Liberal Party, which it superseded after the last war as the official Opposition, the Labour Party was originally conceived by its founders not simply as offering an alternative Government to run the capitalist system, but to wage a political struggle as a means of bringing about a transformation of property relations with all its social implications. The Liberal Party, for instance, differed from the Tory Party only as to the methods of running the capitalist system; it never challenged the fundamental social and economic structure of British society. On the other hand, the Labour Party in its early days did at least pose a theoretical challenge to the existing social order, though one might disagree with the methods proposed for bringing about the change. Unlike scientific Marxists, the Labour leaders of the early period envisaged the change in the social system through evolutionary constitutional means. That is to say, they hoped that at some time the electorate would return to office Labour Governments, which would, by legislative enactments, achieve Labour's objective. This theoretical prognosis was always disputed by revolutionary Socialists, who maintained that even if Labour did ever secure a majority at Westminster the ruling class would resort to illegal measures to prevent such a transition. But we are not here concerned with the polemics of reformism versus revolution, for history has already resolved this question as far as Britain is concerned. How has this come about?

As it developed into a mass organisation, the Labour Party became more and more dependent upon the trade unions for financial support and as vote gathering apparatus. For this financial and political support it has been obliged to pay a great price: it has been obliged to abandon its early theoretical programme. Unlike these socialist idealists, the trade union leaders have never really been converted to the socialist objective, even though they have given lip service to it. Their concern has been to guard and advance the trade



union interests of their members, and they have used their positions in the Labour Party to impose their aims. These aims have been to wring concessions from the ruling class, and they have come progressively to the point of view that if the capitalist class is to be in a position to accede to their economic demands, that class must have their support whenever its position is threatened. The result has been that whenever British Capitalism-Imperialism has been faced with a crisis, the Trade Union leaders have not utilised that crisis to forward the socialist aims of the Labour Party, but rather they have joined forces with the capitalist class to resolve the crisis. An ideological union has come about between the leaders of Labour and of Capital on the basis of Empire. This tacit agreement between the Tories on the Right and the Trade Union leaders on the Left constitutes the historic basis of Reformism in the British Labour Movement.

The Empire is conceived as a world wide trading concern owned by the British capitalist class and operated primarily in the interests of that class. And since the reforms desired by the Labour leaders for the working class in the metropolis derive from the spoils of Empire, these leaders have, willy nilly, been forced into the role of junior partners in the Imperialist concern. They conclude that without tribute from the Empire they will be unable to obtain these concessions, except they are prepared to challenge openly the whole fundamental basis of British Imperialism. But this position they have not taken up, as they are unwilling to take the risk. So they are now pursuing a conscious policy which is the outcome of the conclusion they have arrived at: that the standard of living of the British workers can only be maintained and perhaps extended on the basis of Empire.

To further their point of view they regard and use the Labour Party, quite without deference to its professed socialist aims as a political apparatus which will look after the interests of trade unionists at Westminster. The Trade Union Congress leaders meet the bosses on the industrial sector, while the Trade Union M.P.s do so in the Parliamentary arena. In this way both angles of the joust for better working conditions are covered.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Greeting the 1944 Trade Union Congress at Blackpool on behalf of the Labour Party, Ellen Wilkinson chided the trade union bosses on

One point we would like to stress in this appraisal of the stand of the Trade Union officials, who, thanks to the financial support of the Unions, dominate the Labour Party; and that is that the Fabian-Imperialist course they are pursuing is absolutely conscious. The concern of the leaders is now to try and persuade the rank and file membership to abandon the vestiges of anti-imperialism still clinging to the party and to support in an unqualified manner the Colonial system. There yet remains in its ranks, however, a number of idealists who wish to see the worst features of Colonial rule abolished or ameliorated, and as a sop to this orientation on the problems of Empire, the Executive from time to time issues pious resolutions, statements and manifestos, giving lip service to the aspirations of the subject peoples in terms of Dominion status for India by and by, and the gradual evolution of the Colonies of the West Indies and Africa towards self-government. This is nothing but demagoguery aimed at creating among the subject peoples the impression that the Labour Party stands for a fundamental change in the *status quo*. Nothing of the sort. While Mr. Bevin draws lances with Mr. Churchill on domestic issues, the most radical reform he offers the Indians is to close down the India Office and put them under the Dominions Office.

The basic principles of Labour's Colonial thesis were revealed in all their glaring nakedness in a Parliamentary debate on the future of Empire.<sup>1</sup> And it was left to Mr. Emanuel Shinwell who, by his past record at Westminster, had earned for himself the reputation of a genuine Left Socialist, to expose the bare ribs of Labour's pro-imperialist leanings. Mr. Shinwell, seemingly having repented of his previous Left attitude, declared that "I have occasionally found myself in disagreement with my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, but I am in hearty accord with the view he expressed some time ago on the suggested liquidation of the

their attitude towards the Labour Party. "Some of you are getting into the habit of treating the Labour Party as a poor relation. We are poor and we are a relation, but you need not treat us as though the Labour Party was a negligible quantity, because, if you do, the electors will believe you," declared Miss Wilkinson. She also asserted that "there is a growing tendency to treat M.P.s as union delegates rather than as representatives of a whole constituency."

<sup>1</sup> *Hansard*, April 20, 1944.

Empire. Sir, we have no intention, any of us, of throwing the British Commonwealth of Nations overboard to satisfy a section of the American Press, or indeed any one else." Having thus shown himself a supporter of the new Fabian-Imperialism, Mr. Shinwell presented his case very logically. "I ventured to cross swords very humbly with General Smuts who declared that after this war we should be a poor country," he said. "Of course we shall be a poor country, of course our plight will be precarious, of course we shall have to reduce the standard of life of our people, and, of course we shall become a second-rate or even a third- or fourth-rate Power unless we take appropriate steps to prevent it." And what are the appropriate steps proposed by Mr. Shinwell, spokesman of the Labour Party? "The Colonies," he maintained, "are not being developed in an economic sense as they ought to be . . . There should be an inquiry into the possibilities of expansion in all the Dominion countries, in India particularly, and in our Colonial possessions. . . . We ought to take accumulated savings and invest a great proportion of them in those Empire countries who need them—some of them do not need them, having large sterling balances—and particularly in the Colonies."

The *Daily Herald*, official organ of the Labour Party, observes in its editorial on Mr. Shinwell's speech, which supported a motion to promote post-war co-operation between the nations of the British Commonwealth, that "the motion was tabled in the names of Mr. Shinwell, a Socialist; Lord Winterton, a Conservative; Sir Edward Grigg, a die-hard Conservative, and Sir Herbert Williams, an ultra-Conservative."<sup>1</sup> Clear evidence, this, of the close tie-up between the Tories and Labour on the basis of Imperialism. The *Herald* attempts to take Mr. Shinwell to task for his views, but in doing so itself exposes Labour's attitude on Empire. "He (Mr. Shinwell) was far too much concerned with answering 'sneers at the British Empire' and with giving superfluous assurances that we have no intention of 'throwing the British Commonwealth overboard.' Who ever seriously supposed we had?" asks the *Daily Herald*. "A Socialist can afford to ignore the critics of the Empire and to concentrate on the exposition of his Party's aims."

<sup>1</sup> *The Daily Herald*, April 25, 1944.

But since Mr. Arthur Greenwood, then official spokesman of the Labour Party in Parliament, fully endorsed Mr. Shinwell's views, we can only conclude that they also expressed the party's aims. Mr. Greenwood even went so far as to refer to Field-Marshal Smuts as "a man of great, ripe wisdom and a man whom we all honour," that same Field-Marshal Smuts whose Dominion of South Africa is notorious for its treatment of its majority black population. Marshal Smuts is the author of the Regionalism scheme, the latest device for joint Imperial control by the United Kingdom Government and the Dominions. This Regionalism has also received recognition and acceptance by the Labour Party, as testified in an official report of the National Executive issued on April 24, 1944. The report declares that "In regions such as Africa, South-East Asia, and the South-West Pacific, where neighbouring Colonies are administered by different Governments, we strongly recommend the early creation of Regional Councils to co-ordinate economic policy, with a view to making the interests of the Colonial peoples primary beyond all doubt." The Labour Party, judging from this document, stands, then, on the same side as the Tory Party, even though it may give lip service to the interests of the Colonial people as being primary in any system of Imperial rule. In fact, ever since Colonel Oliver Stanley, the Secretary of State for Colonies, adopted the Colonial Development and Welfare Plan, the Tories have appropriated more and more from the programme of the Fabians. Now there is hardly any difference between Tory 'Democracy' and Fabian-Imperialism on Colonial affairs.

Mr. A. Creech Jones, who has so often championed the Colonial peoples in Parliament and exposed their grievances, while under no particular obligation to do so, since they did not elect him, feels that "This country has an Empire it cannot shed," although he assumes that "it is our responsibility." Mr. Creech Jones understands the role of Monopoly Capitalism in the Colonies, and asks in an article on British Imperialism whether the Colonial territories are "moving to political and economic freedom."<sup>1</sup> He tells us that there are vested interests which must be removed,

<sup>1</sup> *British Imperialism and the Colonial Empire*, by A. Creech Jones, M.P., in *The Left News*, April, 1944.

and then demands: "But how is it to be done?" That, of course, is the questions which Colonials always ask. How is it to be done? How are vested interests to be removed? That was the burning question which faced Lenin, and we have seen how he solved it; how he removed the vested interests of Czarist Imperialism by superseding them entirely. And Lenin was faced also with the same problem of resolving the inequities and oppressions and disabilities suffered by the widespread populations of the Russian Empire. This, too, he did, as we have also seen, but only after having superseded the power which was exploiting them. Having achieved this prerequisite, Lenin drew those people into association with the former ruling nation, the Great Russians, by admitting the right of Self-Determination for the Colonial peoples and national minorities, by admitting them as free and equal partners into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

But when this question of how to achieve progress for the Colonial peoples of the British Empire is posed by official spokesmen of the Labour Party like Mr. Jones, a likely Colonial Secretary, all they propose is an extension of social welfare, more civil rights, greater trade union facilities. All these are very good suggestions, but it is quite legitimate to ask who is to allow all this, and how? For finally, of course, the financial question is the root problem of the extension of social well-being in the Colonies. This was clearly brought out in the case of the Sargent Plan for education in India, referred to in Chapter VI. This plan, drawn up by Mr. John Sargent, Commissioner of Education for India, was put on one side to wait "full realisation until India had increased its industrial and agricultural wealth to pay for it."

It is quite illusory for Labour Party idealists to imagine that wide schemes for improved education, extended social services and better economic conditions will be provided by the British ruling class in Colonial areas, when they have hesitated to implement the Beveridge plan at home. Many of these people fall back upon the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940, which was passed largely to placate the populations of the West Indies, who had demonstrated their extreme dissatisfaction with British rule by a wave of militant strikes. Under the Act there was created the Colonial

Development and Welfare Fund, which was to devote £5,000,000 a year over a period of ten years towards the well-being of the Colonial territories of the Empire (with a population of over 60,000,000) by way of rehabilitation schemes. A noteworthy feature of the Fund is that any part of the £5,000,000 not spent in any one year may not be carried over to the following year. The total expenditure up to the end of June 1943 out of the Fund was stated in Parliament to be only £742,924. In the same period, the Governors of the various Colonies contributed to the British Treasury in the name of the populations, in cash or interest-free loans between £40 and £50 millions, to assist Britain's war effort. What a great hoax this Fund is!<sup>1</sup>

Yet the colonial theoreticians of the Labour Party fall back upon the Development and Welfare Act to correct the economic and social ills of the Colonies. It is their Bible, their rod and staff of Imperial progress. They use it to camouflage the pro-imperialist line of much of the Left. The Fabians have been delegated the role of anaesthetists, to administer the chloroform while the Trade Union officials assist the Imperialists in the operation on the victims. Their camouflage has the purpose of blurring the sharp pro-imperialist orientation of the T.U.C. with a pastel pink colouring. Ameliorative measures form the main plank of their platform, but the Parliamentary spokesmen of the Party undermine them by coming out openly and blatantly for what is now euphemistically termed the 'greater development of the Empire.' Literally translated, this means more intensive exploitation of the natural resources and labour power of the Colonial territories.

#### *Labour Colonial Bureaucrats.*

In fact, there is now a working tie-up between the Labour

<sup>1</sup> In October, 1944, the Colonial Office declared a profit of £3,676,253 accumulated from transactions in West African cocoa in 1939-1943. Instead of distributing the profit among the native producers or using it for promoting social services among the Africans, the Colonial Office will use the money to subsidise a Marketing Board set up as part of the British Ministry of Food and for a Cocoa Research organisation which it proposes to establish after the war. (Report on Cocoa Control in West Africa, Crnd. 6554.)



Party and the Colonial administration. For Transport House is working in collaboration with the Colonial Office in recommending trade union functionaries to go out to the Colonies to act as Labour Advisers and subordinate officials in the new labour departments which have been set up since the Imperial Government has recommended the extension of trade unions among Colonial workers. In the past, civil servants attached to the Colonial administrative organs were drawn exclusively from the middle classes; they were university men who used the Colonies as a career. But since the official recognition of trade unionism in the Colonies in 1940, there has been a departure from the traditional policy of appointment and trade unionists are being placed in the Colonial labour offices. These trade unionists, who were never Socialists at home, will not put themselves out to propagate Socialist ideas among the native workers. The Colonial Office's enlistment of the active aid of the T.U.C. in supervising labour organisations in the subject territories is quite a brilliant piece of strategy. In doing this, it will use the British trade union appointees to put a curb upon the militancy of the native workers; for the intensification in the development of Colonial resources will bring forth the active opposition of the Colonial masses to the intensified oppression which it is bound to produce. The trade union men, as the servants of the Colonial Office in the labour departments of the Colonies, will have the task of maintaining industrial peace among the coloured under-paid workers.

There is no doubt that the Colonies, especially India, will be milked to restore Britain's declining capitalism. Mr. Shinwell has, in fact, done the ground work for the Tories, and how much better that he, a supposed Socialist, should have done it than they! He has filled out the framework of Marshal Smut's Regionalism, providing the economic content, dotting the i's and crossing the t's of the South African Premier's proposals. It is hoped to rally working class support behind an expansionist production programme by assuring the workers of Britain that this is the only way in which they can hope to ensure decent conditions of living at home, while the ruling class will continue to play its centuries-old game of power politics in opposition to the United States and the Soviet Union.

No sooner had the war in Europe come to a victorious conclusion, thanks to the stability and mighty power of the Soviet State, than the fundamental economic and political conflicts between the British and American capitalists on the one hand, and between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union on the other, broke into the open at San Francisco. Temporarily blurred by the exigent imperative for forming an anti-Hitler front, the essential differences between the 'United' Nations cannot be suppressed too long. Marshal Smuts's scheme of Regionalism and Mr. Shinwell's detailed amplification of it are proposed as the *modus operandi* for meeting America's world imperialist hegemony.

It the British working class falls for these power-politics nostrums—and they will if no political party emerges to re-direct them into the path of Socialism—they will find themselves drawn into greater and more destructive wars. The fundamental problems posed before Britain and the world cannot be solved in terms of 'ultra-Imperialism,' or 'supra-Imperialism,' but only in terms of Socialism. It is, of course, possible to effect temporary adjustments, to establish some sort of patchwork pattern such as has been envisaged by the American Agreement. But no permanent solution of the problems of the British people is possible within the framework of the existing social system. More intensive exploitation of India and Africa must result in violent resistance from those people. And this resistance will react upon the stability of the Imperial structure, which will not gain strength as is maintained by those putting forward plans to better it, but will be progressively weakened by the energetic struggles of the exploited masses of the Colonial territories. It is well to remember that the British Empire is not a cohesive entity of white people. It includes 500 million coloured people as against 70 million whites. And even the adherence of the white section of the Empire is not permanently guaranteed. The Dominions of Australia, New Zealand and Canada are gravitating towards the United States, and the loyalty of the Union of South Africa is questionable. Marshal Smuts is holding it to Great Britain at the moment, but when he is gone there will be a big drive from the Boer Nationalists, headed by Dr. Malan, to sever

the Imperial connection by declaring South Africa a "Fascist Christian National Republic."<sup>1</sup>

'Regionalism' or any other plan designed to secure the more intensive exploitation of the Colonial masses can only destroy what remains of their traditional loyalty. In reality, the Imperialists are digging their own grave. It is significant that while Mr. Shinwell recognised that there are 13 million dissatisfied Negroes in America, he was unable to make a similar accusation against the Soviet Union, and it is quite certain that he would have no hesitation in doing so were Stalin vulnerable in that regard. The most he could say was that "even our friends of Soviet Russia, for sound and proper purposes, in order to safeguard themselves against possible aggression in the future, have sought to exercise, I shall not put it higher than this, a protectorate over other countries." Aggression from whom? Only from some Imperialist Power or Powers. Obviously not Germany, now prostrate. Which Power or combination of Powers only history will reveal.

These people may have plans for Empire, but history has its own logic. This war and the part which the Soviet Union in particular has played in it has done more to educate the workers of Britain and of all lands, not excluding the subject peoples of the Empire, on the fundamental merits of Socialism, even with the limitations of the present Soviet régime, over the present decaying system of Capitalism-Imperialism which reaction is making desperate attempts to keep alive. History, in fact, has done the job which the Labour Party was founded to do but rejected. But these reactionary elements, though they may try to cheat history and succeed in arresting temporarily the historical process, cannot do so for ever. As Lenin said, "the Social Revolution may meet with defeats and temporary setbacks, but only Socialism can lead humanity out of the blind alley into which it has now been dragged."

#### *Fascism or Socialism?*

Only two alternatives are offered by the historical circum-

<sup>1</sup> See Alexander Campbell's *Smuts and Swastika* (Gollancz) and *The Garment Worker*—official organ of the Garment Workers' Union of South Africa for May-June, 1944.

stances of the present: Fascism or Socialism. The question of Socialism no longer remains an academic one. The contradictions and seething conflicts which exploded in the present war will not be solved by the war. Indeed, its conclusion can only deepen and sharpen them. Arising out of the sufferings which the peoples of Europe have undergone in the course of the holocaust will be an exaggerated nationalism whose dimensions are already discernible. Dislike it we may, but ignore it we cannot. It is a factor which we must face realistically. But like the nationalist struggle of the subject peoples of the British and other Empires, it is just another aspect of the deep-rooted crisis of the social and political system and is impossible of solution within the capitalist social structure. The Soviet form of multi-national State gives the only real answer. Within the framework of such a State the pressing problems of frontiers, of monetary exchange, of tariff walls, of markets, of production and distribution, are at once capable of solution.

The political and economic differences rampant under the present system of Capitalism-Imperialism are, within the Soviet type of State, with its common ownership of productive means, its socialised and planned basis, sublimated into a broader and richer Cultural Nationalism which enhances the social unity of all the components. "In the old days, when the Czar, the capitalists, and the landlords were in power in our country, it was the policy of the government to make one people—the Russian people—the dominant people, and all other peoples subjugated and oppressed peoples. That was a bestial, a wolfish policy. In October, 1917, when the great proletarian revolution began in our country, when we overthrew the Czar, the landlords and capitalists, the great Lenin, our teacher, our father and tutor, said that henceforth there must be neither dominated nor subjugated peoples, that the peoples must be equal and free. In this way we buried the old Czarist bourgeois policy and proclaimed a new policy, a Bolshevik policy—a policy of friendship, a policy of brotherhood between the peoples of our country.

"Since then eighteen years have elapsed. And now we already see the beneficial results of this policy. The present conference is a vivid proof of the fact that the former mistrust between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. has long been laid

to rest, that the mistrust has been replaced by complete and mutual trust, that the friendship between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. is growing and gaining in strength. That, comrades, is the most precious thing that the Bolshevik national policy has given us.

"And friendship among the peoples of the U.S.S.R. is a great and important achievement. For as long as this friendship exists, the peoples of our country will be free and invincible. Nothing can daunt us, neither enemies at home nor enemies abroad, as long as this friendship lives and flourishes. You need have no doubt of that, comrades."<sup>1</sup>

The means by which the Soviet Union solved its Colonial and National Problems inherited from Czarist Imperialism, and united the world's most heterogeneous ethnic society into a powerful State whose divers peoples are culturally individual, but whose entity is economically and politically united, provides the finest guide to the solution of similar problems on a world-wide scale. Only when the subject peoples of Asia and Africa, and the national minorities of Europe are united within a Soviet form of multi-national State will the racial, religious and sectional frictions, and the conflicting interests which Imperialism breeds and exploits and which lead to constant wars, be at peace and live in harmony. For Imperialism divides: Socialism unites.

<sup>1</sup> Address by J. Stalin at Conference of Collective Farmers from the Asiatic republics of Turkmenistan and Tazikistan—Dec. 4, 1935.

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