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**THE
CRIMINAL
CONSPIRACY
OF
STALIN
AND
HITLER**

**The
LABOUR
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FINLAND

THE CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY OF STALIN AND HITLER

Non-aggression pacts existed between the U.S.S.R. and her neighbours, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and Poland, and were prolonged for ten years by Protocols signed on April 4, 1934 (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), on April 7, 1934 (Finland), and on May 5, 1934 (Poland). Ratifications were exchanged with Finland on December 29, 1934, and with Poland on June 16, 1934.

In his Ceremonial Address, when the Baltic Protocols were signed at Moscow, on April 4, 1934, M. Litvinov declared, on behalf of the Government of the U.S.S.R. :

" The Soviet State to whom the ideas of chauvinism, nationalism, racial or national prejudices are completely alien, desires no conquests, no expansion, no extension of territory."

" We stand for peaceful, close, and friendly relations with all the neighbouring countries which have common frontiers with the U.S.S.R."

M. Joseph Stalin (March 10, 1939).

" They (the Fascist rulers) resort to bribery, deception, blackmail, and threats of furtherance of their aims of conquest. . . . They are forming gangs of diversionists in Rumania for the commission of terrorist acts ; they are conducting extensive disruptive activities in Poland, preparing for her dismemberment."

M. Manuilsky, Secretary of the Communist International

(March 11, 1939).

" . . . 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old formulas, formulas which we employed but recently, and to which many people are so accustomed, are now obviously out of date and inapplicable.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 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. . . . The roles, as you see, are changing."

M. Molotov (October, 1939).

LABOUR'S PROGRAMME OF ACTION

" We must refuse to serve or support our Government (and *ipso facto* any other Government) if it were condemned as an aggressor by the League, or designated itself as an aggressor by becoming involved in war after refusing arbitration."

"For Socialism and Peace" (1934), page 17-

And thereby hangs a tale—a tale wherein a spade shall be called a spade, and the old formulas, very old formulas, about bribery, deception, blackmail, aggression and war, shall be employed in their old concrete connotations, with modern illustrations.

Stalin and Von Ribbentrop Grip Hands

We shall begin, for the sake of brevity, with the scene in the room of Baron von Weizsacker at Berlin on the evening of August 15, 1939, when the German State Secretary received the British Ambassador. Sir Nevile Henderson telegraphed to Viscount Halifax :

"I was impressed by one thing, namely, Baron von Weizsacker's detachment and calm. He seemed very confident, and professed to believe that Russian assistance to the Poles would not only be entirely negligible, but that the U.S.S.R. would even in the end join in sharing in the Polish spoils. Nor did my insistence on the inevitability of British intervention seem to move him."

It was announced in Berlin six nights later, and in Moscow the following morning, that the Soviet Government and Nazi Germany were about to sign a non-aggression pact. Herr von Ribbentrop arrived in Moscow within two days. Late in the same evening, after a few short hours of "negotiation," the pact was signed, M. Joseph Stalin and Herr von Ribbentrop gripped hands over it, and a text was issued to the world's Press on the following day, August 24, 1939.

In the preamble to the Russo-German Pact it was stated that the two parties had been guided in their agreement by the desire to strengthen the cause of peace between Germany and the Soviet Republics—and only between them! It contained no provision for denunciation if either of them should attack a third Power. But they each explicitly agreed not to join any other group of Powers which directly or indirectly is directed against Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union—and that, too, regardless of the circumstances. The two Powers, therefore, had a free hand as regards third parties, but remained "in consultation with one another in order to inform themselves about questions which touch their 'common interests.' "

The stage was set for war against Poland.

A Frontier Incident! War!

On September 1 a German report was circulated of an "invasion by Polish diversionist bands near Gleiwitz." Herr Hitler, employing the time-worn imperialist formula, made a confused announcement in the Reichstag that "this night for the first time, Polish regular soldiers fired on our own territory. Since 5.45 a.m. we have been returning the fire, and from now on bombs will be met with bombs." He was particularly happy to tell that Germany and Soviet Russia had resolved to conclude a pact which ruled out for ever any use of violence *between them*. "It imposes the obligation on us to consult together on certain European questions" . . . "it assures that the powers of both these powerful States are not wasted against one another."

Two days later France and Great Britain were at war with Germany.

Soviet Russia Moves. Partition of Poland

It was now the turn of Soviet Russia to move, according to plan. M. Molotov adopted the ill-starred Nazi formula. Soviet troops had crossed the Polish frontier on September 17 to take their "blood brothers" under their protection. A situation had arisen which demanded of the "Soviet Government special concern for the security of its State." The Soviet Government could no longer maintain a neutral attitude.

"One swift blow to Poland, first by the German Army and then by the Red Army, and nothing was left" of Poland. This was M. Molotov's own graphic picture of the operation on a later occasion (October 31).

The "sharing of the Polish spoils" was consecrated on September 29 in a German-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, fixing the frontier "of their *imperial interests* in the former territory of Poland," where it was their exclusive task to re-establish "peace and order." "They refuse all interference by third Powers in this settlement," including, of course, the interference of the Poles, Jews, and other peoples directly concerned. Having created "a sure basis for a durable peace in Eastern Europe" by the destruction of Poland, they thought that the war between Germany and the Allies should come to an end. If their efforts to this end should not meet with success, "the fact will then be proved that Britain and France are responsible for the continuation of the war." One of the Imperial Masters, Herr Hitler, produced an olive branch, bristling with thorns, during a Reichstag speech on October 6. His proposals

were based upon recognition of his conquests and his right to do what he pleases with the conquered, and were rejected.

What next?

Russia's Anxiety Neuroses

"Common anxieties and common dangers are perhaps the best bonds between States," M. Litvinov once said (December 29, 1933), when speaking of the community of interests between the Soviet Union and Poland, with an oblique reference to the disturbing influence of Herr Adolf Hitler.

M. Joseph Stalin and Herr Adolf Hitler had now embraced over the prostrate body of Poland. The Polish State did not exist; all treaties with it were invalid (M. Molotov, September 17). Poland was no longer a cause of anxiety to Russia.

M. Stalin and Herr Hitler, however, were now near neighbours. M. Stalin had also other neighbours in Eastern Europe, namely, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. M. Litvinov had also spoken about *them*. "These countries are becoming more and more convinced of the absolute sincerity of our aspirations for peace, of our good will towards them, and of our interest in the preservation of their full economic and political independence. Indeed, we are not only interested in this, we are anxious about it."

Whether M. Joseph Stalin devours those whom he loves, whether he was under the hypnotic spell of Adolf the Conqueror or Peter the Great, or whether he was now the victim of new morbid anxieties, the reader is at liberty to speculate. His Gargantuan appetite had not been satisfied by the conquest of Polish territory "equal to the area of a large European State" (M. Molotov). His smaller Western neighbours at once became the object of his imperial solicitude.

Submarine Sighted. End of Estonia

Estonia was the first victim. On September 22, M. Selter received a peremptory summons to go at once to the Kremlin. He went. One week later Estonia had been dragged behind the Russian veil.

It was at first announced that the Soviet Government had invited M. Selter to come and sign a new trade agreement. Three days afterwards M. Selter returned home, and, simultaneously, Radio Moscow announced that M. Selter had given an "insufficient" explanation of the escape of the Polish submarine *Orzel* from Tallinn. This submarine had arrived on September 18, and was dismantled and interned! It escaped three days later.

There was more to come about submarines. The Soviet Tass Agency raised the cry, "There must be secret submarine bases near Tallinn," as Soviet destroyers had sighted two submarines on the northern coast of Estonia. Then came a story of the mysterious torpedoing of a Russian steamer, *Metallist*, of Soviet aeroplanes being seen over Tallinn, and of Russian troops moving towards the Estonian frontier.

Meanwhile, M. Selter had found himself again in Moscow perforce (September 25), and on the self-same day (September 29) when M. Joseph Stalin concluded his Treaty of Friendship with Herr Adolf Hitler, the U.S.S.R. (Population, 162,000,000) found it necessary to conclude a "Pact of Mutual Assistance" with Estonia (Population, 1,116,000) operative in the event of aggression or threat of aggression on the part of *any great European Power*.

M. Selter was made to feel that some such threat was imminent. The Soviet Union obtained the right to maintain naval bases and several military aerodromes on the islands of Oesel and Dago and in Baltiski Port, with Soviet land and air-armed forces, and to supply the Estonian Army with their material and equipment.

Nothing has since been heard of the unknown submarine.

Latvia and Lithuania follow Estonia

M. Joseph Stalin had now completed his second demonstration of the substitution of "military operation for diplomacy," a phrase which was dear to M. Litvinov. Latvia and Lithuania were to receive their summons very soon.

The Latvian Foreign Minister arrived in Moscow on October 2 and the Lithuanian Foreign Minister arrived on the following afternoon. They already knew what was expected of them. If they still had doubts, after the Estonian Treaty, an article published in *Isvestia* (October 3) would have enlightened them. They would have learned—certainly for the first time—that attempts had been made to equip bases for the British Fleet in the Estonian islands of Oesel and Dago, *where there would now be Russian naval bases*. "But the growth of Soviet naval strength and the fortifying of strategic positions in the Baltic gives the best security for the vital interests of neighbouring small countries. Our glorious Red Fleet ensures the possibility of operations in the Baltic against all possible aggressor nations."

Finland was now mentioned as one of the prospective "victims" of hypothetical "aggressors," and was, therefore, presumably to become one of the actual victims of Russia's "attentive and solicitous

attitude towards the independence and sovereignty of the small States which are weak from a military point of view." (*Pravda*, quoted by *Manchester Guardian*, October 4, 1939.) Russian Czardom, ran the argument, was able to use naval bases on the present territory of Finland (including the Aaland Islands). Then why not Soviet Russia?

The Soviet Treaty with Latvia (Population, 2,000,000) was signed on October 5 ; the Treaty with Lithuania (Population, 2,200,000) was signed on October 10. They were both drawn up from the pattern of the Pact with Estonia. Both these small Powers discovered that they needed protection by Soviet Russia from "*any other European Power*," and would find it advantageous to buy their arms and war materials from Soviet Russia. Latvia permitted the Russian Navy to have naval bases at Libau and Windau, and to build aerodromes for the Soviet Air Force. Russian artillery bases were to be set up along the coast. All these bases, aerodromes, and coastal batteries would have their complement of Russian troops. In the Lithuanian Pact nothing was said about Memel. The Vilna region, part of Poland, was incorporated in Lithuania, and the Soviet Army and Air Force were permitted to establish themselves at points distributed all over the territory of Lithuania.

In *Pravda* (quoted by the *Daily Herald*, October 16), a Russian author, Vishnevsky, quoted a Red Navy man as saying : "Peter the Great fought 21 years to win access to the Baltic. In the Stalinist epoch the problem has been solved in a few days, without a single shot being fired."

The Pawns in their Game

M. Joseph Stalin and Herr Adolf Hitler had now brought within their despotic "protection" by force or threat of force, regardless of life, liberty, or happiness, 60,500,000 human souls :

M. JOSEPH STALIN		Herr ADOLF HITLER	
Eastern Poland ...	17,250,000	Western Poland ..	17,250,000
Estonia ..	1,116,000	Sudetenland..	3,700,000
Latvia ..	2,000,000	Slovakia ..	3,300,000
Lithuania..	2,250,000	Moravia ..	2,321,000
		Bohemia ..	4,473,000
		Memelland..	153,000
		Austria	6,760,000
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	22,616,000		37,957,000

There was worse to come, however. M. Joseph Stalin had become "a fast worker," as they say in the underworld, since he plighted his troth to Herr Adolf Hitler. His foreign policy had become one of seizing strategical vantage points in view of hypothetical wars and present economic advantages. *Pravda* had gloated over the prospect that the trade of the Baltic States would now be diverted from the West to the East. M. Joseph Stalin was a militarist and imperialist in the Russian tradition.

Strategic Bases and Sally Posts

In the view of the Comintern, the propaganda arm of the Kremlin, it was Nazi Germany which, prior to the Hitler-Stalin Pact, threatened the independence of the Baltic States and Finland.

In January, 1939, the "Communist International" asserted that "German Fascism is striving to undermine and dominate the Baltic States, to enslave their inhabitants, to erect strategic bases and sally posts." It had already raised an alarm (November, 1938) that "German Fascism is scheming to convert the Aalarid Islands into the Balearic Islands of the North. The security of the Aaland Islands is part of the general question of the security of all Scandinavia and Finland." The second part of this statement was certainly true ; but when other Powers agreed last year that Sweden and Finland should be permitted to fortify the Aaland Islands, Russia made threatening objections (May, 1939). Coming events were already casting their shadow over the security of Sweden and Finland.

The Soviet Government had even let it be known through various sources that she suspected Finland of conspiring against her. M. Holsti, the Finnish Foreign Minister, visited Moscow (February, 1937) in order to dispel, as he said, any anxieties that "Finland has made secret arrangements with a Great Power whereby Finland should be the jumping-off ground for an attack upon the Soviet Union." M. Holsti proposed that all questions disturbing the relations between the two countries should be once and for all cleared up. The Great Power was certainly Germany. But M. Holsti's proposal did not lead to any positive results. M. Joseph Stalin was biding his time. His real thoughts were hidden behind a cloud of propaganda.

An Invitation to Finland

This was the state of relations between Finland and Russia when M. Molotov sent for the Finnish Minister in Moscow upon the day of the Estonian capitulation (October 5). M. Molotov informed him of the Russian desire for negotiations. When the Finnish Cabinet were about to begin their deliberations on the matter (October 6), Herr Adolf Hitler was making his "Peace with Victory" speech in the Reichstag (October 6). Certain passages were very significant for Finland.. He said :

(1) "Germany has concluded non-aggression pacts with the BALTIC STATES. Her interests in regard to them are exclusively of an economic nature."

By this declaration, Germany gave to Russia a free hand in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. They did not interest Germany, save as regards commercial intercourse.

Herr Adolf Hitler continued :

(2) "Germany has not had even in the past any conflict of interests, let alone issues in dispute, with the NORTHERN STATES, and she has as little to-day. She has offered non-aggression pacts to both SWEDEN AND NORWAY, and if they refused this offer, it was only because they themselves did not feel themselves in any way threatened."

A special reference to DENMARK followed. Germany had established with Denmark loyal and friendly relations, and had concluded with Denmark a pact of non-aggression.

But what about Finland? The Baltic States, the Northern States, and Denmark had all been mentioned by name. Finland was not even mentioned. Was Finland no longer on the map? The truth was soon to appear.

The Finnish Government accepted the Russian invitation (October 8), declaring at the same time through its Foreign Minister : "We threaten none, seek no advantage, and will not adhere to any great Power or group. Our sole desire is to live in peace with all, and remain outside conflicts."

Russia's Demands

M. Joseph Stalin had once declared that, "We do not want a bit of foreign land, but at the same time, not an inch of our land shall ever be yielded to anyone else." (Sixteenth Congress of Communist

Party, 1930.) "Give him an inch and he'll take an ell," would more fitly describe the nature of the proposals which were handed to the Finnish delegation in Moscow on October 14. Nevertheless, the Finns were conciliatory and disposed to compromise, even to the extent of yielding to Russia bits of *their* land.

Russia insisted generally that the Finnish-Russian frontier should be demilitarised. The demand had a superficial air of equality—the same rule of law for the rich and the poor, the weak and the powerful. Great Russia did not need to fortify its frontier against feeble Finland. The Finns had a fortified line on the Karelian Isthmus. The Russian proposal covered a demand for its destruction.

"The law forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread." (Anatole France.)

"Frontier guards are enough in the frontier zone," said the Russians. "Only frontier guards may be found there in normal times," said the Finns.

Another Russian proposal that the frontier in the south-western corner of the Karelian Isthmus should be pushed some 50 miles further northwards and north-westwards would have brought the Finnish "Maginot Line" over to the Russian side of the frontier. That the Finnish frontier at this point was 20 miles from Leningrad—the range of a long-distance gun—was made the excuse for this proposal. The Finns had no such guns, and the distance of Leningrad from the Finnish frontier was to a hair's breadth the distance of the Finnish frontier from Leningrad, whose population was nearly as great as the whole population of Finland. The Finns naturally thought that their own security would be endangered by a frontier adjustment of this magnitude and significance. They suggested that where the frontier at this point was inconvenient because it made a salient in Russian territory, it might be moved eight miles westward. This offer was unacceptable to Moscow, which offered to take a little less than their original demand. The Finns declined this counter-proposal, because the purpose of any mutual arrangement should be to make proper allowance for the security of both parties. They then proposed the cession of a somewhat more extensive territory on the northern coast at the end of the Gulf of Finland, $12\frac{1}{2}$ to $15\frac{1}{2}$ miles from their ancient frontier.

Certain outer islands at the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland were already demilitarised by treaty (1920). Russia now required the cession of these islands, without giving any assurance that they would remain demilitarised. Finland agreed, nevertheless, subject

to a mutual arrangement with regard to Suursaari, including the cession to Russia of the southern part of this island.

These demands were all based upon an alleged danger of aggression against the Soviet Union. The Russians, however, made another discovery. They discovered that the frontier of the Fisherman's peninsula at Petsamo had been unskillfully and artificially drawn by agreement between Finland and the Soviet Union so recently as 1920. Giving no reasons whatever, the Soviet Union now demanded the cession of the whole of the western part. The Finns, always conciliatory, made a counter-proposal, including some cession of territory.

None of these demands of the Soviet Union was chosen as the cause of the deadlock. That distinction was reserved for the cession of a naval base with a Russian garrison in the Port of Hango and adjoining territory, with the right of using the bay of Lappohja as an anchoring berth for the Soviet naval forces. To Finland, neutrality and independence were sacred ideas. It would be both incompatible with her policy of neutrality and a grave threat to her independence if she were to grant to a foreign Power military and naval bases on her own territory and within the confines of her frontiers.

M. Molotov met this argument with the not very tactful rejoinder that the ceded territory would, *ipso facto*, become Soviet territory, after having been sold to the U.S.S.R. M. Molotov was willing to substitute for Hango, three islands in the vicinity, subsequently increased to six islands by name and "certain other islands," all within Finnish territorial waters and surrounded by Finnish territory. In a Memorandum presented to M. Molotov on November 9, 1939, M. Paasikivi, the Finnish Delegate, stated that his Government was of opinion that the "reasons which prevent our granting a military base at Hango apply also to the islands in question." Upon the same day M. Molotov disdainfully returned the letter. Undaunted, M. Paasikivi and M. Tanner submitted a new Memorandum upon the following day, concluding with the "sincere hope that an agreement may be concluded between Finland and the U.S.S.R. on the basis of the concessions proposed to the U.S.S.R. by Finland." Finland, it should be observed, had advanced no demands whatever. M. Molotov returned no reply to this communication. On November 13, 1939, the Finnish delegation left Moscow. They thanked M. Molotov for his kindness and expressed "the hope that at some future date the negotiations may bring about a result satisfactory to both parties."

If there should be any reader who thinks that Finland might have returned an unqualified acceptance of the Russian demands, let him suppose that Nazi Germany, flushed with victory, had brought Holland and Belgium under its "protection," and that Herr Adolf Hitler had informed Great Britain and France, then "weak from a military point of view," that it was essential to prevent the access to the North Sea of an enemy of Nazi Germany and the protected States, making the following demands: that the British coastal defences should be destroyed, that the Orkney and Shetland Islands and the Channel Islands should be fortified by Nazi Germany, that the Isle of Wight and the Port of Southampton and neighbourhood should become a German naval base, that territory in East Kent, extending to a distance of 5 miles inland from the coast, as well as the Pas de Calais in France, should be ceded to Germany. How would you feel about it? Very well, the Finns were of the same opinion, although they had not fought and lost.

The Drums of War

During a short interregnum of twelve days, Moscow beat the drums of war by Press and radio in the familiar manner of the Nazis, which has always been the Bolshevik manner. The Finns were even threatened with the fate of the Czechs and the Poles, and the Soviet Air Force made threatening demonstrations over Finnish territory. Even Dr. Goebbels was surpassed by the *Tass Agency* correspondent, who alleged that "Finnish reactionaries dream of conquering the Soviet Union as far as the Urals" (*The Times*, November 16, 1939).

The cloven hoof of Soviet Imperialism also revealed itself in the other complaint that the same Finnish reactionaries are supported by Great Britain, which "dominates Finland economically." Great Britain, it is true, is Finland's best customer and her best market. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, boasts of its "self sufficiency," in the same way as Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. If it is the policy of the Soviet Union to expand its internal trade by expansion of territory, then it has many more worlds to conquer, and cannot escape the stigma of being imperialist.

Frontier Incident! Russia Spreads the War!

When the propaganda had appeared to reach the lowest depths—Stalin's Men in this country taking the cue as Nazis abroad take the cue from Dr. Goebbels—M. Molotov judged it opportune to

present a Note to the Finnish Minister in Moscow on November 26, 1939. He complained that on that very day, at 3.45 p.m. precisely, Red troops in the vicinity of the village of Mainila, on the Karelian Isthmus, had been the object of unexpected artillery fire from Finnish territory. He therefore proposed, in the name of the Government of the U.S.S.R., that the Finnish Government should withdraw its troops on the Karelian Isthmus, without delay, to a distance of 12½ to 15½ miles from the frontier.

The Government of Finland immediately ordered an enquiry. It found, and informed M. Molotov (November 27), that there was, indeed, firing on November 26 in the vicinity of the village of Mainila. The competent frontier-guard post had made a note of the shots at the actual moment of the incident. The firing took place on the Soviet side of the frontier, and the points where the shots had fallen could be seen on the Finnish side, close to the village of Mainila. "It seems possible," said the Finns "that this may have been an accident." Although there were no concrete grounds for the withdrawal of troops, the Government of Finland was prepared to open conversations with a view "to the mutual withdrawal of troops to a certain distance from the frontier." Finland also proposed that Frontier Commissioners should be instructed to carry out a joint enquiry into the incident, in conformity with the Convention concerning Frontier Commissioners, concluded on September 24, 1928.

M. Molotov was not in that mood. "The reply of the Finnish Government," he wrote, "reflects the deep-rooted hostility of the Finnish Government towards the U.S.S.R.; their proposal for a mutual withdrawal of troops reveals clearly the hostile desire of the Finnish Government to expose Leningrad to danger. The Government of the U.S.S.R. considers itself released, as from to-day (November 28) from the Treaty of Non-Aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Finland." On the following day, the U.S.S.R. recalled its political and economic representatives from Finland. At the same time, Finland repeated its proposal for the appointment of a Frontier Commission of Enquiry, suggested that the dispute should be examined by the Conciliation Commission provided for in the Pact of Non-Aggression, and alternatively offered to submit the settlement of the dispute to neutral arbitration. An offer of the good offices of the U.S.A. as mediator was then accepted by Finland, and arrogantly rejected by the Soviet Union. About the same time (November 29-30) the Russian Army and Air Force made war upon Finland. Finland still expressed her willingness to negotiate. But there was no reply.

A Modern David and Goliath

The moment for war had been well chosen. Finland, the country of lakes and fenland, was covered with ice. The snowfall would not reach its maximum (2½ to 3 feet) till the middle of March. Conditions for transport and the mass movement of troops promised to be ideal for about two or three months, when the snowdrifts would accumulate and be followed in late spring by a thaw. Snowdrifts and thaw are both unfavourable to military movements.

It had been one of the themes of Soviet propaganda—and of Stalin's minions in this country—that the Finnish ruling classes, supported by Great Britain, did not want an agreement with the U.S.S.R., but that the broad masses desired friendly relations with the Soviet Union (e.g., *Tass Agency*, November 15). Soviet bombs, however, made no such distinctions. Nor did the Finns. Attacked, they defended themselves.

Victims of a policy of deception, blackmail, trickery, cynicism, and brutality not dissimilar to the subtle cruelty of Japanese militarism, but excelling in cunning and dissimulation the diplomacy of Russian Czardom, Nazi Germany, and Italian Fascism—whose daggers were never concealed in the folds of angels' wings—they were now confronted with the brute weight of the Russian Empire. The new Russian aerodromes and naval bases in Estonia, which were to protect Estonia from any "*great European Power*" became bases of operation against Finland !

"For Fatherland! For Stalin! Battery fire!" was the battle-cry of the Red Army. Never had the Russian peasant and workman shouldered a rifle in a worse cause.

The Puppet Government

The tragedy of the situation was relieved by only one gleam of grim humour—the declaration broadcast from Moscow (November 30) by the Finnish Communist Party that "the land of the Soviets never threatened and never alarmed Finland" and the further declaration, also from Moscow (December 1) that a Finnish People's Government had been established at Terijoki, near Leningrad, with M. Kuusinen, a Finnish Communist and former Secretary of the Comintern, as Prime Minister. M. Kuusinen was the Henlein of the Finns, with this exception, that even under the most favourable conditions (1927 and 1929) the Finnish Communists never represented more than 10 per cent, of the Finnish electors. M. Kuusinen had now the temerity to publish "a vast programme of reforms," which were already a reality

in Finland, and revealed through his manifesto that the worst of all Finnish reactionaries was M. Vaino Tanner, Foreign Minister and Leader of the Labour Movement, who is also President of the International Co-operative Alliance.

In March, 1937, the same M. Vaino Tanner had been recommended as President of the Finnish Republic in a manifesto signed by M. Kuusinen himself. Now, "these hangmen," proclaimed M. Kuusinen, from the rear of the Russian Army, "must be driven out of Finland." The word "hangmen" was ill-chosen in a manifesto from Moscow, where it would sometimes appear that the executioner's axe is as busy as the Finnish woodsman's chopper. Nobody is hanged in Finland or executed, whether they be Bolsheviks, old or new, priests, politicians or diplomats, commissars or generals. Finland is not rich by worldly standards. But it is rich in the virtues of the good life. It is a cultured democracy.

The Finnish Labour Movement, which represents 43 per cent, of the Diet, made the quiet and dignified reply to M. Kuusinen that, "The working class of this country asks only to be allowed to live in peace and develop the country by peaceful reforms into one which satisfies everybody." If the Soviet Union did not wish to set any value on the will of the working-class for peace "there is nothing left for the Finnish workers to do but fight, sword in hand, against force."

The grim joke of the "People's Government of Finland" was even carried one stage further by M. Joseph Stalin. Finland had appealed to the League of Nations, which had accepted the proposal of the Swedish delegate to appeal once more to Soviet Russia to cease hostilities and to accept the mediation of the League. The proposal was rejected. The Soviet Union was not at war with Finland! On December 2 they had concluded a Pact of Mutual Assistance and Friendship with the People's Government of Finland!

M. Kuusinen and his friends were not at Terijoki. They were warming their hands at the fires of the Kremlin with Kuusinists from other countries. They are doubtless still there.

The device of the People's Government was invented for Stalin's Men abroad. When (January 6, 1940) the Governments of Norway and Sweden received menacing Notes of Protest, because their people were giving aid to Finland, as they gave aid to Republican Spain, more generously than any others, it was found that these Notes came, not from the so-called "People's Government of Finland," but from the Government of the U.S.S.R.!

A New Precedent in International Perfidy

This pamphlet is written for those who understand that the rule of law must be the basis of any community of nations living in a state of peace. The Soviet Union had not only committed an act of brutal and unprovoked aggression against Finland but was in a state of undeclared war with Finland. It had created a new precedent in international perfidy through the unilateral denunciation on November 28, 1939, of a Non-Aggression Treaty with Finland, valid until 1942, which had been in process of amendment by mutual agreement on October 23, 1939.

The Soviet Government had suggested amendment (October 14). The Finnish Government agreed. In the "Proposal of the Soviet Union" (October 23), it was stated: "The Soviet Government accept the Finnish Government's proposal regarding the amendment of Article 2, paragraph 1, of the Non-Aggression Treaty."

The reader will recall that the Soviet Union was regarded by itself, and by others, as the leading representative of "the tendencies which are interested in the preservation of peace." It was the Soviet Union which had provided an exhaustive definition of "aggression" and "aggressor." M. Litvinov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, should, however, be permitted to speak for himself. He said (December 29, 1933):

"The definition of aggression which we have given is generally recognised to be a valuable contribution to the science of international law, and also of international practice; at the same time, it forms an excellent measure for determining the absence or presence in any State of aggressive, annexationist aims."

"This proposal of ours," he had said, "is already contained in agreements with a solid chain of our neighbours from Finland to Afghanistan and with all the three countries of the Little Entente."

Let us now take a look at this definition:

Art. II.— . . . the aggressor in an international conflict with due consideration to the agreements existing between the parties involved in the conflict, will be considered the State which will be the first to commit any of the following acts:

- (1) Declaration of war against another State;
- (2) Invasion by armed forces, even without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;

(3) An attack by armed land, naval, or air forces, even without a declaration of war, upon the territory, naval vessels, or aircraft of another State;

(4) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;

(5) Aid to armed bands formed on the territory of a State and invading the territory of another State, or refusal, despite demands on the part of the State subjected to attack, to take all possible measures on its own territory to deprive the said bands of any aid and protection.

Art. III.—No considerations of a political, military, economic, or any other nature can serve as an excuse or justification of aggression as specified in Article II.

An Appendix to Article III of the Convention gave certain indications permitting the determination of an aggressor in the sense of Article II, and established, *inter alia*, that none of the circumstances mentioned below may be used to justify any act of aggression:

The internal position of any State, as, for example: its political, economic, or social structure; alleged shortcomings of its administration; disorder following upon strikes, revolutionary or counter-revolutionary movements, and civil war ... frontier incidents which do not fall under any of the cases of aggression indicated in Article II.

This may seem a tedious catalogue to the Unity Mitfords of the Left, for whom pledges are given only to be broken. Those others, however, who have quiet and understanding minds, will appreciate the grave significance of M. Molotov's declaration that concepts such as "aggression" and "aggressor" have acquired new meaning. Men may take off their masks, but words do not change their meaning so quickly. What is the present value of the Soviet Treaties with the solid chain of her neighbours into which the Soviet definition of aggression has been written and signed? The Soviet Union, in its own view, is the aggressor.

M. Litvinov once said, in his role of immaculate censor of everybody else's morals: "For a small and weak country to speak now of neutrality means to declare that she refuses the assistance of the League, friends and allies, and invites all those who wish to rape her to do so." (June 27, 1938.) His admonitory finger was pointed at Nazi Germany. The Soviet Union has now cast itself for that role.

The Criminal Conspiracy

It was not through any lapse of memory that Herr Adolf Hitler had omitted to mention Finland in his speech of October 6. The act of omission was a public whisper in the ear of M. Joseph Stalin. Finland was no longer on the map at the Reich Chancellery. The official *Diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz* (December 5) frankly confessed that "it was really no business of the Reich's to interfere in a sphere where Russia had vital interests of long standing. It was obvious that the clash between Germany and Poland provoked by Great Britain must lead to a partition of Russian and German spheres of interest."

This was the diplomatic manner of expressing the fact that the two gangsters had agreed to work different pitches or, more precisely, that the occupation of the Baltic States and Finland was part of the price which M. Joseph Stalin had exacted from Herr Adolf Hitler for his betrayal of the peace of the world through the conclusion of the Soviet-German Pacts. A bargain in a thieves' kitchen was followed by the now inevitable war, Russia and Germany partition Poland; Russia takes the Baltic States under her "protection," "erects strategic bases and sally posts," and uses them in a new war against Finland.

The real depth of the iniquity of M. Joseph Stalin is still unknown. His thirty pieces of silver are already stained with the blood of his own nameless and countless Russian dead. His blood guilt and complicity with Nazi Germany are enshrined in his Christmas message to Herr von Ribbentrop: "The friendship of the peoples of Germany and the Soviet Union, cemented by blood, has every reason to be lasting and firm." Whose blood? The blood of Russians and Germans?

Thus Joseph and Adolf "switch the war." They also switch the "ideological war." They agree not to waste their resources, verbal or material, against one another. They demand an unconditional cessation of hostilities in the West—and only in the West—Joseph being sure of his prey in Finland. They feign a common delusion of persecution by "plutocratic" France and Great Britain. There is no Finnish plutocracy, but that did not save Finland. Molotov (October 31) denounces a war for the destruction of Hitlerism as "not only senseless but criminal," the war which he was preparing against Finland being wise and benevolent. *Pravda* (January 26, 1940) claims that "Germany does not want war, but peace," and that the Soviet Union is "a powerful stronghold of peace." Aid to Finland becomes a war of intervention against the Soviet Union and a pretext for using the Northern States as bases of operation for the further encirclement of Germany.

Adolf sends Joseph birthday congratulations. The text is printed prominently in *Pravda* on December 23 with messages from Von Ribbentrop, Kuusinen, etc. Upon the next day there appears a message from Mr. Harry Pollitt, among a torrent of congratulations "from numerous organisations and a few individuals. A second list appears under the heading "Greetings" from the Central Committees of eleven Communist Parties including the British. The texts are not printed. M. Joseph Stalin has a new sense of relative values.

Nevertheless, M. Joseph Stalin still has accomplices, paid and unpaid, in this country, where the truth is not hidden from them. Stalin's Men had at once changed step and followed their Leader. Their old pamphlets, speeches, articles, and manifestos were consigned to their ample demagogic dustbins. They listened to the voice of Moscow, compared notes with Berlin, shouted that they want peace with Hitler, and joined the Unity Mitfords of the Right in a chorus of vituperation against the French and British "war-mongers."

A Few Pages of History

Pravda (December 4, 1939) has written that the object of the war is "to transform Finland into a province of the Soviet Union." What's in a name? Let us turn back the pages of history.

The period between the first Russian Revolution and the final victory of the Allies was a period of indecision, strife, and even civil war, for Finland, whose "independent" history did not begin only in 1920, when, firstly, Soviet Russia and then the other Powers finally recognised her full independence and integrity as an accomplished fact.

Finland was a distinct entity within the Swedish political community from the middle of the twelfth century until 1809. The Finns were citizens of Sweden, sharing their joys and sorrows, their religious, cultural, and political progress, and, to their great misfortune, also their wars with Russia.

By the peace of Nystad (1721), after the Great Northern Wars, Sweden ceded the Baltic States to Russia, and Finland was dismembered, Southern Karelia and Viborg being annexed by Russia. Sweden had collapsed as a "Great Power." Peter the Great celebrated his victory with a good deal of noise and assumed the title of Emperor of all the Russias. The Empress Elizabeth took another little bit of Finland in 1742.

Still the drive westwards to the sea had not stopped. The Russian imperialist has always "one more river to cross"—until he

reaches the sea in every direction. Napoleon, to whom Sweden was "Russia's geographical enemy," had persuaded Czar Alexander I to compel Sweden to close the Baltic against the English. He failed. There was a sudden attack upon Finland without any declaration of war by Russia, a short struggle, a heroic defence by the Finns, and in 1809 Finland, Grand Duchy of Sweden, became Finland, Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire.

Czar Alexander I had fulfilled an ancestral ambition, and he had done it with a complete absence of humbug. He gave a solemn undertaking to the Diet "to govern this country as a free nation enjoying the rights guaranteed to it by its Constitution." But neither he nor his successor Czar Nicholas I, Grand Dukes of Finland, again convened the Finnish Diet.

Finland was administered from Helsinki as a separate State, firstly by a Council of Finnish subjects, appointed by the Grand Duke, known after 1816 as the Senate; a Finnish Secretariat in St. Petersburg acted as intermediary in matters requiring the assent of the Grand Duke. Alexander II convened a Finnish Diet in 1863, and in 1869 a new constitutional law was adopted, mainly based on the old Swedish model (Acts of 1772 and 1789). Legislation proposed in the Diet was sent to the Senate, and, if approved, was submitted to the Grand Duke, the Czar, for his assent.

The Finns, who were never a people without an independent history, attained within their present frontiers,* in loose union with Russia—but not without a struggle—a high degree of national independence and political maturity, and unlike Russia, a high state of cultural development. Unlike Russia, they had never known serfdom, except within the Viborg Province.

"Between 1869 and 1898 the history of Finland is bare of notable events, but it was a period of rapid social and national development. Finland became a country of prosperous bourgeois, liberal and even radical, but scarcely socialist in tone. Education reached a very high level, and to a great extent culture determined a person's social status. All those who had been through the university met upon an equal footing; leisured or idle persons were hard to find. The nobility had gone into commerce; and the industry, simple tastes, and intelligence of the bourgeoisie enabled them to develop the resources of the country and provide comfortably for themselves. But there was little that could be called wealth; and the social tone was such that the few wealthy men bore their

* With the exception of Petsamo region added by Treaty (1920).

riches apologetically. Finland was not only a poor country, but a land of wholesome delights and high ideals. . . . The taxes were not heavy; and the tariffs, in spite of many threats from Russia to level them up to her own, were never interfered with, and always remained low."*

The Last of the Romanovs

It was the Czar, Nicholas II, the Last of the Romanovs, who set to work in systematic fashion to destroy the constitutional liberties of Finland. He endeavoured in 1898 to turn the Finns into Russian conscripts. The Diet rejected the Bill. The Czar retaliated in February, 1899, by abolishing the Diet. He would legislate in future for Finland without its advice or assistance. Bobrikov was appointed Military Dictator to govern Finland. He was greeted by a national movement of passive but effective resistance, culminating in the Great Civil Strike of the people of Finland in October, 1905, under the leadership of the Social Democratic Party. This Party had been founded in 1899 to express popular democratic feeling and the material needs of the new industrial working-class and the more numerous group of crofters and landless agricultural labourers (207,000 families in 1901). The Party seized power in Helsinki and other towns, maintained order, and ensured freedom of speech and of the Press, and freedom from arbitrary arrest by the Russian police.

The Czar Nicholas II yielded to the demands of Finnish Social Democracy. The old Finnish Diet met again in June, 1906, and voted an annual military indemnity to Russia in lieu of military service, against the protests of the Socialists. The first elections of the new Diet were held in April, 1907, on the basis of universal suffrage for all citizens over the age of 24, regardless of property, age, or sex. The Finnish Diet was the most democratic political instrument in Europe. Eighty out of its 200 representatives were Social Democrats, a number that was increased to 83 in 1908, to 84 in 1909, to 86 in 1910 and 1911, and to 90 in 1913. But the veto of the Czar remained. The word of the Czar was inviolable. Peter Stolypin advised him to use his veto, and he did. Not all of the Bills introduced by the Social Democrats, who had not a majority, were accepted by the Diet. But only a meagre part of the social legislation adopted by the Diet and approved by the Senate were also approved by the Czar: an eight-hour day in the baking trade and a nine-hour day in many other trades, with payment for night-work and overtime at 50 per cent, above normal rates; the principle of "equal pay for equal work" regardless of sex

*"Finland." H.M. Stationery Office, 1920.

in State schools, in the Post Office, and on the Railways; civil marriages and an improvement in the legal status of illegitimate children. The Diet voted universal and compulsory education from seven to thirteen, with free board and travelling expenses in case of need; the total prohibition of the sale of alcohol; accident insurance; the commutation of service for money rents and compensation for tenants' improvements, civil rights for Jews, etc. But they never became law under the Czar.

In June, 1910, the Third Duma and Imperial Council rushed through the Imperial Legislation Act for Finland. It was a measure for the unification of Finland with Russia in matters of finance, customs, monetary system, communications, order and law, public education, the right of association, freedom of speech and writing, and the right of assembly, navigation and pilot service, the use of the Russian language and the legal status of Russians in Finland. This meant the end of Finland. This imperial legislation, however, was never enforced, except as regards navigation and the rights of Russians in Finland.

It had evoked widespread indignation in Europe among public men and international lawyers, and throughout the international working-class, without exception, as an abrogation of the constitutional rights of Finland. Memorials of protest were sent to the Duma from members of European Parliaments: British (120 and 43 Irish Nationalists), French (120 Senators and 292 Deputies), German (165), as well as the Italian, Dutch and Belgian Parliaments, and the German National Union of Austria.

It was at this time that Rosalind Travers, wife of H. M. Hyndman, wrote her "Letters from Finland." Mr. Henry W. Nevins was a Special Correspondent at Helsinki. "Whether governments wish it or not," he wrote, with an optimism which this generation has not justified, "the peoples of Europe are, in fact, developing into a community of nations. Treaties and international sanctions such as those upon which the liberties of Finland are based, cannot be torn up without a shock to the good faith and security of the civilised world."

The Second of the Bolsheviks

Czar Alexander I had proclaimed (1816) that his Oath of 1809 was binding upon his successors. It was certainly not binding upon the Government of the U.S.S.R. That Government, however, had bound itself by new engagements to Finland—Treaty of Dorpat (1920) and Pact of Non-Aggression—and solemn multi-lateral treaties, such as the Covenant of the League and the Kellogg

Pact, which deserved at least as much respect as the Oath of Czar Alexander I.

The need of the support of the West against Germany, after the Russo-Japanese War, made it prudent for the Last of the Romanovs to go slow in the persecution of the Finns. The Second of the Bolsheviks, the First being Lenin, strikes a devil's bargain with Nazi Germany which gives him freedom to bring the Finns completely under his subjection. Russian Imperialism was not murdered with the Last of the Romanovs. Those who exonerate, defend, or acclaim it stand outside the stream of British Liberal and Socialist traditions, as well as those of Russian Social Democracy.

"What about motives?" the inquiring spirit may ask. The motives of New Russia are nothing to the Finns, new or old. They prefer their own way of life, which is a better way. Their way of life is the way of a civilised people. It is the fruit of centuries of social and political struggle in freedom. They neither threaten nor endanger anybody. None, except Russia, has ever threatened them.

When the Second of the Bolsheviks adopted the foreign policy of the Last of the Romanovs, he found the motives for that policy in the Imperial Archives. There is nothing new in the assertion that Finland threatens the security of Leningrad. Again, what's in a name? Leningrad is just St. Petersburg of the Czars. The arguments used by M. Molotov in his Exchange of Notes with the Finnish Delegation in Moscow are precisely the arguments which were used by the Czarist bureaucracy to justify the destruction of the autonomy of Finland. One may read, for example, in a pamphlet published in 1906 and attributed to General Borodkin:

"Finland, which lies at the very gates of St. Petersburg, plays such an important part in the defence system of this town that the very existence of St. Petersburg, the capital of Russia, is only feasible upon the condition of our absolute domination over Finland. Is it possible to imagine the capital of a country which is only 20 miles from the frontier and only a few hours sea journey from the base of a foreign navy?" ("The Finnish Frontier Province within the Framework of the Russian Empire." St. Petersburg, 1906, page 1.)

Another booklet by A. Morskoi, "Russia's Military Power," published in St. Petersburg in 1915, quotes from a Memorandum

upon the aims of Russian Foreign Policy and the principles of Russian Military Strategy by no less a personage than General A. N. Kuropatkin, Minister for War and Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army during the Russo-Japanese War. In this Memorandum, transmitted to Czar Nicholas II, the necessity for the abolition of the autonomy of Finland from the standpoint of Russian military interests is also emphasised. "The task of completely incorporating Finland within the Russian Empire," says Kuropatkin, "will occupy us in the twentieth century! "

Kuropatkin goes a step further. In this Memorandum he hints at the fact that Finland has a special importance for the Empire of the Czars as a strategic base for far-reaching aims in the north. "Our frontier with Sweden corresponds, in its southern part, completely with our interests; in the north, however, this frontier is too artificial. It is not an advantageous one for us, as it cuts Finland off from the Arctic Ocean, while the whole coastal region remains in the possession of Norway. The situation is therefore abnormal in this region."

The full text of Kuropatkin's Memorandum has never been published. M. Joseph Stalin, however, is evidently familiar with its contents.

Is it to be regarded as disquieting that Danish and Swedish newspaper correspondents in Berlin should report (e.g., *Stockholms Tidningen*, January 14, 1940) that according to Baltic diplomatists who were present at the negotiations in Moscow, the Soviet authorities said that their goal was control of North Atlantic harbours; that the *Berliner Nachtausgabe* should declare that "Stalin's aim is to obtain ports on the Atlantic coast," and that this is "quite reasonable;" that Ribbentrop's newspaper, the *Berliner Boersenzeitung* should write the same thing; and, finally, that the *Warschauer Zeitung* should write upon the subject for the second time and at great length, declaring that "An exit to the oceans through the Bosphorus or the Baltic Sea is not sufficient for Russia. A free exit to the Atlantic Ocean is necessary"? (*Times*, February 1, 1940.) These confident statements from the Nazi Press are mere echoes of a quotation already given from Kuropatkin's Memorandum. Disquieting or not—and there is wisdom in waiting—Russia's war against Finland has nothing to do with the emancipation of the working-class nor even with Socialism of the Communist type, which is not Socialism at all. The dead hand of Czar Nicholas II, the Last of the Romanovs, has been laid upon Joseph Stalin and the Comintern.

The Red Czar

The Red Czar is now the executor of the traditional imperialism of Czarist Russia. Stalin's Men use the freedom which they enjoy to defend War and Tyranny, a war of conquest by an alien and powerful despot against a small outpost of republican democracy. This vile thing is done *for the first time* in the name of the British working-class! Stalin's apologists defend the Russian war against Finland because they believe or seem to believe that the Soviet system is superior to any other, that it ought to be shared by everybody, and may justly be imposed by force or cunning upon States which are "weak from a military point of view" and have no powerful allies—a very old idea in a transparent new dress. They defend tyranny, either because they do not know, or those who know refuse to tell, that Fascism and Bolshevism have identical political systems. The Russian Communist Party is no longer even the semblance of a Party. "U.S.S.R . . . Its Stalinist word is inviolable!" ("Comintern Manifesto on the 21st Anniversary of the Soviet Revolution.") "Mussolini is always right!" "We thank our Fuehrer!" *They* brook no discussion.

Even now, these emissaries of a foreign despotism refuse to see through the disguise of the Red Czar, who has used a new social and political system to invent a new kind of slavery for the Russian people.

The Finnish Labour Movement Appeals to You!

THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF TRADE UNIONS OF FINLAND.— . . . *In spite of the growing economic difficulties and the effects on the world of the Great War, we had before us great possibilities to carry our own development forward another long stage in the New Year . . . But forces outside Finland's control ordained otherwise. We were attacked. In the political game of the Great Powers this was considered to be a small side-issue, a part of that general yielding to the tutelage which two Dictator States had mutually agreed upon with regard to several small States. Finland tried to conform, in so far as she could. But her good-will was not heeded. The aspirations of the Great Power in the East aimed and*

still aim further. The concessions made by Finland could not satisfy its imperialist ambitions. It thought best to attempt to take by force that ascendancy to which it aspired. The Finnish nation was forced to take up arms to defend the frontiers of its country . . . Our task is simple and clear. We defend our country's independence and our individual freedom. If we do not succeed in this, slavery and destructions threaten us. We have no choice other than to fight. And this the whole Finnish nation is doing, assured of its right to live as an independent nation, whose every class of society has the possibility of taking part in the conduct of common affairs within the framework of a democratic constitution.

THE LEAGUE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC YOUTH OF FINLAND. APPEAL TO THE WORKING-CLASS YOUTH OF THE WORLD.—*The Soviet Union broke the peace. Our country was invaded without warning. The most modern, terribly destructive instruments of war have been used against unarmed civilians, children, women, the aged, the sick. For the purpose of extending its power westwards the Soviet Union has thus joined the ranks of the aggressor States by attacking a free and peaceful nation and people. In spite of its will to peace, the working-class youth of our country is now compelled, weapon in hand, to defend its liberty. We are fighting the battle of our own country, and at the same time, of all mankind, for peace. We believe and trust that the working-class of the world and its youth will understand and support us, now that we are engaged in a defensive struggle on behalf of our national, social and socialistic ideals . . .*

THE LEAGUE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC WORKING WOMEN OF FINLAND.—*In the present situation . . . we are compelled regretfully to acknowledge that our people were deprived of every opportunity for further negotiations and that our country, in spite of its efforts for peace and its conciliatory attitude, was forced into a position of defence against an attacking enemy. Our democratic social order, our freedom, and our right of self-determination are to be taken away from us and a social order is to be forcibly thrust upon us which we, as free citizens, cannot accept. We cannot submit to slavery, cannot surrender our liberties and rights. For them we shall fight to the end . . . The hopes of our enemy that the power of resistance of Finnish working women, women hardened by great trials, can be broken, are doomed to failure if all of us unanimously and in co-operation help each other. Under the eyes of all mankind we fight on behalf of democracy, justice and liberty.*

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