

France is at the head, the immediate preparation of intervention against the Soviet Union.

For imperialist France it is not only a question of arming its two vassals which are destined to supply the first cannon-fodder for the imperialist war, but also of supporting their economy which is threatened with collapse. In this respect Czechoslovakia, as the chief producer of war material in Central Europe, Hungary, which by its flirtations with Italy threatened to upset the plans of French imperialism in South-East Europe; and finally Austria, whose disastrous situation involves every possible danger, play a first-class role.

The official communiqué which was published at the conclusion of the Belgrade Conference is couched in the usual optimistic tone: the three Foreign Ministers accept the French proposal of a Danube bloc and declare that the difficult economic situation of their States could be improved only by regional treaties; they at the same time emphasise the urgent monetary requirements of their countries, which are in financial difficulties and for which immediate assistance must be provided.

The most important factors, which are alone capable of determining the future of the countries of the Little Entente and of those countries at which imperialist France is casting its eyes, were not present in Belgrade. These factors are: the working class and the peasantry, the oppressed peoples of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Poland etc. Led by their Communist Parties, the working and peasant masses of these countries are conducting a persistent fight against the regime of oppression, the destruction of which is the first prerequisite for a revolutionary way out of the crisis.

INDIA

British Blood-Stained Rule in Bombay.

By Cepeda.

In the middle of May there flared up suddenly in Bombay what is described as a "communal riot", which in the course of the weekend has resulted in nearly 150 persons being killed and over fifteen hundred wounded. The disturbances are said to have begun as a clash between Hindus and Moslems arising over a trivial incident and spreading suddenly with lightning rapidity so as to produce mass conflicts, looting and arson all over the city. It is abundantly clear even from the very heavily censored news, that has been allowed to be sent out, that something very much deeper and more important is involved here than an outbreak of religious passion between members of different creeds.

In the first place, the present events have taken place in a very special situation and at a very significant time. They have taken place precisely in Bombay which is the biggest industrial city in India, where the working class movement is most developed and where the mass political struggle has reached a high level of development. Bombay at the present time is in a state of critical unrest and acute tension. The atmosphere in which the present outbreak has taken place bears considerable resemblance to that of three years ago when the last big outbreak of this kind occurred. At that time there was seething discontent among the masses after the brutal suppression of the strike movement and widespread political unrest in the period before the Indian National Congress was compelled to make its declaration of a "fight to a finish" with British imperialism. The communal riots were deliberately provoked as an attempt to divert attention from the mass struggle against imperialism and the class fight. At the present time, somewhat similar occurrences have taken place in a situation of rising political temperature and general uncertainty. A point was rapidly being reached when the existing situation could no longer be tolerated and the possibility of a mass revolutionary upheaval was becoming more and more likely.

The occasion was therefore especially appropriate for a diversion of this kind to be attempted. It is only necessary to note the main factors in the situation to understand how eagerly British imperialism would seize upon such an opportunity for attempting to drown the threatened upheaval in a sea of bloodshed. The acute economic crisis has given rise to extreme distress, unemployment and actual starvation. At

the same time the government terror regime has been intensified to an unprecedented extent, while the political struggle against British imperialist rule, although reaching a more and more critical position, has clearly come to an impasse in which the way forward is not clearly marked. **The attempt to suppress the mass movement has failed**, in spite of the mass arrests, baton charges, shootings and police terror, **owing to the growing spirit of resistance among the masses who refuse to be beaten into surrender, but at the same time the bourgeois Congress leadership has more and more obviously demonstrated its incapacity to lead the struggle.** Disillusionment with the Gandhist policy and his sabotage of the mass movement is now widespread but the only possible alternative, viz, the independent leadership of the working class, has not yet been realised in practice.

The acute unrest among the masses has been shown by the growing strike movement during recent months. Particularly important in this connection is the **Bombay dock strike** which took place during March and early April and which ended in a complete victory for the workers, in spite of the fact that the authorities attempted to provoke religious and racial conflicts by importing Muslim blacklegs from North India. Note should also be taken of the recent statements by British Government officials, including that of the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons, concerning the growth of Communist activities in India and the danger arising from growing Communist influence among the masses. Finally, it is highly significant that these disturbances have taken place in Bombay at a time when the special Ordinances for the crushing of the mass movement, which were issued for a period of six months, are shortly due to expire. British imperialism will be very glad of the excuse offered to it for declaring that the maintenance of "law and order" in Bombay and the rest of India obviously demands the employment of all possible measures of repression.

The imperialist spokesmen are already using the Bombay fighting as an excuse for advocating the renewal and even the extension of the special ordinances. The Government are also seeking to justify their determination to still further postpone the granting of even the smallest measure of central self-government, by saying that the communal outbreaks show the Indians to be unfit for any degree of responsibility.

Thus, everything has been pointing to the likelihood of an effort being made to produce such a conflict as has actually occurred. The atmosphere for a Hindu-Mohammedan conflict has been carefully prepared for a long time past. It is notorious that this conflict in India has been sedulously fostered by British imperialism in the interests of maintaining power on the principle of "divide and rule". The whole history of India under British rule shows clearly that to the degree that the Indian masses unite to fight British imperialism and its reactionary allies, so does communal tension disappear. This naturally does not suit the imperialists and consequently, despite their crocodile tears over communal riots, they do all they can to divide the peoples of India. By creating separate electorates for Moslems and Hindus and promoting a competition between Hindus and Moslems for the fruits of political office, British imperialism largely succeeded in making the Mohammedan-Hindu question into a struggle for political privileges and power between the ruling elements of the two communities. Most of the communal faction fights, which have taken place in India in recent years, are known to have been artificially fermented by such political gangs. At the same time, of course, there are many circumstances, such as the existence of Hindu landlords and Mohammedan peasants, where a purely economic class struggle takes on the appearance of a religious fight.

In the present case, there is no doubt that opportunity was taken to excite religious passions in the usual way. The responsibility for this rests very heavily on the shoulders of those bourgeois national reformist politicians both inside the Congress and outside, who have combined to make the Hindu-Moslem question an "insoluble" problem. It is significant that not only was there a complete deadlock on this question at the Round Table Conference but that only a short time ago the Consultative Committee in India pronounced its inability to arrive at a solution. The vicious communal incitements contained in the speeches of **Shaukat Ali** and other so-called national leaders have played an important part in precipitating the present conflict.

The most important feature, however, about the recent Bombay events is the new character that it exhibits in comparison with previous occurrences of the kind. In the first place, it was made use of as an opportunity for instituting the most terrible massacre by police and troops. A very large proportion, if not the major part, of the victims have been struck down not by religious feudists but by the bullets of British troops. It is admitted, that the method used to restore order was by repeated firing on crowds causing numerous casualties. Big forces of troops were drafted into the city and free use made of large numbers of armoured cars. The descriptions that have been given indicate that the events took the form much more of a revolutionary mass outbreak which the British forces proceeded to drown in blood rather than of the usual sporadic individual stabbing affrays which have been characteristic of Hindu-Moslem conflicts in the past.

In the second place, the mass character of the outbreak was demonstrated in the setting fire to large parts of the city and the looting of shops on a very large scale. This betokens much more the action of starving masses goaded beyond endurance rather than anything in the nature of a religious conflict. It must be remembered that the economic crisis has given rise to mass unemployment in India for the first time and no provision of any sort is made for the unemployed.

The third new factor in the present so-called religious riot was the important part played by the working class. It is perfectly clear that the proletarian masses, instead of allowing themselves to be provoked into a religious riot, have succeeded to a large extent in converting the fight into a mass revolutionary struggle. Not only did the railwaymen and tramwaymen go on strike but a large number of the textile workers also came out. In the previous communal riots in Bombay, the fighting took place mainly in the form of individual affray and almost entirely in the middle class areas and the workers were not much affected. In this case, what has occurred has been rather a social upheaval in which the proletarian masses have engaged in fierce fighting with the British imperialist forces.

British imperialism attempted to provoke a religious conflict with the aid of its agents in the Indian bourgeoisie in order to have an excuse for repression. The present stage of the struggle in India, however, led inevitably to the development of a struggle of a different character. It is certain that in the future it will be more and more difficult to sidetrack the mass revolutionary struggle by means of religious provocation. Only the working class can show the way forward to a new social order in which religious and caste differences have no meaning and hence it is that the proletarian class movement already is able to rise above such efforts to divide its ranks. In Delhi in February Congress volunteers joined with a Moslem demonstration to protest against the N. W. Frontier Ordinance. In the N.W. Frontier elections last month, Hindu and Moslem joined to boycott the ballot box. In April Bombay dockers, mainly Moslems, fought side by side with Hindus, against Pathans, who are also Moslems. The Communist Party of India in its leadership of the mass struggle of the workers and peasants is demonstrating in practice how religious prejudices and backward social customs can be overcome and abolished.

SOVIET CHINA

Fourth Kuomintang Campaign Defeated on all Fronts.

By Wan Min.

"The fundamental problem to be solved in connection with the Chinese question is how to check the growing influence of the Communists." This is what the Japanese Prime Minister Inukai declared on March 7.

All sections of the Kuomintang are now attempting to fulfil this task. Nanking and Canton exerted their utmost efforts in organising the fourth campaign against the Chinese workers and peasants army, the armed advance-guard of the Chinese revolution.

The Chinese Red Army immediately gave a very emphatic and forceful answer to the imperialists and their lackeys. By occupying the big commercial town of Changchow on April 19,

they gained a decisive victory in South Fukien, as a result of which East Kwangtung is immediately threatened. The main front of the anti-Communist campaign was completely smashed; for the Kuomintang troops were forced to abandon the Kwangtung-Kiangsi frontier (the main front) and to retreat in all haste to the Kwangtung-Fukien frontier in order to meet the attack of the Red troops.

The Red Army has also won a decisive victory on the Hupei front along the Hankow-Peking railway line. According to reports from Hankow published by the "Manchou Pao" on April 17, the 41st, 44th and 48th divisions of the Kuomintang troops were overwhelmingly defeated by the Red Army. On the Anwei front the Red Army has occupied Liuan, the centre of the tea plantations, which means a danger to Anking, the capital town.

From North-East Kiangsi the Red Army penetrated Chekiang and is now marching on the capital town, Hangchow (Manchou Pao, April 20). According to a report of the "Ta-Kung-Pao", a strong Red Army made its appearance in Mishien, near Loyang, on April 15.

Of special importance is the founding of the 26th Red Army in Sanyung, in the district of Nantung, not far from the scene of war in Shanghai. Here there have gathered together a large number of the volunteer workers and peasants troops dissolved by the treacherous Kuomintang and of the revolutionary soldiers of the 19th army. Up to the present they possess more than 3000 modern weapons.

The victories of the Red Army in the last few weeks show that they are advancing in the direction of the political centres. One can therefore reckon on a growth of the anti-imperialist and anti-Kuomintang movement among the working masses in the big towns.

The Kuomintang issued a number of demagogic slogans in connection with the campaign against the Chinese Soviet Republic, such as: "The fight against the Communists is just as important as the fight against the Japanese", "Before commencing the fight against the outer enemy we must destroy the inner enemy". The masses of the people, however, opposed these slogans. When, at the beginning of March, the Canton troops marched to Kiangsi, not only did the workers and students of Kwangtung protest against this by strikes, but the petty bourgeoisie of Canton conducted a powerful protest movement against the misuse of the "anti-Japanese funds" for the campaign against the Communists. The Chinese in the Southsea islands, when handing over monies collected and aeroplanes for the fight against Japanese imperialism, make it a condition that they shall not be employed for civil war. The so-called iron army of Chang-Hua-Kun, which was ordered by Wan-Tsin-Wei to proceed from Hunan to Kiangsi to fight against the Communists, declared that it would not obey this order but would march to Shanghai to support the 19th army.

In order to win the favour and approval of their imperialist masters, the Kuomintang spread lying reports according to which the Red Armies in Hupei, Kiangsi and Fukien have been completely defeated. The masses of the people in China, however, know from their own experience that the more reports of victories the Kuomintang spread, the worst plight they are actually in. Even the imperialists were recently compelled to admit the victories of the Red Army. The "Ta Kung Pao" of April 22nd published the following report from Hankow:

"The newspapers are full of reports of victories in the fight against the Reds. But the English newspapers in Hankow have of late frequently published exactly contrary reports... The reports of the killing of 4-5000 Communists or the capture of 4-5000 rifles are more than exaggerated, a fact which even the military authorities admit."

A sad admission by one of the Kuomintang papers! Since the commencement of the campaign more than a hundred warships of the imperialist Powers have gathered in the Yangtse as far as Ichang. In answer to the occupation of Changchow by the Red troops, more than 20 imperialist warships have arrived at Amoy. The British have sent there not only submarines and aircraft-carriers, but also their famous flagship "Kent" with a battalion of English soldiers. The direct intervention of the imperialists against the Chinese Red Army is proceeding in the whole of China. It is high time that the international proletariat was at its post in order to defend the Chinese Soviet Republic.