

# WHITE PAPERS AND RED

*Retracing the moves that led to the war. New light on the background of the non-aggression pact. The continuity of Soviet policy. First of a series by Joseph Starobin.*

THESE are times of a great historical reckoning, and the Soviet Union's "magnificent resistance" against German fascism represents a challenge which the academic and journalistic world cannot ignore. The facts about the background of the present war demand reexamination. It is necessary to take another view of the past two years, to go back even further, beyond the non-aggression pact to the problems of Munich. It becomes necessary to reevaluate previous conceptions and misconceptions, especially in the western world, about the character of socialism and fascism, and the relationship between socialism and democracy. To be sure, the Soviet Union's epic struggle is proving to be the most gigantic educational process of our time. The average man is settling the question which troubled him about Finland or about the non-aggression pact, as he reads his daily newspaper. And the case for the Soviet Union, concealed and distorted as it has been, today gets much more than the benefit of the doubt.

In fact, millions of people are going much deeper. They are inquiring how it came about that the Soviet people, without benefit of the profit motive, were capable of planning, building, and operating an economic system which enables them to stand off the most powerful armies in human history. The spectacle of the Soviet individual—so resourceful, so intelligent, so self-reliant and yet so well integrated with his fellow-men—the spectacle of the Soviet human being giving such tenacious battle already causes people to wonder whether the things they have been told about the incompatibility of socialism and individual freedom can possibly have been true.

BUT IN the journals of opinion and in the daily press there is a strange, begrudging hesitation. This is even more striking when one recalls the hysterical volubility which gripped the liberal world in the first winter of the war. In those days, thousands of words were written and paid for, attacking the Stalinist foreign policies, ridiculing and disavowing the friends of the Soviet Union. All the glittering generals-without-armies, the galaxy of novelists, literary critics, foreign correspondents, and all their kitchen police gathered round to "court-martial" the USSR. They did not come only to indict the Soviet Union; they came to bury it. They came to bury the whole system of Marxist thought and action.

In the *Nation*, for example, the title of Louis Fischer's third article had the tone of triumphant finality: "The Death of a Revolution." In the *New Republic*, the foremost diarist of the summer soldiers, Vincent Sheean, titled his two articles nothing less than "The USSR as a Fascist State." Reinhold Niebuhr laid down a heavy artillery barrage, replete

with his usual philosophical boom-booms. By contrast, Ralph Bates and Granville Hicks were more modest: they filled out their applications for "safe conduct" through the war period in single articles. And Lewis Corey brought up the rear with three offensives-in-depth. His articles bore the candid title: "Marxism Reconsidered."

IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE, of course, that the ideological architects of the "Communazi" interpretation of history should find things a little embarrassing these days. And when embarrassed men have any good taste left, they are silent. So it is not accidental that Louis Fischer alone has spoken up, in a recent issue of the *Nation*: Mr. Fischer was never noted for his good taste. Ordinarily, it would not be necessary to linger with Fischer, except that this enables us to delve into a broader review of Soviet foreign policy.

In his powerful speech in the first week of July, Stalin restated the reasons for signing the non-aggression pact; among them, Stalin said, was the fact that the year and a half of the pact gave the Soviet Union time to speed up its defense preparations. The Soviet Union became stronger for that year and a half. But Fischer says no. "I think it is weaker," he argues in the *Nation* of July 10, "because all its potential allies on the continent have meanwhile been crushed by Germany, and today Russia faces Hitler alone." It is weaker, he continues, "because the Soviet Union now has Finland, the Baltic states, and Rumania as bitter enemies whereas in 1939 or 1940 it might have had them as allies or protective buffers."

We can pass over the fact that Louis Fischer believes the USSR is now facing Hitler alone. The crux of the issue is this: were Britain and France really allies of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1939? Or were they "potential allies"? And if their quality as allies was only potential, then why was this potentiality unrealized? The whole question revolves around the reliability of the governments of Chamberlain and Daladier as allies. And on this there is no longer any question. Dorothy Thompson, a close friend of Louis Fischer, has already answered him, and she did so long enough before Fischer wrote his article in the *Nation* to make him look foolish. In the first week of the war, on June 25, Miss Thompson wrote in the *New York Post*: "It is my belief that Hitler was making a tremendous gamble on Britain getting out of the war, as a result of this development [that is, the attack on the USSR—J. S.]. Were the same political brains ruling England that ruled it up until two years ago, exactly that would have happened. The two revolutions and the two bogeys of the Europe and the West would

have been encouraged to eat each other up, and Hitler would have emerged in the role of the White Knight saving the world from Bolshevism. . . ."

In this brief observation, when it is reread and thought about, lies the final proof of the reliability, or potentiality, of Britain and France as Soviet allies in the summer of 1939. Miss Thompson is saying now (refuting her own past, of course) that the "political brains" ruling Britain two years ago would have encouraged (what she calls) "the two revolutions and the two bogeys of Europe and the West" to "eat each other up"—in brief, she refutes Fischer's contention that the USSR would have had reliable allies on the continent. She therefore confirms the wisdom of the Soviet Union's reluctance to ally itself with Chamberlain except by the most iron-clad, mutual obligations.

BUT ON THE QUESTION of the Baltic states, Louis Fischer makes himself even more foolish. Not only does he tangle with Dorothy, but with his old friends Lloyd George and Winston Churchill. The USSR is weaker today, he says, because these states might have been allies or protective buffers rather than enemies. But the Anglo-Soviet negotiations in the summer of 1939 revolved precisely around this question: Poland, Finland, and the Baltic states refused to become Soviet allies, or even protective buffers. They insisted that they would not be guaranteed by any outside power. Poland, it is true, accepted a British guarantee but made it worthless by refusing to enlarge that guarantee to include the Soviet Union. Lloyd George ridiculed the Polish guarantee on precisely those grounds. "If we are going in without the help of Russia," he said in the House of Commons April 3, "we shall be walking into a trap. It is the only country whose armies can get there [Poland] and who has got an air force that can match Germany's." . . . "Nor should there be any serious difficulty in guaranteeing the Baltic states and Finland," Winston Churchill wrote on June 7, 1939. "The Russian claim that these should be included in the triple guarantee is well founded. . . . People say: what if they do not wish to be guaranteed? It is certain, however, that if Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were invaded by the Nazis or subverted to the Nazi system by propaganda and intrigue from within, the whole of Europe would be dragged into war. . . . Why then not concert in good time, publicly and courageously, the measures which may render such a fight unnecessary?"

In other words, as Fischer knows quite well, it was because the border states insisted on remaining buffers, and refused to permit an Anglo-Soviet guarantee of their security,



that the negotiations broke down. And it was because Chamberlain and Daladier refused to persuade these states to be guaranteed, and probably stiffened their recalcitrance, that the Anglo-Soviet negotiations were deadlocked. It was not the fault of the Soviets, therefore, that these states retained their precarious position. Nor is it true that peoples of these countries are today enemies, thanks to Soviet policy. In fact, it was Fischer who howled when the USSR forced a measure of its security from Finland. It was Fischer and his friends who yelped and howled when the USSR took over Byelo-Russia and the Galician Ukraine, upon the collapse of the Polish state, when it re-occupied Bessarabia and concluded agreements with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In actual fact, the USSR was doing by itself what it had previously tried to do in harmony with Britain and France. It went about protecting itself and, simultaneously, the peoples of the border regions when all hope of doing so in alliance with Britain and France had disappeared.

BUT let us go a bit deeper. In his speech, to which Fischer takes such exception, Stalin assured the Soviet people that they "shall have loyal allies in the peoples of Europe and America" . . . that their defense would "merge with the struggles of the peoples of Europe and America for their independence, for democratic liberties." To Louis Fischer this remark appeared questionable. It seemed that in its hour of need, the Soviet Union was turning to the peoples of the western world, whereas, in the two years of the non-aggression pact, the USSR had appeared to be maintaining its neutrality irrespective of the tribulations of the West. This misconception gave rise in the winter of 1939 to the charge that the USSR was "betraying" the working class of the western world.

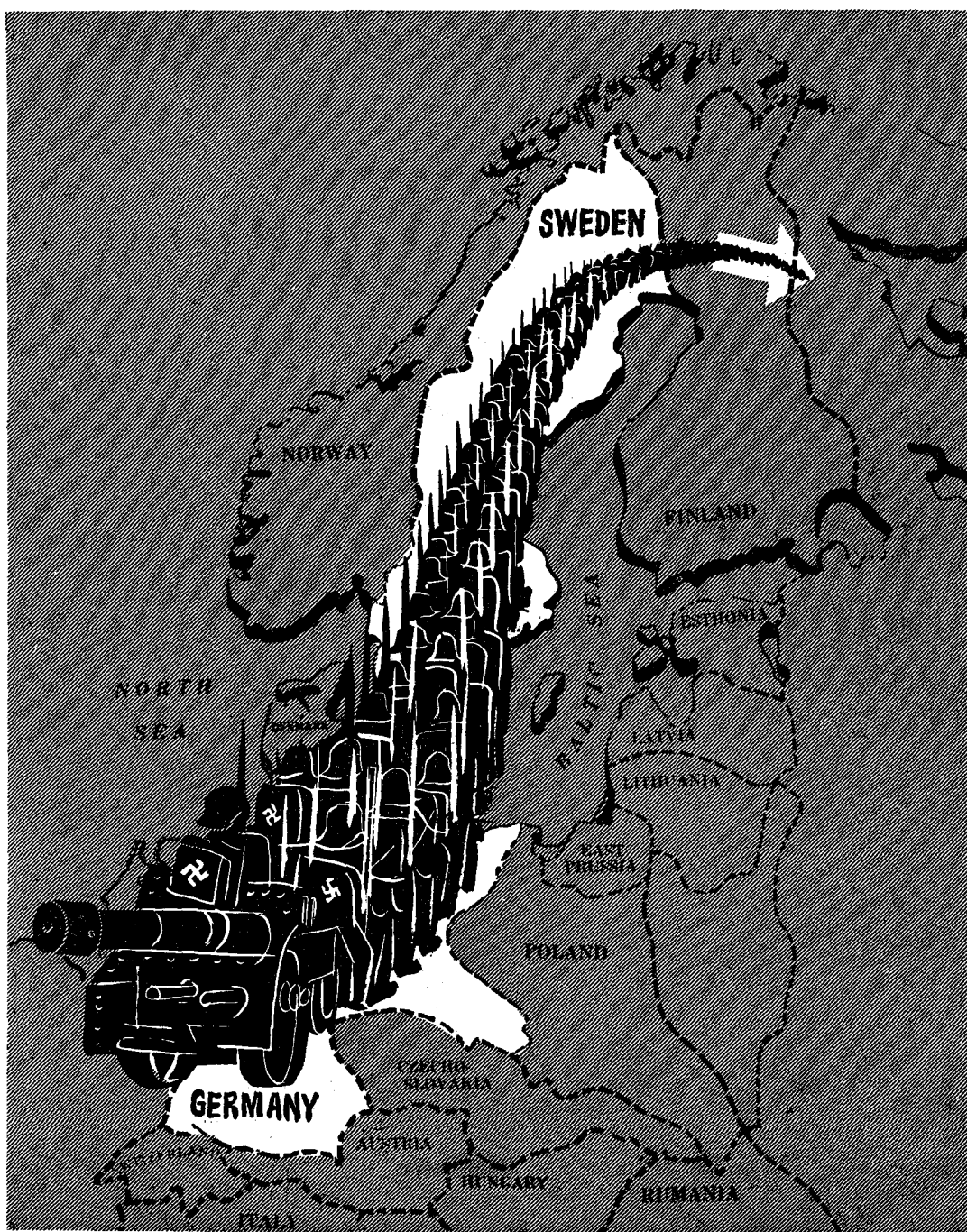
Today, of course, that charge has completely lost its force, as the whole world sees hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens laying down their lives in an heroic resistance to the common enemy of all peoples. This charge has lost its force as millions of people in Britain, all Europe, and our own country see in common struggle with the Soviet Union the only hope of their own independence, and the only hope of a real, lasting peace. This charge has not only lost its force, but the full truth is that it never had the slightest basis in fact. On the contrary, in a subsequent article I think the evidence will prove that even in the period of neutral relations with Hitler Germany, and without violating those relations, the USSR was fundamentally and single-handedly weakening Hitler's power and the influence of his backers. For the purposes of our present discussion, I think it can be shown first, that Soviet policy has always been based on the most sober and serious sense of responsibility toward the working classes and the democratic struggles of other peoples; and second, that in the period after Munich, and in the months just prior to the non-aggression pact, the Soviet Union made tremendous ef-

forts to create a fighting unity between itself and the peoples of the West, despite the fact that the Social-Democratic leaders of the West were sapping and disintegrating the anti-fascist resistance and unity among these peoples. It can be shown that the USSR has always striven for a militant alliance between itself and the peoples of the decisive western countries, that in fact it considered German fascism so powerful and universal an enemy that only a fighting alliance between the great powers of the world would suffice to crush it.

The key to Soviet policies, and for that matter the key to an understanding of the whole past decade, is the inter-relation between the policies of the Soviet Union and the democratic struggles of the peoples in Europe, America, and Asia. Our enemies and some of our friends fail to understand this inter-relation: to them, the USSR is either engaged in a world-wide conspiracy against the established social order, or else it is callous to the interests

of the rest of the world; to them, non-Russian friends of the Soviet Union are either agents of a foreign power, as J. Edgar Hoover believes; or else they are misguided idealists, sacrificing their own integrity and influence in their own lands to pursue an unrequited affection for the USSR, as for instance, George Soule of the *New Republic* believes.

None of these concepts is true. What is true is this: that the men and women of the Soviet state, while trying to avoid encirclement at the hands of world reaction, have nevertheless at every stage of political development consciously carried out heavy responsibilities in the interests of the democratic struggles of the rest of the world. They have borne our defeats just as they have rejoiced in our successes. And the successes were few. They are dying today, not merely because they have been invaded by the cannibals; they are giving up their life blood, they who might be enjoying the fruits of socialism in plenty, because the



Sweden—The Middle Way

Frederick



German working class was defeated, because the British people were held back too long from ousting Chamberlain, because the French working classes were demoralized and disorganized by the incompetence and treachery of their leaders.

We need not go too far back. The pattern of events in the three or four years after Hitler's coming to power is relatively clear. Earlier than most of us, the Soviet people recognized the peculiar and dangerous character of German fascism. Its peculiarity rested in the fact that fascism represented much more than the resurgence of German imperialism: it carried the counter-revolutionary, the anti-democratic hopes and ambitions of powerful sections of the British ruling class. Britain and France had spent millions of lives and billions in treasure to assure the defeat of an imperialist rival in the first world war. By the terms of Versailles, they intended to eliminate that rival for generations to come. And in the "normal" course of affairs the imperialist conflicts would have developed between Britain and France, and on a world scale between Britain and the rising power of American capitalism.

Yet how are we to explain the remarkable fact that within eight or nine years of its disaster, German capitalism had rehabilitated itself and within fifteen years was making a bid for European hegemony and world power? That can only be explained by the mortal fear primarily in Britain of the influence of socialism on the colonial peoples, a mortal fear of the association of the German workingmen and the Russian people, which would have opened the path for the advance toward socialism in all Europe. It can only be explained by a desire among powerful British and other imperialists to maintain Germany as the bulwark of a tottering capitalism, to permit the resurgence of German imperialism against everything democratic in Europe on the condition that it proceed against the fortresses of socialism.

The USSR saw that, and its people tightened their belts, speeded up their industrialization and preparedness, while its leaders decided to join the League of Nations and throw their diplomatic weight on the side of peace, on the side of the democratic liberties and independence of European nations.

The peoples of Europe also reorientated themselves after recovering from the shock of the defeat of the German masses. In the armed struggle of the Viennese workingmen, in the uprising of the Asturian miners, in the formation of the Spanish and French people's fronts there was one guiding motif: to break the momentum of the fascist offensive, to prevent the outbreak of war, to advance the democratic aspirations of the common man against the intrigues and pretensions of the neo-medievalists.

It is not accidental that this popular upsurge achieved its clearest expression in Spain and France. For the first stage of Germany's aspirations to continental hegemony required, as *Mein Kampf* indicates, the humbling of France. So also Italy's Mediterranean ambitions developed at the expense of France.

The fascist intervention in Spain and preparations for the rape of Czechoslovakia were directed not only against the democratic achievements and example of the Spanish and Czech people: they were intended to encircle France, to break the alliance between France and the Soviet Union, the fulcrum of European peace. And the British Munichers cooperated not only because they were interested in reducing the power of France in its imperialist sense but because France of the middle thirties most clearly expressed the democratic heights to which the peoples of all Europe aspired.

Whereas for three years this virtual coalition of democratic forces in alliance with the Soviet Union staved off the fascists, by October 1938, at Munich, the floodgates had been opened, and the alliance between the USSR and the peoples of the West had virtually been nullified. This aspect of Munich has never been sufficiently appreciated. It has never been sufficiently realized to what a level the peoples of Europe were reduced after Munich. After all, what was left of the unity between the western working class and the Soviet Union? After Munich the Czechoslovaks were gone; the French People's Front disintegrated so rapidly that by the end of November the Radical Socialist leadership was breaking the general strike of the French Confederation of Labor; a few weeks before the rape of Prague Franco's armies were reaching Barcelona, and the valiant fight of the Spanish people was over (betrayed but never conquered); in Britain itself, the fatuous leaders of the Labor Party were expelling D. N. Pritt and Stafford Cripps for demanding a People's Front—and there was the USSR alone, more dangerously isolated from European affairs than ever before. Things were so critical that significantly enough, after Munich the USSR insisted that only full-fledged military agreements among the great powers could hold the fascists. Whereas in the years previous it was still possible for Litvinov to appeal at Geneva that the powers abide by the League of Nations Covenant, after Munich things had come to such a pass that only the most serious, drastic, far-reaching measures could prevent another Munich or a general war.

But—and here is the whole point—after Munich the Soviet leaders realized, in common with men like Earl Browder, R. Palme Dutt—or from another point of view, Winston Churchill—that the fascists were changing their orientation from east to west. Browder's estimate of Munich is well known, recalled by A. B. Magil in *NEW MASSES*,



August 5. Winston Churchill called it a "total unmitigated defeat." In a cable to this magazine in its first issue after Munich, R. Palme Dutt wrote in a vein that is truly Biblical for its terrible prophecy:

Chamberlain may dream that Hitler will turn the power which British capitulation has surrendered into his hands against the Soviet Union, and spare Britain. Such an attempt is not excluded, but it is by no means the greatest likelihood that Hitler should necessarily direct his attack first against the strongest state in the world, the one state that has stood firm and not trembled before fascism. There are three other directions in which Hitler may first turn his line of attack. The first and most obvious line of advance is to follow up the reduction of Czechoslovakia . . . the second line of attack is against France . . . [developing] initially as the assault of French reaction in the service of Hitler against French democracy, with the aim to turn France into a vassal tied to Hitler . . . and the third line coming more and more into the open . . . is the deep and basic conflict with Britain for the possession of the spoils of the empire. . . . Chamberlain's laurel crown of victory is already withering on his brow and will yet turn into his crown of thorns.

In the French Yellow Book, the collection of diplomatic papers which throws most light on post-Munich affairs, confirmations that the fascists were turning against the west appear as early as December 1938. And on March 10, 1939, four days before the final ignominy in Prague, Joseph Stalin told the Eighteenth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party:

. . . Certain European and American politicians and journalists having lost patience waiting for the "march on the Soviet Ukraine" are themselves beginning to disclose what is really behind the policy of non-intervention. They are saying quite openly, putting it down in black and white, that the Germans have cruelly "disappointed" them, for instead of marching further east, against the Soviet Union, they have turned, you see, to the west, and are demanding colonies. One might think that the districts of Czechoslovakia were yielded to Germany as the price of an undertaking to launch war on the Soviet Union, but that now the Germans are refusing to pay their bills and are sending them to Hades.

Now, what does this all mean? It means that as early as March the Soviet leaders realized that *if it were a question only of their own security, they could probably safeguard it by normalizing their relations with Germany*. They could have negotiated the non-aggression pact in the early spring. Yet it is a striking and crucial fact, which utterly destroys the myth of "betraying the West" that despite the ebb-tide in the European anti-fascist movements, the Soviet leaders spent five months trying to bring about a coalition between themselves, Britain, and France to halt fascism. If necessary they were prepared to war against it. Evidently they were deeply concerned with the fate of the peoples of the West, and they knew what was happening in France a full year before the rest of us. Evidently they saw in the anti-fascist alliance the most logical and most effective barrier to a general war. And it was only when that alliance proved impossible, in the

eleventh hour, that the Soviet people decided to approach the problem of dealing with Hitler, and his backers in London, from the other angle: they took the hard and difficult alternative of curbing Hitler and smashing Chamberlain by themselves—waiting until the wheel of history had turned and it might once again become possible to reestablish a fighting unity with the West against the common enemy.

In his uneven but valuable volume *Night Over Europe*, Frederick L. Schuman, the leading American historian on European affairs, develops the corroborative evidence. Schuman puts the alternatives which confronted the Soviet leadership as follows: first, the possibility of a united capitalist attack; second, the possibility of a Nazi attack on the USSR condoned by Britain and France; third, "a bloc of the western powers and the Soviet Union against the Reich to prevent any further aggression, or to insure German defeat if it were attempted"; Fourth, a German attack on Poland, opening into a war with France and Britain in which the USSR remained neutral.

The first possibility, says Schuman, "no longer required serious consideration," since the depth of antagonisms among the great powers precluded a united attack on socialism. *"That the last possibility finally materialized does not prove that it was from the outset envisaged as the most desirable one by the Kremlin."* (Italics mine—JS.) Schuman continues, with a rigorous logic that shames Louis Fischer and all the rest of his friends:

Germany could be checkmated and if not deterred from aggression, then defeated, only by the realization of the third possibility [that is, a coalition against the aggressor]. *"This was therefore the alternative sincerely preferred by the men of Moscow, not because they said so, but because their purposes both as defenders of the Socialist Fatherland, and as international revolutionists (Schuman's phrase) could best be served thereby."*

If they did not accept forthwith the Allied suggestions, it was because of continued fear of the second possibility [a Nazi attack condoned by Chamberlain and Daladier—J. S.] induced by the peculiar character of the Allied proposals and enhanced by the new gestures of appeasement in the West. Stalin and Molotov moreover were no longer begging the Allies for support against the Reich. They had no need to. The fourth possibility was always open if the third failed.

I think we have now assembled the evidence, in some sort of perspective, which wholly refutes the criticism of Soviet policies just prior to the non-aggression pact. And the evidence is, that so far from ignoring the problems of the peoples of the West, the USSR risked a Nazi attack condoned by Chamberlain and Daladier, which these gentlemen tried to make possible up to, and even after the outbreak of war over Poland. It was a risk which becomes even more understandable in the light of the present struggle against Hitler, and establishes a historical continuity between the present and past. It was a risk that is explicable only on the premise



"Listen to this, Baron."

that from the very outset the Soviet people were keenly aware of the relationship between their own security and that of the smaller nations of Europe and the peoples of the decisive western lands. They were willing to stake that security in the interests of genuine unity against the common enemy, just as today the security of all of us rests on genuine unity with them.

In a succeeding article it will be worth tracing the details of the Soviet Union's relationship with Germany in the past two years, reconsidering the non-aggression pact, what it did and did not do. In a final piece, it will be worth reexamining, in the context of this background, some of the attitudes and problems of American policy.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.



# NAZI MILITARY FABLES

Colonel T. comments on Hitler's fairy tale of the forty-fifth night. RAF double. Statistics on losses in two wars. A line that never existed.

BESIDES the fact that on the fiftieth day of the war the Germans had not attained a single strategic objective and could claim but one seventy-five-mile advance during the seventh week (in the triangle Vinnitza-Belaya Tserkov-Uman), the news from the front affords us several startling revelations.

First, we learn that the Soviet Air Force has bombed Berlin repeatedly. We will not attempt to claim that such raids have great *direct* military value. We did not concede any military importance to the German raids on Moscow and we do not wish to overestimate the military importance of the Soviet raids on Berlin. However, they have great moral value.

Let us look at these raids from another angle. A rather arbitrary but fairly correct division between the "Eastern" and "Western" fronts would be the fifteenth degree longitude East, i.e., approximately through Vienna. Berlin is just west of this dividing line and heretofore has been the stamping ground of the RAF. But now another "RAF" (Red Air Force) has entered the zone, thus clasping hands with its flying ally over the Brandenburger Tor; and somewhere way north along the same longitude two other "namesakes"—the RN's (Royal Navy and Red Navy)—have clasped hands over the hump of Norway and are keeping clear the sea lane from Iceland to Murmansk.

The Red Air Force's has been no mean achievement, especially in the light of its previous and repeated "destruction" by the Germans. It is natural that the big bombers used were not based near the front lines. It is therefore safe to assume that they came from either Leningrad, Moscow, or Kiev, which means round trips of 1,800—2,000—1,600 miles without taking "cruising" into account. This achievement shows that the Soviet Air Force is materially and morally able to undertake long-range operations—a fact which scotches the Lindbergh dogma. It places every single part of Germany "on the spot," a very terrifying fact for the Germans. Most of Germany is under a double air threat.

Furthermore, this proves that the Soviet High Command feels that it can afford to divert part of its air force from the immediate battlefields. And finally, the fact that the Nazi air-raid defense failed to open fire during the first Soviet raid on Berlin, seems to indicate that the German, and *not* the Soviet High Command, isn't quite aware of the potentialities of the forces opposing it. The Soviet raids, irrespective of whether they hit military objectives or not, must have badly hit German morale which twelve hours before had been bolstered by Hitler's Scheherazade tales of the forty-fifth night.

And now as to these tales. H. V. Kalten-

born, despite his usual radio vagaries, justly said that the German General Staff must have gasped when it read its own communiques of August 6 and 8. Any military man would have gasped at their enormity.

What did they say, besides hollow things about field marshals, second-rate places, and principles of "unconditional truth"? The only concrete things in those communiques were a few figures. But what figures! The Red Army, according to the Germans, lost 895,000 prisoners, 13,145 tanks, 10,388 guns, and 9,082 planes. It was also claimed that the Red Army had lost 3,000,000 men, killed.

TO BEGIN WITH, the very explicitness of the figures on *materiel* losses gives away their spuriousness. The increase of these figures between July 1 and August 6 (tanks from 7,615 to 13,145; guns from 4,423 to 10,388; planes from 6,233 to 9,082) gives the lie to the first "victory" communique which claimed in fact that the Red Army did not have "anything to fight with" any more.

And now we come to the figures on human losses. In order to evaluate them properly, we must turn to the statistics of the first world war. Although the weapons nowadays are different, it may be said that this change has hardly affected, for instance, the average ratio between the dead and wounded. True, the ratio between dead and wounded tank drivers and fliers is greater than the ratio between dead and wounded infantrymen, but the very number of tank troops and fliers is comparatively small and their heightened mortality cannot much affect the total numbers. It may also

be said that casualties from air bombs are smaller than those caused by artillery, because a shell gives hardly any warning except a gurgling sound lasting but a few seconds, while one sees and hears a plane long before the bombs start to fall. We may, therefore, safely assume that the ratio for casualties in this war is approximately the same as in the first world war. The Soviet figures on the Finnish war, for example, show the ratio to have been 1:3 between dead and wounded.

Here are a few figures on the war of 1914-18:

Comparative Losses of Russian, French, and German Armies  
(In Thousands)

	Mobilized:	Killed:	Wounded:	Percentage of casualties:
Russia	15,500	1,300	3,850	35.5
France	8,300	900	2,750	47.0
Germany	11,000	1,500	4,247	55.0

(Those who died of wounds are not included in the items "killed" or "wounded," but are included in the percentage of casualties.)

Thus the average ratio between killed and wounded for all three major armies is 1:3 (approximately). Applying this ratio to the figures announced by the Germans, we find that according to Hitler's propaganda the Red Army must have lost some 9,000,000 men in wounded. Adding to this 3,000,000 "dead" and 1,000,000 "prisoners," the Soviet armies must have lost 13,000,000 men in forty-five days, or a division every eighty-five minutes. The German figures when analyzed reduce themselves to this absurdity.

Nor does the number of prisoners claimed by the Germans quite click with their boasts of huge "encirclements." In the four summer and three winter campaigns on the Eastern Front during the first world war, the Russians lost 5,500,000 men—killed, wounded, and those who died of wounds. Russian prisoners taken by the armies of the Central Powers amounted to about 2,400,000 men or thirty-one percent of the total casualties. In this connection it must be remembered that in that war there were few large-scale encirclements and capitulations besides the Battle of Tannenberg. The Germans, claiming that they have been "encircling" Soviet troops and forcing them to capitulate all the way from Bialystok to Uman, boast of only 1,000,000 prisoners out of 13,000,000 casualties, i.e. less than eight percent (as compared to thirty-one percent during the first world war). This is another totally absurd figure.

As against these lunatic vagaries we have the perfectly plausible figures of the Soviet



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