



THE WEEK IN REVIEW

India's Decision

AS WE went to press, the working committee of the All-India National Congress was still debating Sir Stafford Cripps' proposal for dominion status with the right to complete freedom, and constitutional government after the war. It was therefore impossible to offer any definitive judgment.

Of course, it would be easy to point out a dozen disappointments in the British plan. The idea that India may be split up into a number of states seems to perpetuate the pernicious theory that India is incapable of unity; it is a concession to the so-called Moslem League, which, as anyone who knows India will tell you, does not even represent the Moslems. The fact that the Indian princes will handpick their delegates to the postwar constitutional convention is also distasteful; it opens the way to the nullification of the majority will by a reactionary minority. And the way the plan was presented, the way India was put on the spot, the way many American newspapers were talking about "India forfeiting American sympathy if she does not accept the plan" etcetera—this struck us as very distasteful also. After all, what is at stake is not only the future of India, but of England and all the United Nations, and the interests of all require that India be given an opportunity for full partnership in the war.

On the other hand, it is worth bearing in mind that most of the important objectionable elements of the plan lie in the future. Concessions to Moslem cliques and the princes are essentially future concessions. They would not mean much if the All-India National Congress and other progressive elements became strong enough in the course of the war, as they very well may, to collect on the "postdated check."

The real question, therefore, is what will happen in the present, not the future. India is in immediate danger. If Cripps has proposals making it possible to train millions of Indian youths, if barriers to industrialization will be removed, if such leaders as Nehru are brought into "real political power" as Chiang Kai-shek called it, and that happens quickly, these things will be decisive.

On this score Cripps is rather vague, which does not necessarily mean that he does not have concrete assurances. It is not just a question of who heads India's defense: Wavell might very well do that better than anyone else. Nor is it a question of displacing the Viceroy completely. It is a matter of who

works with the Viceroy, and in what way. This is what the Congress seems to be debating, while the world waits and watches.

Patents for Hitler

A GREAT many Americans are learning for the first time exactly why we have so little synthetic rubber and Hitler has so much. Because, they have finally been told, Standard Oil of New Jersey entered into a conspiracy with the German chemical trust, I. G. Farben. Under the agreement Standard turned over to the giant Nazi firm all patents for chemical processes involving the manufacture of synthetic rubber. Further, Standard agreed to abide by I. G. Farben's dictum that it would release neither its own nor the German trust's development in synthetic rubber to American companies. Still further, Standard supplied Hitler four years ago with its Butyl rubber process—but refused to give it to the US Navy. While withholding its patents from American companies, Standard was advising Italian firms to get them from their German allies. And when the American companies attempted to develop synthetic rubber processes, Standard threatened them with patent litigation. After 1939, when the Nazis had built a good store of rubber for themselves and permitted Standard to negotiate with other American companies, the American partner of I. G. Farben hampered and discouraged its competitors in every way possible. (During this time, Standard officials were also planning a partnership with Japan that would ensure postwar business for them—and were selling aviation gas to Italy over Secretary of State Hull's objections.)

This story, as told by Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold to the Truman committee, is not made less shocking by the fact that Standard entered into the agreement with I. G. Farben in 1929, before Hitler. For the agreement was renewed during der Fuehrer's time, and was designed to "operate through the term of the war whether or not the US came in," according to a memorandum by a Standard officer. In fact, even after Pearl Harbor the Standard Oil Co. was refusing to give the American government its improved process for making synthetic rubber—although Hitler had it.

Nor is it less shocking because Mr. Arnold tells us that Standard was not alone in limiting production through such arrangement—aluminum, magnesium, drugs, dyestuffs are

also among the critical war materials restricted by cartel agreements. In 1941 the TNEC reported on these cartel arrangements, including Standard Oil's with I. G. Farben. A few newspapers and organizations have protested Standard's dealings with the Nazi firm. New *MASS* carried an editorial on the subject in its issue of February 10 last. So the story is not entirely new. However, the government's action against Standard and Arnold's testimony to the Truman committee have publicized an intolerable situation. Now the company has been forced to pay a \$50,000 fine and to release its patents and "know-how." However, the "consent decree" under which Standard agreed to do this leaves untouched the matter of the company's future relations with I. G. Farben.

It's a pretty safe bet that the people who are staying home to save tires, who deprive themselves of near-necessities that contain rubber—and who, above all, would die before doing anything that might possibly give Hitler an ounce of material to wage his horrible blitz—these people will hardly be satisfied with Mr. Arnold's charitable exoneration of Standard's motives as profit-seeking rather than Nazi hand-holding. When profit-seeking reaches the fanatical height of catering to a world enemy at the serious expense of America's war effort—well, what do you call it?

Labor's Offensive

THINGS have grown a little quieter on the anti-production front. It took some forceful counter-attacks to quell the wild shooting of Representative Smith and his allies—but if they are not quelled completely, at least they have retreated somewhat. First they were forced back from their stand that labor was "limiting production" with the forty-hour week—labor and its friends proved that plants could run 168 hours weekly, provided only the usual time-and-a-half for overtime was paid. Then the assaults on the overtime pay had to yield before the record, which showed that this could not possibly hinder output. As for the attacks on labor "strikes," again labor itself and its friends pushed back the disrupters, answering their lies with the truth—that there had been practically no strikes in 1942, and that organized labor had voluntarily relinquished its right to strike for the duration.

A number of things contributed to the comparative—and perhaps temporary—lull in the blitz against unity. President Roosevelt took a stand against any legislation that would lessen the average pay for workers, as the Smith bill was designed to do. Donald Nelson, War Production Board chief, reiterated his conviction that the proposed measure would only harm labor and production. Most of all, leaders of organized labor fought back

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the falsehoods, exposed the tactics of the violent, concerted attacks by professional labor-baiters. It was these leaders who first felt a perfectly natural, healthy suspicion that the whole campaign had been organized by forces less interested even in taking a crack at labor than in cutting down American war production. The very fact that it was a campaign of lies was enough to engender the suspicion. Then William Green and others turned up some curious facts about the "prairie fire" of pro-Smith sentiment, supposedly emanating from the Southwest—a fire which proved to be all smoke, generated by a small band of reactionaries which included at least one known America Firster. Investigators for the Truman committee have already started a little research into America First connections with the whole anti-production drive.

Smith is reported, at this writing, to be considering changes in his own bill which will "modify" it somewhat. Modification isn't enough. Any bill restricting labor at this time is completely unnecessary—as numerous government authorities have recently pointed out—and dangerous to morale and unity. Only complete exposure and routing of the forces behind Smith will keep production free of their evil interference.

Everything We've Got . . .

ON THE production front it is anything but quiet. CIO leaders held their Extraordinary Conference in Washington March 23-24, highlighting labor's truly extraordinary activity on the immense sector of war output. However, it was not a review of past accomplishments but plans for the future which concerned the delegates. They considered all questions, all issues, in the light of how to win the war—and how to win it this year. It was in this spirit that the conference (which Bruce Minton discusses on page 15) strengthened and enlarged AFL-CIO unity by endorsing the Combined Labor's Victory Committee and planning for activity undertaken jointly with the AFL in support of the war. It called for "an immediate offensive against the Axis powers to achieve victory in 1942."

While the Iron Is Hot

THINGS are moving steadily, and with an increasingly terrible tempo toward the great crisis of the war. You feel it in every radio and news report, in every important item, whether good or bad. Add up any number of events in the week: the Japanese advance toward the India frontier, Hitler's pressure on Bulgaria, the speech of Lord Beaverbrook here hammering away at the decisive character of the Soviet front, or the speech of the Soviet ambassador in London, Ivan Maisky, reiterating the ideas that Maxim Litvinov has twice driven home to us all. You feel it in the demonstration of 50,000 or more Londoners in Trafalgar Square last week, insisting on an offensive this spring. Or in President Roosevelt's order, as commander-in-chief, that our pledges to Russia be given first priority. April is here. Fighting before Leningrad, Smolensk, Kharkov is heavy. The big question mark is the Allied offensive on the continent, the offensive that could still distract Hitler from his anticipated middle Asian blow. *That is the issue of this spring.*

Axis strategy may have its surprises, but the main outline is clear. The Axis is trying to sever our communications with the Near East and Russia. That is the meaning of Japan's occupation of the Andaman Islands south of Rangoon, which are hopping off places to break up our lines to Persia and India. That is the meaning of the big air and sea battles off northern Norway and the port of Murmansk. Simultaneously Hitler prepares his big push, into the Near East as well as deeper toward the Caucasus. Bulgaria is being played off against Turkey. An agreement with Turkey to stand aside for a Nazi thrust against Syria, which would branch out to Iraq and Egypt, is a possibility. And in that the French fleet may still play its dirty role. Bulgaria's king has returned from Germany, and her Premier, Bogdan Philoff, came out with a big blast against "Bolshevism"; although the Bulgarian pro-fascists may not trust their own troops against the USSR, there's no doubt that they are yielding their country as a land base for the Black Sea drive. As Dorothy Thompson emphasized in a fine column last week, the Nazis know that the middle of the Eurasian continent is the key to the war. For this, they are striking this spring and summer.

AGAINST such crucial perspectives, what are we and the British doing? The fight for communications goes on. Every freighter, every tanker, every seaman plays a part. From all newspaper reports, the British are living up to their pledges of aid to Russia. But thus far, the United States lags behind. There must be a major scandal among the underlings in the lend-lease setup, in the Maritime Commission, in the Army, and among certain manufacturers if the President himself has to call their attention to our pledged word. British commandos made a daring raid against the largest shipbuilding and submarine port on the Atlantic coast last week, at St. Nazaire. Harbor installations were smashed, a destroyer loaded with dynamite (incidentally, among the fifty we gave the British eighteen months ago) was exploded in the harbor gates. It was a great raid in the great tradition. It shows what can be done when the will is there.

And it is a token of what is needed. To hold the Middle East? Yes, planes and men are needed there, but the best way is to divert Hitler's spring plans, to divert him to the West, and to squeeze him from both sides. To defend the British Isles? Yes, essential. But not by sitting on the island. The best defense of Britain is by fighting on the Continent. To land on the Continent is not only to help Russia; it means to force Hitler to fight on the soil he has conquered. It means to fight for England—for all the United Nations—as close to Germany as possible. To defend China and Australia? That, too, is essential. We must send all possible supplies, we must organize aggressive action. But it must be realized that *this spring* the best way to halt Japan is to knock Japan's ally out of the war by combining our forces with those of our strongest, immediately powerful allies. To ship our materials to Russia? By all means, as we pledged. But in addition to use those materials for matching what the Russians have done, by supporting the British and joining with them to open fronts at Hitler's rear.

AMERICANS are ready for the offensive. Not for words, but for action. They are producing, and will steadily produce materials for this offensive, but they want the materials we have to be used most wisely. The spirit of the Englishmen at Trafalgar Square is what we need—a concerted campaign to get action in the decisive theater of the war. April, May, June—these are the months of the great decision. As Miss Thompson says, if we do the right thing, concentrate our forces, match our strongest allies, "We shall win the war this year. It won't necessarily be over, but it will be won. And it will be won all over the world. . . ."

While the conference was taking place, Daniel Tobin, head of the AFL's International Brotherhood of Teamsters, made a radio speech in which he stressed labor unity and the common program of AFL and CIO in war production. And the AFL's 5,000,000 members had this to say, in a full page newspaper ad appearing March 30: "*We are giving this job everything we've got! We will stick to this job, come hell or high water, until this war is won! That is our pledge to America!*" Here is organized labor's answer to the fifth and sixth columns. It is expressed in deeds by everyday cooperation—with the government, with fellow-workers, with management in joint councils. To meet this cooperation, to utilize it most effectively, a place must be made for labor's full participation in all war production agencies, from the WPB to state, regional, and local boards.

Cheers for Wallace

THE distinction between the fifth and sixth columns becomes academic in the case of Martin Dies. Actually, as Vice-President Wallace said last week, "The effect on our morale would be less damaging if Mr. Dies were on the Hitler payroll." Dies' distortions and slanders "might as well come from Goebels himself so far as their practical effect is concerned." By hiding under the cloak of false patriotism, Dies "is a greater danger to our national safety than thousands of Axis soldiers within our borders." And Hitler knows that better than anybody else.

The Vice-President performed a patriotic service by hitting out so strongly at the fuehrer from Texas. We can no longer tolerate this "deliberate and dishonest effort to confuse the public." Dies has been verbally rebuked before. Now he must be stopped cold. The American people expect their government to take all necessary measures to silence Dies. One way to do it is to deny him the funds he is now seeking to continue his subversive activities.

Everything Mr. Wallace said about Dies also holds true for the Rapp-Coudert committee, New York's replica of the Dies group. A bill to extend the life of this committee is now up before the Albany assembly. Significantly, the newspapers last week reported that the law firm of Coudert Brothers was the attorney for the Vichy government in the purchase of a new consulate on Fifth Avenue. Sen. Frederic C. Coudert, Jr., of New York's little Dies committee, is a member of this firm. New Yorkers should remember Wallace's warning that "it is the solemn duty of all patriotic citizens to fight the enemy within our gates." Let them speak to their representatives at Albany in the sharp language of our Vice-President.



It Goes Without Saying

TO NEW MASSES: It goes without saying that I am heartily in favor of Earl Browder's release. There is not a reasonably active man in America today who has not committed graver infractions of our multitude of conflicting laws. He was singled out for unfair treatment because of political opinions, and the President would be doing a fine thing for America if he dished out to Browder a share of the freedom for which we all are fighting.

ELLIOT PAUL.

Culver City, Calif.

The Right to Vote

TO NEW MASSES: While other people have been testifying before a Senate committee on the Pepper bill to abolish the poll tax in federal elections, I would like to get in a word too on this subject. I speak from experience, living as I do in the state of Tennessee where the right to vote depends on whether you have the cash. Luckily, I've always had it. Not only that, I have been able sometimes to "treat" less fortunate persons to a trip to the polls. On at least two occasions they asked me for the money telling me how they intended to vote, and I didn't ask. It was enough for me that they wanted intensely to exercise a right granted in the Constitution and stolen from them by an artificial device. It gives me a particularly sardonic feeling, therefore, when these poll-tax demagogues in Congress rise to rant about the Farm Security Administration "paying the poll tax" for poor people. The implication in their speeches is that the FSA has indulged in a covert form of vote-buying, for the benefit of the administration. What it *has* done, actually, is to loan the money to pay poll taxes that have "accumulated" for years and must be paid before the man who owes them can vote. The FSA does this on the perfectly logical grounds that security, to be real, must include the ability of an American citizen to function as a citizen—i.e., to vote. It is exactly the same logic under which I proceeded when I provided the wherewithal for some individuals to vote—no matter for whom, but to vote. I don't know a better reason for turning out the poll-taxers—by passing the Pepper bill—than the demonstration they are now giving of their "divine right" attitude in regard to their offices.

J. P. A.

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Cliveden Postscript

TO NEW MASSES: I hope it is not too late to mention a point in connection with Bruce Minton's excellent expose of the Washington Clivedeners in your February 24 issue.

This point has to do with one of our reactionaries down here in Georgia, L. W. "Chip" Robert. Minton gives a lot of data on him, but he missed a good item—Chip's part in the reeking trials of Dr. Walter D. Cocking, one of Georgia's better educators and one of the few really qualified research men in the state university in the field of

education. The Cocking episode is of course nearly forgotten in the wake of war news these days, but it will serve to point out the caliber, if more evidence is needed, of those Minton rightly assails.

Let me quote Dr. Cocking himself, in his factual account of the second "trial," the one at which he was ousted from the Georgia schools. It is just after the final vote of the packed Board of Regents—ten to five against Cocking:

"And then, as the crowning mockery to the whole ridiculous and degrading spectacle, Regent L. W. 'Chip' Robert pulled from his pocket a document already prepared and typed in advance and introduced it before the regents for immediate adoption. The document . . . demonstrates . . . completely the farcical aspect of the so-called hearing, and shows beyond a shadow of a doubt the predetermined decision of Governor Talmadge's majority on the board . . ." [of which Robert was one].

This document, obviously handled in advance of any trial evidence by Robert, ended up by profusely thanking fascist-minded Governor Talmadge, et al., for their "valuable assistance" to "the people generally of the state of Gorgia and to the generations to follow," for their part in the trial.

In view of Robert's obvious lineup with local reactionaries it is not surprising but somewhat alarming to note his graduation into the "higher" society of Washington's Cliveden set.

R. S.

Gainesville, Georgia.

First Things First

TO NEW MASSES: It seems hardly necessary today to urge American aid to the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and China, to which I might add the Netherlands. There can be few, if any, citizens of the United States who do not realize the imperative necessity of doing everything possible for those countries. The admonition of General Smuts at the close of the first world war: "In time of international difficulty for the old slogan 'To the battlefield' let us substitute the new slogan 'To the conference table,'" is the ideal for which we must work. But first of all we must give validity to the conference table by the defeat of the powers that would substitute brute force for the sanctity of treaties.

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Mooney and Browder

TO NEW MASSES: I am saving Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's "Farewell, Tom Mooney" to show my baby son when he gets old enough to read and understand it. And for far more important reasons than that I, an Irishman, was struck by the peculiar appropriateness of an appreciation of Mooney appearing in the issue of NEW MASSES dated March 17, and written by one of our greatest descendants of Ireland. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's picture of Mooney was such a *human* picture—in death he was more alive to me than at any time when he was actually living, although he seemed very much alive then too. It means a great deal to America that this man, who suffered so long and unjustly in prison, yet kept faith with democracy and risked the little remaining life of freedom granted him in order to fight for the freedom of another great democrat. Tom Mooney's work on behalf of freeing Earl Browder should be a burning example to all of us.

JAMES BANNIGAN.

New York City.