

# A VIEW OF SOVIET PEACE AIMS

*The clues can be found in a study of Soviet policy before and during the war. A leading engineer presents his approach to the problem.*

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**T**HE probable peace aims of the Soviet Union may be surmised from the history of its development both with reference to its economy and its foreign policies.

While it was recently stated by Stalin that the republics of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Karelia, Moldavia, White Russia, and the Ukraine, now largely under Nazi domination, should be included in the Soviet Union at the close of the war, no agreement to this effect was entered into by Molotov in the recently concluded British and American treaties. The governments of these republics are at present established in the Soviet Union and their representatives are being elected under the Soviet system. They are recognized as the accredited representatives of their people, many of whom are fighting in the Red Army. The continuance of these Baltic republics as members of the Soviet Union would be important to peace in Europe first, because of what it means to the peoples of these countries and, second, because of the significance to the Soviet Union of the strategic position of these republics. It would not be surprising if the Soviet Union would also accept similar protection on its borders farther south. Stalin himself has pledged the creation of a strong independent Polish state after the war. All of these matters are well known and have been restated by the Soviet Union from time to time.

It is probable that another of the peace aims of the Soviet Union is that there shall be no subject peoples, forced to pay reparations and held in economic bondage to another group. While the leaders of the Axis powers should be punished, the Soviet Union has stated the people themselves should be given the freedom to choose their own form of government and elect their own representatives in that government. Under such circumstances it is highly improbable that the people of the Axis governments will choose the kind of government which leads a people to the exploitation of others and to war.

We can get a fairly good picture of what to expect from the Soviet Union at the peace table, when we realize certain significant facts of its organization. In the first place, the Soviet Union has no investments in foreign territory; that is, there are no powerful investing groups among its citizens who own securities in other lands. This means that the Soviet Union will have no designs which will lead to mandates or colonial possessions because it doesn't follow the principle of foreign exploitation. There are also no investments by foreigners in the industries of the Soviet Union, and therefore the Soviet Union does not have to be in a trading position at the peace table and has a clear conscience in the making of its peace.

Again the economy of the Soviet Union does not depend to any considerable extent on foreign trade in the sense that she needs those kinds of political trade treaties with other nations which give her an economic advantage in a world competitive market. Therefore, it is not likely that any of her proposals will reflect such a need.

It is also interesting to reflect on the fact that on three different occasions the Soviet Union went before the League of Nations and proposed programs of disarmament, and on three other occasions the Soviet Union proposed to other powers in Europe, that there be agreements of collective security. Failures to act on these proposals are now remembered with regret. In view of this history it seems, therefore, not at all unlikely that the Soviet Union will again make proposals looking toward disarmament and collective security.

It also appears probable that the Soviet Union will do all things possible which will not only enable her to build up her internal economy but will also make it possible for the conquered nations to do as much. The Soviets have an expanding economy which was only temporarily interrupted in its expansion by the need of building up a war machine against invasion. If collective security arrangements are adopted which will make it unnecessary for the Soviet Union to devote such a large part of its energies to the building up of a war machine she will then be in a position to continue the remarkable advance she has already made in building up her internal economy.

**I** AM rather inclined to the opinion that the representatives of the Soviet Union sitting at the peace table will be more concerned about the *program* of international arrangements than the mere verbalisms of peace aims; as a nation she has learned what every engineer knows, that the product made depends on the machinery used. In other words, she has learned that you cannot maintain peace, no matter how nicely phrased the aims may be, when you set in motion those processes of doing business which inevitably lead to conflict. The peace aims of any nation must be judged by the particular program it established for carrying on its relations with its own and other peoples. There will probably be no significant differences among the united nations as to the basic principles and aims of the peace conference, but there will probably be some difference as to the methods proposed by which these objectives are to be attained. These differences in method will reflect the principles of the economies by which the several nations operate. Accordingly, since the Soviet Union operates on the basis of a cooperative economy, we may look for proposals for carrying out the peace aims which she has found, by experience, to have a high probability of establishing a durable peace between peoples.

One of the important things about any treaty, including peace treaties, is the sincerity with which we may expect it to be carried out. On this point it may be well to reflect on the statements of Ambassador Davies to the effect that the Soviet Union has been foremost among nations in carrying out its agreements. He states specifically "Diplomatic history will record that of all the nations of the earth, none has a finer record of living up to its treaty promises than the Soviet Union." This, together with the testimony of others, should lead us to understand that the peace objectives of the Soviet Union will be sincere, that the methods proposed will be workable and the agreements made will be faithfully adhered to.

WALTER RAUTENSTRAUCH.

*Prof. Rautenstrauch's article is a continuation of the discussion of postwar problems which New Masses began recently in two articles by A. B. Magil. The new US-British-Soviet agreements constitute, of course, the foundation for the future peace aims of the USSR and all the United Nations. We would welcome the participation of our readers in this discussion.—*

*The Editors.*

**P**ERHAPS your salvaged tin cans were put out for collection on the last announced "pick-up" date, and you probably felt that you were setting a good example for the neighbors. You may take it more seriously next time if you'll remember even a part of the following: If *all* cans were saved in New York city alone, they would provide enough scrap metal in a year for 30,000 anti-aircraft guns, 360,000 aerial bombs, 1,850,000 fifty-caliber machine guns, 75,000 medium tanks, and an astronomical number of fighter planes which take only a pound of scrap each but must have that.

Salvage on any such scale goes far beyond the best efforts of you and your neighbors and winds up as a government responsibility, especially that of city governments. But it's still your contribution that is crucial. And what have you done about the President's big rubber drive? That was not only a yardstick for future gas rationing, but actually rubber may yet become even more important than scrap metal, with literally no source left us for the original product. And one-third of all rubber used in defense can be scrap. Twenty-five feet of garden hose can supply enough rubber for seven gas masks and four men's rubber overshoes enough for a pair of army shoes. If you turned in an old hot water bottle, it helped to make up 100 pounds of them, which would equal fifty-seven pounds of crude rubber. The list of facts and figures is almost endless and the lesson is obvious.

We have heard more about tin cans and rubber lately than anything else, but we will have to become really systematic about all salvage. Each kind of metal is important to the war effort and this means zinc, nickel, and copper in addition to the iron and steel we generally think about. Your apartment house superintendent is more likely to dig up those things than you and you should speak to him if you haven't. But here are a few old things you might have around and what they stand for: A pair of roller skates, an old door lock, or a broken down trash basket can supply scrap metal for a thirty-caliber machine gun; a five-pound flatiron can furnish iron for four hand grenades, and an old bedspring (sixty pounds) can take care of steel for two four-inch 105 mm. shells.

**G**REAT BRITAIN was slow in getting her salvage drive under way too. And her whole sluggish war effort picked up after the people became salvage-conscious and began getting support from their government, particularly local governments. Bradford, England, achieved 100 percent increase in salvage following a direct appeal to sanitation workers and some good general public education. The "Director of Public Cleansing" for that city believes his success could be duplicated anywhere. In a British area of 6,400,000 population the people saved 348,000 tons of metal in a year. In New York City, roughly comparable in population, the present salvage rate approaches 30,000 tons—a deplorable figure, the reasons for which I shall try to indicate later.

In England the housewife long ago learned to set up four

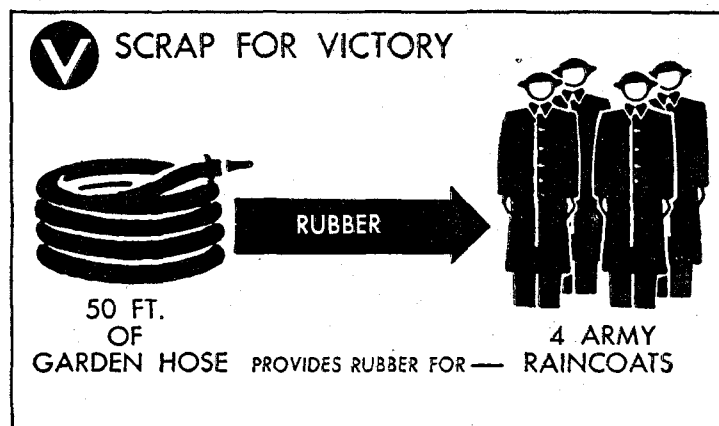
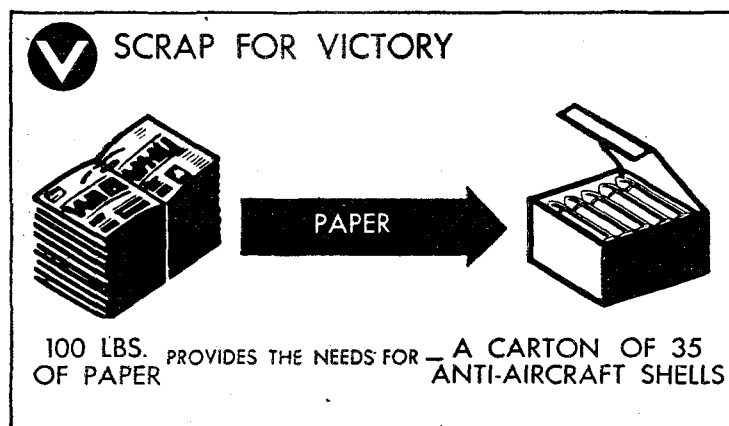
# GET IN THE SCRAP

*It may only be a tin can or a discarded raincoat to you, but piles of them mean more machine-guns, more tanks. Things to know about the salvage drive.*

garbage and trash containers: For "pig food," cans and old metal, bones, and wastepaper. By now she's probably got a fifth for rubber. The bones are for glue, glycerine, and fertilizer (we still don't need household bones as a source for these things). As to wastepaper our government recently halted the collection drive due to an oversupply. But these different requirements don't mean that we can't profitably learn the British way by keeping our cans and metal, our rubber and our garbage carefully separated. We have reason enough to imitate them. More than a year ago the British Controller of Salvage estimated that the savings accomplished equalled 250 ship voyages annually, and the metal salvaged by households up to then was enough for 10,000 tanks. This is undoubtedly a considerable achievement in the light of shipping difficulties.

**R**EMEMBER that the canniest salvagers from way back have been the Axis powers. In Japan they have been systematically collecting old hats and anything else you could name, while it wasn't so long ago that we laughed when we first heard how the Germans were collecting old toothpaste tubes, of all things. Now we are saving worn-out rubber stamps and the insides of pianos—and toothpaste tubes. Dozens of other items will be added as time goes along.

But even with 100 percent willingness to help, a lot of Americans are confused about what to do and how. The government is urging them to sell their scrap material as readily as to give it away, but sometimes it's hard to find out how to do either. In general you can sell large quantities of any kind of



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