Together Against Hitler

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**Introduction**

We in Britain find ourselves facing the third autumn and winter of war, with a terrible struggle still ahead of us, and much suffering to be endured before the Hitler gangsters are defeated.

But the situation has been profoundly altered as a result of the treacherous attack made by Nazi Germany on the Soviet Union on the 22nd June, 1941. This attack, with the clear declaration of the Prime Minister on the evening of the same day that Britain would fight side by side with the U.S.S.R. against Nazidom, and the Soviet-British Treaty of Alliance of the 12th July which followed it, have transformed the character of the war and brought to all the peoples of the world a real tranquility to the world.

Since the attack began, Hitler's Panzer divisions have driven deep into the Western parts of the Soviet Union, although at the cost of terrible losses in men, tanks, guns and aeroplanes, and without success in his main aim of reaching Moscow by blitzkrieg methods.

In this new drive, Hitler has brought into active warfare Rumania, Hungary, Slovakia and Finland. He has issued his reactionary and anti-democratic call to all the Fascist forces of the world, evoking sympathetic responses from the Governments of Vichy France and Franco Spain. In the Far East, his fellow-jackal, Japan, has begun to move further down into Indo-China and towards Thailand, menacing Dutch, American, and British territories and interests, and is also reinforcing her troops on the Soviet borders. The war is indeed assuming world-wide scope, as the Axis powers mobilise all their allies and adherents.

But the forces of freedom are coalescing too. Following on the first general offer of the Government of the U.S.A. to give support to the U.S.S.R. with machines and munitions, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill have met in the Atlantic and dispatched a joint message to Stalin, suggesting a three-power conference in Moscow to arrange for a common plan of resistance to Hitlerite Germany.

We are thus on the eve of uniting the naval power of Britain, the military power of the Red Army, and the economic power of the United States; the enormous potential resources of the three greatest powers of the world are arrayed against the Nazi gangsters. Each of these countries, too, is giving help to the Chinese people in their struggle against the Japanese militarists. If all their forces are co-ordinated to the full, there can be no doubt they will bring the struggle to a successful conclusion. But of all these new developments, with their far-reaching consequences for all the peoples of the world, the most significant is the close military and naval alliance between Great Britain and the Soviet Union.

**Together for Victory**

And now the peoples of these two great countries, Britain and U.S.S.R., stand together against Hitler. No matter what we may all have to suffer, we can now have every confidence in final victory over Fascism, in Germany and elsewhere, in war and in peace, provided only that we can develop the alliance of our two countries into a real understanding and friendship between the great masses of the British and Soviet peoples.

To build up such understanding and friendship has been one of the major tasks of the People's Convention ever since its foundation. That task has now become more important, more urgent, and in many ways easier of realisation, if all the progressive forces in the country will co-operate whole-heartedly in the work.

**U.S.S.R. is Prepared**

The Soviet Union may not have expected the outbreak of war at the particular moment selected by Hitler; but she has long been awaiting it. Not for months, not for a year or two, but for a whole period of years, she has expected war, prepared to meet it, and at the same time striven to keep it from her land, in order to develop her own growing economy in peace. As Mr. Bernard Shaw wrote recently, "In a Socialist country war is a nuisance and a mischief to everybody"; and the Soviet peoples would gladly have been spared, through the vital years of their great re-construction, the burden of all the non-productive expenditure involved in defence preparations.

But, as they always believed that they would be attacked by at least one major Power, they knew that they could only maintain themselves as free Socialist peoples if they made their country fully ready for large-scale war, both in the military and in the industrial sense. These preparations have, of course, been intensified in the last two years. Every possible measure, diplomatic, military, naval and industrial, has been taken to ensure the maximum preparedness for war.
And now that at last the war has spread to her country, it finds her prepared as no other European nation, and able to put up a resistance that the Nazi armies have never yet encountered. She had had, moreover, to make her preparations alone, in virtual economic isolation, under a constant barrage of misrepresentation and abuse from practically every section of political thought in this country except those whose outlook is now embodied in the People’s Convention movement. There have, of course, been some sober and sensible opinions expressed in more Right-wing circles, especially where critics are able to study the work of the U.S.S.R. in fields which they understand as experts, and thus to judge more objectively, and see its technical merits. Field Marshal Lord Milne, for example, wrote recently from the wealth of his military experience, in relation to the policy pursued by the Soviet Union during the last two years and particularly in the first months of the war:

“Fully aware of the amount of assistance he could expect from Britain in the early stages of this war, and knowing, too, the unpreparedness of his own country, Stalin made a pact which has given him a breathing space and time to train men and create defences.

“The Finnish campaign and the occupation of Eastern Poland were probably part of a policy which envisaged the eventual and inevitable clash with Germany.

“It would appear that this time it is Hitler who has made the mistake of underrating his enemy, although it is difficult to believe that he did not know what was happening in Russia: the doubling of the Army, the building of a great defensive zone, the great increase in air strength and—what was more important than those—the training for war on a large scale and modern lines both of the fliers and the land forces.

“Judging from the results of the past month that training has been on sound lines, and has made full use of the lessons learned from the Germans in the campaign which has given their Panzer divisions a reputation of invincibility. This reputation has not been justified against Russia.”

_Sunday Chronicle, July 22, 1941._

Mr. Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty (at a time when Chamberlain was making speeches in which he treated Hitler’s failure at that time to attack the Soviet Union as an example of the “Chancellor’s perfidy”) stated in a broadcast on 12th November, 1939, after the occupation by the U.S.S.R. of the Western areas of White Russia and the Ukraine, that had been held by Poland since 1920:

“The Russian Soviet Government, embodied in the formidable figure of Stalin, has barred off once and for ever all Nazi dreams of an advance in the east. The left paw of the Bear bars Germany from the Black Sea; the right paw disputes with her the control of the Baltic. Whatever history may record about these events, the fact which we have to reckon with is perfectly plain. Nazi Germany is barred off from the east, and has to conquer the British Empire and the French Republic or perish in the attempt.”

The results of her efficient preparation for war were, moreover, not confined to the East. After the fall of France, the mere presence of the Red Army along Hitler’s frontier prevented him from mobilising his full forces for the invasion of Britain, a fact of which, again, Mr. Churchill was well aware:

“We may be sure, therefore, that he (Hitler) will continue as long as he has the strength to do so, and as long as any pre-occupations he may have in respect of the Russian Air Force allow him to do so.”

—(Mr. Winston Churchill, House of Commons 20th August, 1940.)

Mr. Churchill’s statement did not prevent irresponsible critics from continuing their slanders, such as the absurd attempt to portray Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union as close allies under the title of the “Communazi menace.” Hitler had no such illusions, as witness his proclamation of the 22nd June in which he gave his explanation—which contained a measure of truth—why he had been unable to make his full attack on Britain in the summer and autumn of 1940:

“While our soldiers from May 10, 1940, onwards had been breaking the power of France and Britain in the west, the Russian military deployment on our eastern frontier was being continued to a more and more menacing extent. From August, 1940, onwards I therefore considered it to be in the interests of the Reich no longer to permit our eastern provinces to remain unprotected in the face of this tremendous concentration of Bolshevik divisions. Thus came about the result intended by the British and Russian co-operation—namely, the tying up of such powerful German forces in the east that the radical conclusion of the war in the west, particularly as regards aircraft,
could no longer be vouched for by the German High Command."

Thus, for two years, the Soviet Union was not only carrying out in its own interests the policy so highly approved of by Lord Milne, but actually constituted a most powerful obstacle to Hitler's attempt to vanquish Britain. Now, in addition, the Red Army has broken the onrush of the Nazi forces, which had swept over every other resistance on the continent of Europe. The Red Army has achieved this not only because of its previous preparation and the strategic skill of its leaders, but because it is the army of a country whose people are ready to fight to the death for all they hold dear. The individual acts of heroism that have been chronicled in the army communiqués have stirred and moved us in this country, and must astonish those who had been led to believe that the Soviet peoples live under a tyrannous dictatorship; for men do not fight as these men are fighting save for a country that they love very dearly. Why they should love it and serve it with such devotion will become clear later in this pamphlet.

D. N. Pritt.

What is the U.S.S.R.

What is this Union of Soviet Socialist Republics? For years the bulk of our Press and of our ruling class has abused it, calling it inefficient, brutal, corrupt, cruel, even—oh! terrible accusation—imperialist, and described it as indistinguishable from Fascism, which is at once its complete antithesis and its deadliest enemy.

For years the genuine Socialists in Britain—the Left Wing, the class-conscious and militant section of the workers, the Communist Party, wide sections of the Labour Party, and even, until a few years ago, the leaders of that Party; and of course, ever since its foundation, the People's Convention—have maintained on the contrary that the U.S.S.R. is a federation of free and enlightened peoples, pursuing a consistent Socialist policy and able and willing to defend itself against Fascists and any other re-actionaries that might venture to attack it. We have asserted, too, that it has proved the economic soundness of its system and laid the foundations of a world of peace and prosperity; and we have even added that, if it had been true that it was equivalent to Fascism, it would have had a much more friendly welcome from our ruling class!

They were Lying

We of the Left have always known that the traducers of the Soviet Union, Right, Centre and pseudo-Left were lying, and we have waited patiently, in the sure knowledge that lying sooner or later defeats its own end, for the mass of the people to have the opportunity to see what the truth really is.* That opportunity has now presented itself with almost blinding clarity. The events of the last eight weeks (I am writing in August, 1941) have already served to convince a majority of the people that at any rate the hitherto prevailing stories about the Soviet Union must be wholly false. They know that they must reject almost everything that they have hitherto been told, and start again “from scratch” to find out the facts about that country.

They see the U.S.S.R. rapidly emerging from the fog of lies

*In my own case I derived some quiet amusement from the actions of those Labour Party leaders who, in an almost pathological obsession against the U.S.S.R., expelled me from the National Executive Committee and from the Party itself for defending that country's policy, and thereby—somewhat to my surprise and their own disappointment—trebled my political importance.
into clearer outline as a great and noble people. And we may be confident that she will continue to surprise even the warmest of her friends by the magnificence of her behaviour as shown in this present ordeal, and it will become clear to everyone not merely that her traducers have been lying, but also that what her supporters have said in her praise is true.

The Lies Unmasked

Masses of ordinary people in Britain, their critical faculties not sufficiently developed, had been told that the Soviet people were held down by a cruel tyranny, and would revolt as soon as they had an opportunity; that the Red Army and the whole Soviet state would crumble up in ten days; that their soldiers were ill-equipped and underfed; that their tanks were made of plywood, and that two or three Finns alone could surround and capture at least a battalion of the Red Army.

All these things they already know to be untrue. One of the greatest surprises has come on the religious question. As the result of years of misrepresentation the man in the street had been persuaded that “the Russians” had “abolished” religion; and suddenly the news came through not merely that thousands of people had thronged into churches in Moscow to pray for a Soviet victory, but that the Metropolitan of Moscow (corresponding to our Archbishop of Canterbury) had issued a manifesto calling upon his flock to defend their country. This, perhaps more than anything else, revealed to the people in this country how much they had been deceived about the Soviet Union.

Week after week since then, the news of the heroic struggle of the Red Army has only aroused admiration, but has raised the question in the minds of many “How and why has the Red Army been able to offer such resistance.” People know that, if one-hundredth of what they had been told were true, the Red Army could not have stood up to the Nazi forces.

The Basis of Strength

The reason for this success is to be found largely in the moral and political unity of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. No nation or people can stand the strain of modern warfare without a sense of moral unity. It was the absence of it that helped to bring about the fall of France, as it had led to the collapse of Tsarist Russia twenty-five years ago. And there can be no doubt that such a sense of moral unity now exists in the Soviet Union as has scarcely ever been seen in any country or in any period of history.

What are the elements that have gone to build up that unity, that tremendous sense of being all in one fight together to defend something equally dear to all of them? They are many and varied, and I can only mention a few of the more important of them.

Firstly, the numerous peoples and races that go to make up the U.S.S.R. are freely living their own national life. The Ukrainians, the Uzbeks, the Georgians, the Armenians, and numerous other peoples, held down under a cruel yoke by the Tsar, are now free and equal peoples of the Soviet Union, governing themselves in their various republics as part of the federal state of the U.S.S.R.

Once they were looked down upon as “lesser breeds” as compared with the Russians, but now Russians and all others are simply brother peoples within the Soviet Union.

Soviet Democracy

Secondly, whereas Tsardom was a despotism, the Soviet Union is a democracy. The idea that the Soviet Union is a democracy has been laughed to scorn by the Press of Great Britain, but here too, as in other respects, we have to realise that we have been fed with lies. It is a democracy in a far more real and fundamental sense than any country can ever be in which industrial and financial power in substance controls men’s every-day lives, and “money talks” with a loud and firm voice, drowning the cries of justice and equality. It is really and incontestably true that the peoples of the Soviet Union genuinely govern themselves, unhampered by financial powers, through their democratically elected institutions, and regularly elect, on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot, the governing bodies which represent and carry out the popular will. When the Constitution states: “All citizens of the U.S.S.R. who have reached the age of eighteen, irrespective of race or nationality, religion, standard of education, domicile, social origin, property status or past activity have the right to vote in the election of Deputies and to be elected.”* it is telling the truth and speaking of substance and reality, not just of form.

But the democracy goes further and deeper than elections, town councils and parliaments. In their book “Soviet Communism. A New Civilisation,” Beatrice and Sidney Webb point out that the

*The only persons deprived of the franchise are the insane and those convicted of crimes the sentence for which includes deprivation of electoral rights.
U.S.S.R. is democratic in many other ways as well, so that democracy is applied in all walks of life, in the factories as well as at the polling booth, and, for this reason, they call it a "multi-party form democracy." Here then we have the second of the main elements in the moral unity of the people.

Thirdly, the economic basis of the U.S.S.R. is Socialist, with socialist ownership of the means of production, so that no man lives at the expense of another. This Socialist system has been built up in the last twelve years, and as a result, for over a decade, there has been no unemployment in the Soviet Union, no depressed areas, none of that terrible sense of social insecurity which saps the moral unity of many peoples of other countries.

Fourthly, they are not only organised as citizens with full electoral rights, but have in their work strong and powerful trade unions, whose total membership is over twenty-five millions, and which not only do all that trade unions are expected to do elsewhere, but in addition play a leading part in production and administer the whole of social insurance.

Fifthly, they have a gigantic co-operative movement. Not only are some fifty-five millions of people organised in the consumers' co-operative movement, but they have co-operative production in the shape of a network of agricultural societies, usually referred to as "collective farms." In the last ten years, nearly a quarter of a million of these collective farms have been built up, enrolling nearly half the total population. They have been supplied with automobiles, lorries and tractors. Only twelve years ago there was hardly an automobile or a lorry in the U.S.S.R. That was not purchased from abroad, and the peasants were struggling in misery on their little farms with scythes and wooden ploughs.

Now they have a huge automobile industry and hundreds of thousands of tractors at the disposal of these agricultural societies.

We have already seen three interesting results of this agricultural development. Firstly, that there are hundreds of men in the Red Army who, having for the past few years driven caterpillar tractors, now show themselves not as the bewildered and "machine-shy" peasants that their fathers were before the revolution, but as expert in the handling of the caterpillar tanks. Secondly, that these co-operative farmers easily work as a team in the defence of their lands—even in that terrible form of defence, so heartbreaking to peasants, that consists in burning farm buildings and growing crops—and have surpassed even their Spanish comrades as guerilla fighters. Thirdly, that their experience of co-operation has been an important element in building and reinforcing the moral unity itself which I mentioned above.

I could continue indefinitely the catalogue of elements that have gone to create this tremendous moral unity, but I will content myself with one final illustration, the treatment of women. In Tsarist Russia, women were regarded as beasts of burden, having no social or cultural position, hardly even any rights. In the U.S.S.R. they have complete equality. The Constitution again expresses the reality of the position: "Women in the U.S.S.R. are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life."

Equally with men they have the right to work, and receive equal pay for equal work. They have hours of leisure, social insurance and education on the same level as men. There is the fullest protection of the interests of mother and child. Women working in industry are given long maternity leave with full pay, and there is a widespread network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens. Whilst in Fascist Germany women are an inferior sex, in the Soviet Union they are the equal of men in peace, and thus easily and naturally take in war the place of men who are called up to fight in the forces.

The Evil Results of Lying

These are a few only of the facts about the U.S.S.R. which should have been a matter of common knowledge in this country, but come now as an eye-opener to many people, because of the prolonged misrepresentations that have been practised against the Soviet Union. The results of this lying go much deeper than is generally understood, for it has been the basis of all the disbeliefs and misunderstandings that have largely kept the two peoples apart and hindered the work of those who, like the People's Convention, wanted friendship with the Soviet Union. It has moreover provided the foundation on which our reactionary governments, during most of the last twenty years, were able to "put over" on an unsuspecting public their anti-Soviet and pro-Fascist policies. But for such misunderstanding they would never have been able to build up Hitler, to finance and arm the Nazis, and even, as in the disastrous Anglo-German Naval Treaty of 1937, to sanction their building the submarines— forbidden in previous years—which are now sinking many of the ships that approach our shores. In particular, it was on this basis, as I have
shown in my “Light on Moscow,” and “Must the War Spread,” that they were able to wreck the Anglo-Soviet-French negotiations in the spring and summer of 1939, and nearly succeeded in bringing us into war against the U.S.S.R. over Finland in the early months of 1940.

A Warning

It would be well for us to draw a wider warning from the discovery of the deceptions worked on us over the question of the U.S.S.R. If we have been fooled over this—and fooled with a completeness, a ruthlessness, and an unscrupulous efficiency which might better have been applied to ensuring peace or preparing for war—we must have been fooled over many other things: and we should not merely give up for the future the habit of believing what we are told, but also go back as many years as our political memories carry us and eradicate all the beliefs which have been formed for us in the past by the stories served up in the Press. In particular, we might begin by careful reflection over the prejudices which have been instilled into the majority of us in relation to our own political Left Wing in general and the Communist Party in particular. We know at any rate that the Left Wing has been right, and the rest have been wrong—many of them deliberately and falsely, and many more innocently but disastrously—about the U.S.S.R., her policy, her ideals, her efficiency, her power. Does it not follow that what the Left has to say now and in the future must be accepted as pretty certainly correct? And does it not equally follow that all that has been written against the Left by the same sections of opinion that falsely wrote against the U.S.S.R. is equally false? Let the public discard the stories it has been told, in particular about the Communist Party, as it has had to discard those that misrepresented the U.S.S.R., and begin to judge it anew on properly understood facts. I am not a member of the Communist Party, and can think and write of it with some objectivity and, judging it on its merits, I find it a body that generally forms a correct judgment, and always sincerely pursues the real good of the mass of the people, defying and surviving endless misrepresentation and persecution in its work.

This is not a time at which we can afford to be deceived; and if there is as great an awakening as to the true facts to be experienced in relation to the Left movement as has already taken place over the Soviet Union, the quicker it comes the better for the future of all of us.

The War is Changed

Hitler’s attack on the U.S.S.R. and the Anglo-Soviet Alliance make the war fundamentally different from what it has been, not only in its strategy, but also in the fundamental character of the war itself and of the peace which must follow.

It is important to realise that every thinking citizen owes to himself, his country, and the world a duty to form a judgment on the character of any war in which his Government involves or may involve the country. If he does not do this, but adopts the outlook of “My country, right or wrong”—which sounds so fine and noble, but is in fact more fitted to guide fascists than democrats—he does his country a great disservice, for he both runs the risk of supporting an unjust war which may bring untold evil upon his country and the world, and gives an immense and dangerous advantage to any government contemplating in peace time a policy which involves the risk of war. Such a government, which may well represent interests different from those of the mass of the people, will then be able to say to itself: “Well, the people would not support this policy if they really understood it; still less would they support it if they realised that it may lead to war. But we will go ahead; if we get what we want, well and good; and if we do not, but find ourselves in a war instead, they will support us “right or wrong.”

Use Your Judgment

If on the contrary we build up a healthy public opinion that no more surrenders its democratic duty of judgment on war than on any of the problems of peace, every government will have to shape its policy in the knowledge that, when it faces the risk of war, it will not carry public opinion with it unless it is acting justly and in the true interests of the country.

There have of course been occasions in this country when considerable numbers of people differed from the Government of the day as to the character of the war into which that Government has led the country. For example, at the time of the South African war, at the beginning of this century, many of the foremost members of the Liberal Party, including David Lloyd George, and most of the leaders of the newly-born Labour Party, considered the South African War to be unjust, and in its nature imperialist. That very well known economist, J. A. Hobson, who died in 1940, not only wrote a book condemning the South African
War, but accompanied it with a book on Imperialism, which was afterwards used by Lenin in the writing of his own book on that subject.

Outside Britain, of course, there was hardly any country which did not condemn the British Government of 1899-1900 for its war against the South African Republics; and there must be few in Britain nowadays who are not prepared to admit now, whatever their view was at the time, that the South African war was an unjust and imperialist war.

Similarly, in the last war of 1914-18, there were many who saw it as a struggle between rival imperialisms, and recognised it as a war of the type against which the Socialist movement of every country had given so many warnings, and many more still who reached the same conclusion when they saw what came out of it at Versailles and later.

And when the present war broke out in the autumn of 1939, there were of necessity—in spite of the unmistakable vileness of the Nazi enemy—many who, with their memories of the long-sustained policy pursued by successive British governments of building up Hitler Germany against the U.S.S.R., and of their shameful acquiescence and even participation in Fascist aggressions, in Abyssinia, China, Spain, and Czecho-Slovakia, could only form a very wry judgment on the motive with which the Chamberlain government, composed of men with a black record of international reaction and betrayal, embarked on the war. Their aims, if not aggressive, were not anti-Fascist, and were certainly imperialist, as was made blatantly plain in Lord Lloyd’s pamphlet “The British Case.” There was no room for doubt—as is explained in my recent book, “Choose your Future”—that they were firmly resolved to impose on the German people a super-Versailles which would have made the following years of “peace” an unbearable horror for the people of all the countries involved.

**Switching the War**

The anxieties of those who formed this judgment were confirmed and indeed intensified when it grew clear in the early months of the war that the old aim of a combination of Hitler Germany and Munichite or Chamberlain Britain against the Soviet Union had not been forgotten, and was finding expression in “Switch the war” propaganda which was voiced in the newspapers and in certain circles of the ruling class. This attempt reached its culmination in the dispatch to Finland of the arms and aeroplanes which were to be so sorely missed at the time of Dunkirk. I was perfectly convinced then of what many people are beginning to realise now, that a deliberate attempt was being made to involve the people of this country and of the French Republic in a war with the Soviet Union, on the calculation that on this basis it would be possible to make an arrangement by which Hitler would give up his war against Britain and France and join in the attack. The evidence of this was given at the time in my book “Must the War Spread?” published in January, 1940. (I am glad to think that I wrote that book, not so much because my many contentions have been proved correct, but rather because it is widely held that the book, with its great circulation, had some effect in holding up the plans of the British and French imperialists to send 100,000 men to their death in Finland in a futile and criminal war upon the U.S.S.R.)

**The Difference**

As we thus had the onerous duty of forming a judgment on the character of the war, and could not but form the view that the peace aims of the government were likely to lead to endless disaster after the war, we who founded and supported the People’s Convention were bound to advocate the policy of establishing a People’s Government and then seeking a People’s peace with the people of Germany which would eliminate not only Hitler and Nazism but also Imperialism and Fascism in other countries. And now, when the U.S.S.R. is involved in the war, we have again to form our judgment on the new situation; and our judgment must start with the view that, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there is a fundamental change in the character not only of the war but also of the prospective peace.

It is now, for the first time, impossible for the defeat of Hitler to be accompanied by the survival, or the establishment, or the growth, of Fascism in Germany, or Italy, or France, or Britain, or any other country; and equally impossible for any peace of a Versailles or “Vansittart” character to be imposed by the British Government. These are strong assertions, but they are justified. The presence of the U.S.S.R. in the war, with the British Government definitely allied to it, makes the war plainly one of half the world against the purely Fascist countries; and the presence of the U.S.S.R. at the peace conference excludes the oppression of the people of any defeated country. It is interesting to note the language of the short treaty between Britain and the Soviet Union of the 12th July, 1941, which runs as follows:
"The Government of the U.S.S.R. and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have concluded the present Agreement and declare as follows:

1. The two Governments mutually undertake to assist one another and to give every kind of support in the present war against Hitlerite Germany.

2. They undertake, furthermore, that for the duration of the present war they shall conclude neither an armistice nor a peace treaty otherwise than by mutual agreement."

The significant phrase “against Hitlerite Germany” rules out for the future any possibility of a Vansittart or Super-Versailles peace. But it is not only the wording of the treaty that has altered the situation. This has come about much more by our association with the free and democratic people of the Soviet Union, which strengthens the people of this country, and shifts in a more democratic direction the forces opposed to Hitler, just as, in the first period of the war when Chamberlain was wooing Mussolini, the success of his futile efforts to make an agreement with Mussolini Fascism against Hitler Fascism would have been to make the British case less democratic. Moreover, the attack of Hitler on the U.S.S.R. has rallied all the reactionary powers, as is seen by the moves of Japan, by the twists and turns of Vichy, and by the impudent warnings of Franco to the United States to keep out of the war, as well as by the formation of contingents from reactionary France and Spain to fight on the Eastern front. The world is thus divided into two camps, on the one hand Hitler Fascism with the other fascist powers and pro-fascists in every country, and on the other hand the British and Soviet peoples, and the peoples of every oppressed country in Europe, including the people of Germany.

What is at Stake

If I am correct in my estimation of the new character of the war and of the peace, there is surely nothing less at stake than the whole shape of our future. Nazism in particular and Fascism in general must win or lose. If they win, the world is darkened, and the progressive forces of Europe must go underground and start a long fight as arduous as that which began in Russia after the defeat of the 1905 revolution. If they lose, Fascism vanishes, a peace can be negotiated which contains no element of oppression or exploitation of peoples, and no seed of future wars; and the people of Britain as of other countries can look forward to security and prosperity.

With such a future at stake, such a possibility of ending the nightmare of the last 30 years, we must not allow the many real conflicts of interest and ideology that still exist to divide the forces now arrayed against Hitlerite Germany. We cannot secure any of our ideals or forward any of our policies if we do not defeat the Nazis. Sufficient for the day is the evil that we must eradicate therefrom. A striking and praiseworthy example, showing how we must concentrate on the immediate and vital issue without attempting negotiations over other questions which might distract us from the present, is to be seen in the Soviet-Polish Treaty concluded in the last days of July, 1941. There, no attempt is made to resolve in advance disputes between two countries that seemed to be divided by irreconcilable conflicts but are now united to achieve the one essential pre-condition of their survival as free peoples.

After the victory it will be easy to settle differences that now seem formidable, and easy too to secure for mankind material and cultural advances that now seem remote. At the present moment, in what is now a people’s war, let us so act that we, the peoples of the world, conquer in the fight against the fascist forces that Hitler has ranged against us.

The Inspiration of the Soviet People

Before turning to study the part which we have to play in the joint struggle, it is well to examine the sources of moral strength which inspire the Soviet people in this fight. I have already described above something of the basis of the unity of the peoples and their government: but what are the positive inspirations that lend her peoples such magnificent courage and power of resistance? I think they are three in number; the consciousness of a definite political philosophy, the knowledge that under the banner of that philosophy they have achieved immense material advances; and above all the personal inspiration of two very remarkable leaders—Lenin and Stalin—that benign fate or the moulding force of great historical movements has brought to them.

Lenin

Lenin did more than all others to create the Soviet State. He built up the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, the Bolsheviks, in the struggle for the overthrow of the corrupt and foul
despotism of the Tsar and the landlords. After the revolution, Lenin led the Party, under its changed name of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in the struggle to defeat the enemies of the people and to build up a free, democratic, socialist country.

Lenin had been one of the leaders of the Labour and Socialist Parties of Europe, but he differed from all other leaders in his insight, courage and determination. He takes his place in history as one of the supreme figures of mankind. His memory of the people and to build up a free, democratic, socialist country. His work has been carried on by his party and by the whole people, consciously following in his footsteps.

**Stalin**

Above all, his work has been carried on by Stalin, who took a prominent part in building up the Bolshevik Party, and led it after the death of Lenin. He, too, is revered and beloved by the Soviet people in a way which it is difficult for the British people to realise. They have read of him in their newspapers, and have been told the most ridiculous things about him. They have scarcely been permitted to know what he actually stood for, or even what he has said. It was, indeed, on the 3rd July, 1941, that many people in Britain were able to read for the first time substantially the whole of a speech by him. This was the famous broadcast which he gave on that day, beginning: "Comrades! Citizens! Brothers and Sisters! Men of our Army and Navy! I am addressing you, my friends!" It was a revelation for those who read it in this country to realise with what calm courage and determination Stalin was leading the people of the Soviet Union and they were following him. It was in this speech that he proclaimed the "scorched earth" policy, saying:

"In the case of forced retreat by the Red Army units, all rolling stock must be evacuated. The enemy must not be left with a single engine, a single railway car, not a single pood of grain or gallon of fuel."

"Lenin, the great founder of our State, used to say that the chief virtue of the Soviet people must be courage, valour, fearlessness in struggle, a readiness to fight together with the people against the enemies of our country. This splendid virtue of the Bolshevik must become the virtue of millions and millions of Red Army men, of Red Navy men, of all the peoples of the Soviet Union."

Finally,

"The aim of this national war in defence of our country against the Fascist oppressors is not only the elimination of the danger hanging over our country, but also to aid all European peoples groaning under the yoke of German Fascism." Again, he said:

"In this war of liberation we shall not be alone. In this great war, we shall have loyal allies in the peoples of Europe and America, including the German people who are enslaved by the Hitlerite despot. Our war for the freedom of our country will merge with the struggle of the peoples of Europe and America for their independence, for democratic liberties. It will be a united front of peoples standing for freedom and against enslavement and threats of enslavement by Hitler's Fascist armies.

"In this connection the historic utterance of the British Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, regarding aid to the Soviet Union and the declaration of the Government of the U.S.A. signifying readiness to render aid to our country, which can only evoke a feeling of gratitude in the hearts of the peoples of the Soviet Union, are fully comprehensible and symptomatic." With such inspiration, backed by solid material achievements, it is easy to understand how the people of the U.S.S.R. carry on the fight that has aroused our admiration. Of those material achievements, I will give merely a few examples in statistics.

Comparing the present day with the period of Tsardom (1913), in those days only a fraction of the people received schooling. Then, in the schools there were less than 8 million children; now there are 36 million. In the universities there were 112,000 students; now there are six times as many. The people were uncared for in matters of health. In the whole of the Tsar's dominion there were only 20,000 physicians; now there are seven times as many. In industrial production they have gone ahead many times more rapidly than any other country. In 1913 they produced 29 million tons of coal; now they produce six times as much. Then, they produced only 9 million tons of oil products; now they produce four times as much. Of steel, they produced 4 million tons; now they produce 20 million.

In the Tsar's reign they produced 4,800 millions poods of grain; the harvest for this year was estimated to reach 7,900 million poods. Production of sugar has doubled in these years, and that of potatoes has trebled; of cotton, three and a half times as much
it must be encouraged and even—should it be necessary—compelled to implement this policy to the utmost.

Above all, the Government must be encouraged and supported in its stand against "Quislings," against those whose anti-Soviet and anti-Socialist tendencies lead them to desire the destruction of the Soviet Union as well as of Nazi Germany, as well as against those whose only offence is the minor but nevertheless very serious mood of complacently waiting for the Red Army to win the war for us.

**British Quislings**

Are there potential Quislings in this country? To such a question, in past times, the natural reaction of any Briton would have been not only to answer in the negative, but to dismiss the question as completely unreal. Unfortunately, in these last few years, we have learned by sad experience that this question can be put, and indeed, has to be put; especially in these last eighteen months we have learned that the question must be answered in the affirmative, namely, that there are potential Quislings and Fifth Columnists among us. Some of them, the more open and incalculable perhaps, are already behind the locked doors of places of detention; but others of them, the less open and more cunning, are still at large, biding their time.

It is worth while to recall what exactly is meant by the terms "Fifth Columnist" and "Quisling," which have now become so familiar.

The term "Fifth Columnist" arose in this way. In the late summer or early autumn of 1936, when the rebel Spanish generals Franco and Mola, aided by arms and troops supplied by Hitler and Mussolini, with the connivance of the Chamberlain Government in Britain, were advancing on Madrid, General Mola made a remarkable speech, which was reported in all the newspapers of the world. He boasted that the Spanish rebels would capture Madrid, because there were not only four columns converging on the capital of Spain, but also a "fifth column" inside Madrid. Everyone knew what he meant. He was referring to those who were waiting to do all they could, by acts of treachery, assassination, wrecking, sabotage, by espionage, by the sending of vital information to the rebels, and, finally, by the spreading of false rumours and by every other means of weakening the people's effort, to help in the destruction of the People's Government and of democracy and freedom in Spain.

**Hitler's Fifth Column**

Hitler, as many countries in Europe learnt to their cost in the Spring of 1940, had a Fifth Column; it was not confined to one country, but was spread with varying degrees of intensity over every country in the world. The completeness and depth of his organisation was a surprise even to those of us who realised how many highly-placed people there were in every country who gave more loyalty to their own class in its latent war against its workers than to their country in its defence against its external enemies.

It was as a result of Hitler's invasion and subjection of Norway that the name of Quisling came to be used as that of an individual Fifth Column leader. One Major Vidkun Quisling, a highly-placed military man who had been in the Norwegian diplomatic service, turned out to be an important Nazi outpost in Oslo, and was of the greatest value to the Nazis in their designs for seizing and holding his country. Until he thus sprang into infamy, he was unknown to the general mass of the British people, but he had been sufficiently known to our own reactionary government to have been given the C.B.E. for unspecified services rendered in Moscow, where he spent many years as a diplomat, and is suspected of having aided in producing the famous forgery of the "Zinoviev Letter" that played its ignoble but effective part in the General Election of 1924.

**Fifth Column in the U.S.S.R.**

In one country, however, the Hitler's Fifth Column was fully unmasked and dealt with. That country was the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1936 and winter of 1936-37 the Fifth Columnists discovered there, many of them men in high positions, were promptly put on public trial. They were found to have carried out assassinations and wrecking of trains, of transport and industrial plants, in which many Soviet citizens had lost their lives. Their guilt was proved and they were sentenced to the death penalty, which was promptly carried out. In the course of the investigations the threads of the conspiracy were found to stretch out more widely, and further public trials were held, the last of them in March, 1938. There was in addition, in 1937, a trial in camera of highly-placed military men who had been engaged in treasonable relations with the Fascist powers.
The Convention Leads

In the common struggle against Hitler Fascism we have seen above what is the inspiration and leadership of the Soviet peoples. On our side too there is the full possibility of inspiration and leadership of the peoples of Britain and of the world. After all the sad history of months and years of Fascist advance, the real anti-fascist struggle has now at last begun in full earnest. For the first time in many, many years the whole people of Britain can be united and enthusiastic in a single common front to carry out a single common task.

One of the most important factors in the formation of this single common front is the People's Convention. The Convention has grown up as a movement in the last fifteen months, from the time when it first took shape after the Chamberlain policy had brought about the disaster of the Finnish War and the collapse of the smaller countries and Britain's allies in the West. As against the difficulties the British people have had to go through; as against the scandals of profiteering, inadequate A.R.P., unfair food distribution, etc., etc. (some of them, it may be hoped, merely legacies from the Chamberlain regime), the People's Convention has fought for the salvation of the British people and for the strengthening of their forces. The rapid response to its programme among ever widening circles of the British people has demonstrated an increasing realisation of the true situation and a growing determination to resist Fascism in all its forms and in all places.

A Clear Record

The Convention can and will, in these circumstances, prove to be a powerful factor and leader in building up a united National Front. It and its founders and supporters alone have a clean record on the points that are vital—consistent opposition to Fascism in all its forms, consistent support of the Soviet Union and of the policy of British friendship with that country, and consistent advocacy of popular government in this and other countries.

The People's Convention has a clear standpoint; it stands not only for the fullest military aid, for the driving out of the Quislings and the destruction of their influence, but also for the maximum production in the common struggle. I may here quote from the most recent statement by its National Committee, adopted at its meeting on July 26th. There, after speaking of the need for: "the full mobilisation of all our military and industrial resources for a great united effort with the Soviet people against German Fascism," it goes on to deal with the type of propaganda which is needed against Hitler; and then demands that the Government should follow the letter and spirit of the Anglo-Soviet alliance, adding:

"It pledges full unstinted support for every step taken along this path. It declares that every person who is opposed to this action or who hesitates to carry it out should be pilloried as a public enemy and removed from office or position of authority.

"Waste and inefficiency in the factories must be ended. Those responsible for it are strangling our national effort, betraying our pledge to the Soviet Union. The workers are keen to increase production. But it cannot be done without full rights for the trade unions and shop stewards. More democracy and better conditions in industry now mean more tanks and aeroplanes in the front line.

"Every man and woman in Britain has a part to play in these days when the issues are plain before us; victory over Fascism, or enslavement and national degradation. But they can only play this part as free men and women, free to speak, write and act for the common cause, in a spirit of true democracy.

"They can only play their part if they are freed from the grip of the profiteers and the food speculators, who are robbing the people of the necessities of life.

"People of Britain! Now is the time to attack. Let there be no quiet on the Western Front, and no quiet on the factory front.

"The people must mobilise and act now. Get people on your job and in your locality together. Organise meetings, rallies, demonstrations. This must be the greatest mobilisation of opinion that this country has ever seen.

"Make the Anglo-Soviet Alliance a reality!
"End the quiet on the Western Front!
"End waste and sabotage in the factories!
"Abolish profiteering in food!
"Act now for victory!
"Through victory to a People’s Peace!"
False Friends and Easy Optimists

I HAVE dealt earlier with the potential Quislings, the more extreme but less numerous enemies of our new ally and of ourselves. But there are more subtle obstacles against which we must be on our guard. They consist of two groups: firstly, the false friends who whilst hating Hitler cannot sincerely support ourselves. But there are more subtle obstacles against which we must be on our guard. They consist of two groups: firstly, the false friends who whilst hating Hitler cannot sincerely support any policy which may strengthen the Soviet Union or advance the progressive cause in Britain, and, secondly, the complacent optimists who seek to rest on the laurels they have not yet won and to leave the Red Army to win the war for us.

False Friends

Of these two very different groups, the false friends who are the most dangerous are to be found among sections of the ruling class. To understand them one must realise that there are some members of the ruling class who would prefer to follow the Vichy road rather than ally themselves with the Soviet Union against Nazism.

Mr. Churchill and those who agree with him have very clearly made their choice, to fight Nazism hand in hand with the U.S.S.R., which is a Socialist state. But others of the ruling class have not made this choice, and if it had been left to them it is doubtful if they would have done so. The result is that wherever they are to be found—whether in financial circles, or in the army command, or in the more essential ministries, or in some of the more influential newspapers, or finally in the civil service—they, even if accepting the Government decision, have no enthusiasm for it, and are not willing to scrap old prejudices and hatreds.

Examples of this were noted by everyone in the B.B.C. controversy over playing the Soviet anthem, in the decision of a field officer (promptly overruled by the Deputy Chief of General Staff, Major-General Pownall), that no photographs were to be taken of British Generals shaking hands with the members of the Soviet Military Mission on their arrival in London, and in the fatuously stupid refusal of the War Office to permit the band of a Guards regiment to play Soviet military music; and these are no more than a few examples of an attitude that is unfortunately widespread. It would almost seem, when one contrasts this attitude of some of our ruling class to the Soviet Union, which is helping to save their lives, with their past attitude to Hitler and Mussolini when these two gangsters were receiving their efforts at “appeasement” with insolent contempt, as if the only way to earn their affection is to kick them downstairs.

Fortunately, there are firm voices in the other and better section of the ruling class that speak very differently. In the Evening Standard of the 29th July, 1941, its Editor, Frank Owen, in an article headed “An Ally who Fights,” deals with the mentality which has shown itself in high British military circles, and which we may presume is bred from past ignorance and prejudice. He says:

“It almost passes comprehension that official military opinion in Britain could be so dumb as to suppose that the Red Army would behave like some Ruritanian Bodyguard from Bukarest. Yet it is so. ‘Ten days,’ said Whitehall, when the Russian campaign opened. In this matter high military circles showed they knew as much about the Red Army as about their own.’”

After dealing with the prowess of “this great nation,” he goes on to say:

“The physical development of the Soviet Union was there for everyone to see. The almost magic creation of factories, railroads, oil plants, the vast exploitation of coal, iron, gold; the economic colonisation of Siberia, in a word, the building of the economic case of military power.

“Did nobody official from Britain notice this and recognise what it was? If someone had, surely we should not be gaping even now at the titanic Russian effort?”

“No. We should be throwing in every ounce that we could give to this magnificent ally. We should be sending her every technical aid for further strengthening of her material defence. We should be making open battle in the West wherever we could organise or improvise a division. We should be risking our strength as we risked it in the glorious days of Dunkirk, to win the present battle, believing that it would hold off the battle of to-morrow while we repaired the losses. We should not proceed on the basis that a valiant, virile race of 190 million soldier citizens were going to fold up, doncher know, in ten days now.”

Now, this attitude is for the moment more dangerous than any Quisling. If it be true, as is widely believed, that that section of the ruling class that puts its fears of Socialism before its fears of Hitler really cherished the belief—itself a terrible example of the evil results I mentioned above as flowing from the
It is plain enough now that this Fifth Column, if it had not been detected and eliminated in time, would have done devilish work when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union; indeed, it might well have served to bring that attack about much earlier. But at the time these trials, which should have served as a warning and an example to other countries, not excluding our own, were made the occasion of one of the wilder outbursts of British press misrepresentations of the Soviet Union, which was accused of witchcraft, of bloodlust, and every other imaginable crime and stupidity, for having taken the most elementary precautions in its own self-defence, precautions which in the event have of course served to defend our freedom as well as theirs.

I, like several other Members of Parliament, happened to be visiting the Soviet Union at the time of the first of these trials in August 1396. I saw that the matter was of considerable importance beyond the confines of the U.S.S.R., and I thought it my duty to attend the trial. I had the advantage of having spent my working life in matters concerned with law courts, not only in Britain, but in a number of other countries, with whose legal procedure I was somewhat familiar. I found the trial a perfectly fair one. The charges were extremely serious, and the prisoners pleaded guilty on most counts, after their guilt had been thoroughly established in the long preliminary investigations that form part of the criminal procedure of the U.S.S.R. as of most European countries. They were given a patient hearing, and every opportunity to say everything they wished in their defence; and it was the opinion of every foreign eye-witness of the trial, which lasted for some days, that there was no doubt of the fairness of the trial, the guilt of the prisoners, or the justice of the sentences.

The misrepresentation in the British Press was so complete and thorough that even before the trial was over enthusiasts like Sir Walter Citrine were sending messages protesting against the proceedings and exciting sympathy for the accused who are now generally recognised as a gang of Fifth Columnists. Immediately on my return to England I wrote and published a pamphlet defending the trial, which I can now see was hardly expressed with sufficient strength; but it was sufficient at the time to lay the foundations of a political reputation which secured my election and re-election to the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party by the rank and file of the Party and subsequently my expulsion therefrom by the leadership.

In other countries, however, the danger of the Fifth Column was ignored until it was too late. At the end of 1937, the discovery in France of the conspiracy of the Cagoulards, or "Hooded Men," showed that in the French Republic a considerable number of its citizens (and unhappily some of its generals) had been supplied with money and arms by the Fascist powers in order that they might act as a Fifth Column. Some of these Cagoulards were put on trial; but the legal proceedings were never carried through in the case of the majority of them, and even where sentences were imposed they were extremely light. The result was seen less than three years later, when, in the early summer of 1940, the Fifth Columnists in high positions in the French Republic, including some of its leading generals, turned round, betrayed their country, and became willing agents of Hitler Fascism.

In this country, what signs are there of potential Quislings and Fifth Columnists? In looking for them, we have to bear in mind that there was not an inconsiderable section of the ruling class, both in the City of London and elsewhere, who were personal friends with leading Nazis and had done all they could to divert the policy of the British Government in the direction of friendship with the Nazis. They were partly responsible for the terrible history of the Chamberlain Government's attitude towards the fight of the Spanish Republic; and when we on the Left warned the people of this country that if the Government's policy of non-intervention was continued, bombs over Madrid and Barcelona would surely mean bombs over London, Manchester and Glasgow, it was partly the influence of these Fifth Columnists that frustrated our efforts to save the people.

It is in these circles that we must look for the Quislings; they do not advertise themselves, but they are there, and they will be pulling every string they can to frustrate the efforts of the British Government and the British people to throw all their weight into the common struggle, along with the Soviet people, against the forces of Fascism.

The more we are on our guard against them, the more we shall be defending the Government against their influence, and the more fully the treaty of mutual aid and support will be carried through.
is now grown.

These figures are only the merest indication from one or two items of a total mechanical and cultural advance such as has never been known in the history of mankind.

**Mutual Confidence**

Naturally, under these conditions, and with the inspirations I have mentioned above, there is the utmost mutual confidence of Government and people. So far from there being any anticipation of “revolt against a tyranny” or of the Government “crumpling from fear of its own people,” the Soviet Government is freely handing out revolvers and rifles to the ordinary civilians, to the factory workers and collective farmers, as those who saw the news reels in the last week of July could witness with their own eyes.

Among the features of the strength and firmness of the Soviet peoples which flow from their three-fold inspiration and the solid achievements of their twenty years of reconstruction, I would select three as particularly worthy of mention.

The first is the extent to which they have carried the careful and thorough preparation for the defence of their country, coupled with the extreme efficiency of their mechanised warfare, their tanks and aeroplanes.

The second is the quality of their publicity in general and their communiqués in particular. Forming a remarkable contrast to the inconsistent boastful and lying reports of the German High Command, they seem to be informed by a quality of simple truthfulness and directness, and by a superb sureness of touch in the description of heroic actions of individual units or single fighters. They have youth, freshness, and vigour, and above all a realisation of the fact that peoples who are fit to fight and suffer are fit also to be told the truth. (This can perhaps only be achieved when a government and people share completely one outlook and one purpose; but it is in any case something which our Government might be well advised to emulate.)

The third feature is that of their “political warfare,” propaganda directed to the populations of enemy-occupied countries and of Germany itself. Here, too, there is a vivid humanity and directness which—addressed by an emancipated people to people long oppressed and exploited both in peace and in war—will have an important effect in disintegrating the whole foundation of the Nazi war effort.

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**Our Part in the Struggle**

*What must the British people do in this common struggle? It is urgent and vital that each of the allies give the maximum possible help to one another, but so far the brunt of the fighting is being borne by the forces of the Red Army. Already by the end of July, after six weeks’ fighting, the losses on the Nazi side were reckoned at a million and a half, which exceeds the total casualties of the war for Britain and for Germany in the previous year and three-quarters; but the Soviet losses were very heavy too.*

The battle going on along the 1,800 mile front from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea is on a scale never known before in human history. The clash of some nine million men, armed with every kind of modern equipment, tanks, aeroplanes, artillery and machine guns, dwarfs the biggest battles of the war of 1914-18, while all previous wars or battles compared with it fade into insignificance. Therefore, there is the utmost need of speedy mutual aid, as the Treaty of Alliance lays down.

The making of that alliance may not have been a foregone conclusion; there must have been a very big turn round in the sentiments of those who make up the Government; there may well have been some heart-searching before they abandoned their anti-Soviet attitude of many years past. But the change of policy was carried through, and very promptly. In the morning of 22nd June Hitler struck, and in the evening of the same day Mr. Churchill made his historic speech.

But now that this alliance has been made, now that the Government has pledged its word, has pledged us all as well, there must be no shilly-shallying, no “cold feet,” no malign glee at the thought of the Germans and Russians smashing one another; in a word, there must be no “bilking.” On the contrary, there must be the fullest possible effort in every field, industrial, political and military, to play our part in the defeat of Hitler. Our Government has elected without reservation to stand by the U.S.S.R., and

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systematic misrepresentation of the last twenty-three years—that the Soviet Union could not or would not keep the field against the Nazis for more than a week or two, it constitutes a danger more urgent even than the Fifth Column to the fulfilment of the greatest need of the moment—the creation of a second military front in the West.

**The Second Front**

The importance of this is clear; war on two fronts has always been the nightmare of Germany. Hitler and his General Staff have exposed themselves to the risk of such a war at a critical stage, ever since the 22nd June; and yet, apart from the remarkable exploits of our Bomber Command, which presumably would have been carried out in any event, there is nothing resembling a war on two fronts.

Why is this so? One possible answer to that question is plain enough. If there be in this country high military authorities who believed that the Red Army would crumple up in "ten days," then it would be natural for them, if they had no worse motive, to consider it folly to set up a second military front in the West, which, after "ten days" resistance by the U.S.S.R. would have to bear the brunt of the whole of Hitler's forces. That there are obstacles of this kind, arising at best from the prejudices of the past, was plainly to be seen both from debates in Parliament and from numerous informed articles in the press. These obstacles have to be overcome. And the people can overcome them if they show themselves determined to have that Second Military Front and ready to make sacrifices to obtain it.

**Easy Optimism**

An entirely different kind of hindrance is to be seen in the wide-spreading mood of complacency at the present time. Complacency, of course, is in some ways the habitual mood in the British bureaucracy, and one to which it readily reverts as soon as events give the slightest occasion for it. But this mood of complacency is more widely spread; and in this lies its danger. Many people think that the war will end very soon, that the "Russians will win it for us." The salutary warning recently given by the Prime Minister should make them realise that only the combination of British, Soviet and all forces will win the war; and the signs from Japan in the East and Franco in the West of the war extending still further should put them on guard against this complacency. It must be understood that unless the war effort is strengthened, unless all the productive resources of Britain are brought into use, unless every man and woman plays his and her part in a united national front, there is no certainty of a short war, there is not certainty even of victory. But if these things are done, then, be the war long or short, victory is certain in the end.

**The Future**

AND after Victory? Here in this pamphlet I do not wish to follow those whose whole activity is bent on the future, to the exclusion of the present and its urgent needs. But, nevertheless, we may take one glimpse into the future, may lift our eyes and look forward for a moment to something much brighter than we have hitherto dared to hope for.

Who will shape the future? The answer is clear. The victory of the peoples of Britain and the U.S.S.R., of China, and the U.S.A., and of every country (including Germany), over Hitler Fascism, means inevitably that the peoples will shape the future. No doubt there will be some of our rulers, both here and in the U.S.A. who will still hanker after what have been called "power politics" and the prizes thereof. No doubt there are many who still hold to the imperialist aims which they pursued from September, 1939, onwards, as well as before. No doubt the peoples will have to be persistent and determined to win and hold the real fruits of a people's victory.

But the possibility of a Vansittart peace is now gone for ever. The nightmare of Versailles, or rather of a super-Versailles, breeding wars of revenge unto the third and fourth generation, passes for ever.

The peace that we can look forward to after victory will assuredly be one which will ensure freedom and independence for every people, enabling them to choose their own future; and, let us hope, the peoples will choose such a future as will not only eliminate Hitler Fascism, and Fascism in every country, but will remove for ever from the face of the globe the conditions that are the cause of war.
THE PEOPLE'S CONVENTION

is engaged now in its biggest and most urgent task, to win the help of the people of this country in support of the nation's struggle for democracy and freedom, against fascism. This struggle concerns your future and demands your help. Will you give it now?

FUNDS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED

Send your contributions NOW to
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Telephone: Holborn 6260