

Fascism and Empire - Rajani Palme Dutt

Aggression and Expansion

More territory! New spheres of world influence! This is the real war-cry of Fascism.

The future of Italy, proclaims Mussolini, lies in Asia and Africa. Italy must extend its rule over the Near East and Northern Africa.

Germany, cry the Nazis, must win back its lost colonies, and must also win new subject territory in Eastern Europe. "Today Germany" complains Hitler in his "Mein Kampf", "is not a World Power. From a purely territorial point of view the area of the German Reich is insignificant compared with those of the so-called World Powers"- i.e. the British Empire, French Empire, American Empire, etc. "The National Socialist Movement must attempt to remove the disproportion between our population and our area".

The Japanese Militarist-Fascist dictatorship of Araki and his colleagues, who proclaim their admiration of German National Socialism as their model, combines terrorists methods at home with unlimited aggression and expansion policies through the Far East.

British Fascism, voiced by the Rothermeres and Mosleys, and, in another form, by the Churchills; Lloyds and Beaverbrooks, calls for the "strong hand" to maintain colonial domination. Away with the "weakness" of Baldwin and MacDonald! Away with "concessions" and constitutional pretences. Ruthless repression is their watchword.

The colonial rule of the finance-capitalist oligarchies, centred in Europe, the United States and Japan, is tottering. The colonial peoples are rising in ever renewed and stronger waves of assault to win their freedom. Therefore the policy of imperialism turns to ever more repressive measure.

Absolutism

In the first stage after the war the attempt was made to meet the rising revolt of the colonial peoples, not only with bloody repression but at the same time with a "liberal" show of "concessions", with lying promises of "self-government" in the vague future, with "democratic" talk and caricatures of "constitutions". All this humbug, however, failed to stem the revolt, failed to win more than a section of the national bourgeoisie in each country. The oppressed and hungering masses, who could not live on a diet of formulas and White Papers, went forward with their struggle against the unchanged dictatorship.

To-day all this "liberal" talk is more and more thrown on one side. The previous promises are denied or interpreted away. The policy moves steadily to the right. The latest "Constitutional Reforms" under discussion for India drop the last shreds of "democratic" pretences, proclaim openly the absolutism of the Viceroy and the Governors in every sphere, and seek to draw in the most reactionary feudal forces, the ruling princes, to buttress the whole structure.

The British Empire in its present stage of extreme decay affords the most instructive study of the increasing tendency towards Fascism as the final policy of the ruling White bourgeoisie.

The Ottawa Conference represented the attempt of the British bourgeoisie and of the subordinate semi-independent bourgeoisies in the Dominions to overcome the growing disintegration and draw closer the bonds by a series of economic measures.

Has only meant that Britain has paid blackmail to keep some hold on the disintegrating Dominions, but has reached no solution of the economic problem or problem of disintegration.

Stronger measures require to be adopted if the weakening British hold is to be maintained. And here again Fascism comes to the front, not only within Britain, but in the attempt to stimulate subordinate Fascist movements in the Dominions.

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