

# They Voted for It

by Robert Minor

(Third and last part of reply to a critical letter of J. Hart.)

**I** DECLINE to accept what my critic evidently offers as a concession to me: that the American people are "not politically ready for a change." The people have just voted for a change more profound than any that our country has experienced except as results of the Revolution of 1776 and the abolition of slavery in 1864.

What Mr. Hart had in mind when he said the people are not ready for a change was that they are not ready for a change to socialism, which is, of course, true. He overlooked an enormous change that is not a change to socialism. I think Mr. Hart is adhering to a view—not a principle, but an appraisal of the objective situation—that was thoroughly applicable a decade ago but which has ceased to be applicable: the view that there could not be a profound progressive change in the great capitalist countries other than their change to the socialist system.

That was an appraisal made before and during the first World War, and in the two decades afterward, when the world was divided into two camps, when one-sixth of it was a beleaguered camp of socialism, the rest of the world a camp dominated by great capitalist states held in the grip of an economic crisis of overproduction,—states that were politically orientated toward a general war in which it was assumed that the main weight of belligerency would be cast against the socialist state by an aggregation of capitalist countries.

In keeping with this orientation, a solution of the all-crushing problem of the world market was attempted through building up the military oligarchies of Hitler in Europe and the feudalists of Japan, in Asia. As Hitler so quaintly reminded us in his two speeches last January, "the European family of nations represented by the strongest state among it"—Nazi Germany—would regulate everything and "German victory" would mean "the

preservation of Europe." This preservation, said Hitler, "depends exclusively upon the existence of a dominating continental power."

Hitler was not exaggerating, but only restating the point of view that was signed and sealed in the Munich Treaty in September, 1938.

**I**T IS easy to see that a new situation is created by the revelation of invincible strength by a great socialist state and by the maniacal assault of the imperialist-feudal autocracies of Germany and Japan simultaneously upon the socialist democracy and the more advanced capitalist democracies. The common need of the survival of democratic civilization forced the capitalist and socialist democracies into a huge world-wide coalition.

But the change consists of more than this. The other side is economic. The United States and Great Britain were compelled to develop their industrial plant to double what it was prior to the war (in the U. S. from a capacity of 80 billions to 170 billions per year). The great capitalist states faced a certainty of economic ruin, shortly after peace would be declared and the most magnificent machines of production—about half of their total plant—would have to be closed down for lack of a sufficient market. This prospect of ruin as a result of the war, win or lose, caused a serious disturbance of the war unity of the nation in 1942 and more particularly in the summer of 1943.

This alone would have made the Moscow and Teheran conferences necessary, if military considerations had not. And after the Teheran Conference in November and December, 1943, inevitably

the lines were drawn more sharply for political struggle over the issue whether we would take the vast step of entering into that relationship between nations "for many generations" which, in its basic economic connotation, is the unprecedented effort to take hold of and expand the world market capacity in proportion approximating the wartime increase in our production plant capacity.

**T**HE magnitude of the change was suggested by a large-scale industrialist, Henry J. Kaiser, in a recent speech at a demonstration of friendship of the United States for Russia. It is well known that prosperity for capitalism, since the first great cyclical economic world crisis of 1825, has consisted of teetering on the precipice of overproduction and ruin, and always falling over it.

Minds immersed in the conditions of the past have been fearful over the fact that Russia's socialist production has shown an incomparable vitality, a capacity to expand that is not limited, as ours is by limits of consumption-power in its home market. Mr. Kaiser said:

"When Russian industrialism matches our own in volume, when comforts and conveniences are a commonplace for her people, the great mass of mankind throughout the world will be seeking more and more goods to satisfy their awakened desires. In the new world there will be no place for the theories of overproduction."

Mr. Kaiser gives nothing but a statement in business terms of the plan upon which the whole allied capitalist world, together with Russia, is turning as upon a gigantic pivot today.

The speeches of Dewey, supplementing  
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## Worth Repeating

**THE BEACHES** in the D-day operations, as pictured in **INVASION!** by Charles Christian Wertenbacher, appearing in abridged form in the Nov. 25 Liberty Magazine and telling us why we must buy war bonds: From the bluff above the dry bed of the Riquet River, east of St. Laurent-sur-Mer, we could look down through the opening of the river valley at the beach spread out below. It looked like a great junk yard. From the water's edge at low tide to the highwater mark were landing craft impaled on obstacles, blown up by mines, shattered by shellfire, and stranded by the ebbing of the tide. Among them, following a narrow path from the water to the valley's edge, moved a line of sound vehicles and a company of men just landed. As they passed, some of the men turned to look at the wreckage through which they moved: there was a bulldozer with its guts spattered over the sand and another with its occupants so splattered.

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mented by the pro-Hitler press that supported him, made it impossible for the voters not to know that the crux of the question of our entering into a long-time organization of nations had for its most decisive aspect the matter of partnership between the United States and Russia. They voted in favor of such relationships with a socialist state as a means of finding new strength and vitality for our Country as a capitalist state.

This was an expression of political readiness for a change.

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AT the risk of seeming to give overmuch importance to a casual phrase. I am compelled also to reject Mr. Hart's concession that prosperity and social reform can be had through "sup-

port the representatives of enlightened capitalism, who are determined to bring" such results. It is impossible for the representatives of enlightened capitalism alone to bring prosperity and social reform, or to manifest alone any "determined to bring" such results; nor can they bring prosperity except in the form that is a prelude to depression. An enormous role is assigned indispensably to labor. Not "representatives of enlightened capitalism" alone, but also the people come into this picture. The recent statement by Philip Murray shows the outline:

"Cooperation between industry and labor is another essential for full production after this war. Only chaos and destruction of our industrial life will result if em-

ployers look to the war's end as an opportunity for union-breaking, wage - cutting, open - shop drive and if labor unions have to resort to widespread strikes to defend their very existence and the living standards of their members.

"... If industry will respect the rights of organized labor, will bargain with the unions in good faith, and will recognize that postwar prosperity must be built upon increasing purchasing power and increasing production, our unions will help to preserve the industrial peace and will cooperate to the limit to increase the production of goods and services upon which our common prosperity depends."

This also is a part of the great change that the people voted for on Nov. 7.