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ATLEE'S REQUEST TO MALENKOV

When Mr. Atlee gave a Press Conference in Hong Kong after his visit to China and the U.S.S.R. he took the opportunity to allege that the U.S.S.R. has the largest armed forces in the world (though since 1952, even at the official rate of exchange which tends to overvalue the rouble, American arms expenditure has been well ahead of that of the U.S.S.R.)

On September 2, the British Soviet Friendship Society sent Mr. Atlee the following telegram:-

"We are amazed today to read a press allegation that you state that you sent Premier Malenkov through President Mao Tse-Tung a special request that the Soviet Government should unilaterally disarm. It is well known that the Soviet defence budget was reduced in each of the past two years, unlike the British and American. The Soviet Government has repeatedly proposed a one-third all-round cut in all arms and arms budgets of the Great Powers. We urge you cable the British Prime Minister requesting him to meet Premier Malenkov without delay to discuss practical steps to an all-round reduction of all armaments with effective international inspection."

On September 9, "Pravda" published an article entitled "Contrary to the Facts" in reply to Mr. Atlee. This evoked a violent leading article in the "Daily Herald" calling it a "slandrous attack", "intrigue in other peoples countries" and saying that the article showed that "friendship is not sought".

As this leader presages the sort of thing which will be said by enemies of the Soviet Union in the immediate future it is necessary that as many people as possible know what "Pravda" really wrote.

Limited space permits a few paragraphs from "Pravda" only:-

THE MEMBER-SHIP MAKES DEMANDS

"A delegation of prominent Labour Party leaders has visited the Soviet Union and China recently. This

trip was undertaken as a result of demands made by wide sections of the Labour

Party membership expressing a sincere desire for the strengthening of friendly relations with the Soviet and Chinese peoples. The leadership of the Labour Party could not but reckon with these demands.

"...Nor can it be an accident that Mr. Atlee's statement was timed for the new slanderous campaign about mythical "Soviet arms" now being conducted by American propaganda and its British "yes-man".

"It would be vain to try to find normal logic in a manoeuvre of this kind. It is well known that the Soviet Union has repeatedly advanced concrete proposals for a reduction of armaments by the great powers, and that in each case Britain and the United States have been responsible for the failure to adopt these proposals. It is also widely known that the Soviet Union is reducing defence outlays in its state budget from year to year, whereas the United States and Britain are constantly raising their military expenditures."

New Theatre Season

This season Soviet theatres have a number of important new productions for their audiences. They include Maxim Gorky's play "Somov and Others", produced in the capital for the first time.

Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor" will be running at the Mossoviet Theatre from the end of December. Shakespeare's plays and works by other British playwrights have a prominent place in the theatre repertoires in Moscow and other Soviet cities.

The Bolshoi Theatre of the U.S.S.R. is rehearsing A. Khuchaturyan's ballet "Spartacus". I. Dzerzhinsky's opera "Far from Moscow", based on V. Azhayev's novel of the same name, will be produced at the Academic Maly Opera Theatre, in Leningrad.

Anton Chekhov's plays continue to be a great source of inspiration to producers and actors. "The Seagull" will be the current production by the Stanislavsky Theatre in Moscow.

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"Pravda" on Attlee (contd)

"Has Mr. Attlee no knowledge of the statement made by Mr. John Hannah, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defence, on July 31, about the plans for extending war preparations, and his remark that everything is connected with a wide war against the Soviet Union? Is Mr. Attlee unaware of the warlike statements made recently by Bullitt, Clark, Van Fleet, Gruenther and other official American spokesmen, who are openly advocating the precipitation of war? Then why has he chosen to propose the unilateral disarmament of the Soviet Union, rather than to urge the United States to stop its preparations for war and to refrain from whipping up war hysteria?"

"Disclosing the meaning of Mr. Attlee's statement, the British "Daily Mirror" says that Mr. Attlee has "dispelled once and for all fears in the American Press and in the Tory Press in this country". "The Times" also assures its readers that Mr. Attlee has "not let down those who refused to believe that he was being led through China as a captive of communist propaganda."

"So that is where the crux of the matter lies! It appears that the head of the Labour Delegation was really worried most of all lest he be taken seriously in the United States when he spoke about "peace and friendship" for any appeal of this kind is usually branded by American Congressmen as "communist propaganda". So that was the purpose of this notorious "message" to the Soviet Union, which, in Mr. Attlee's opinion was to rehabilitate him in the eyes of reactionary circles in the United States and Britain".

MR. SUZUKI
ASKS QUESTIONS.

"Pravda" recently published the replies of V.M. Molotov to questions put by Mr. Mitsuru Suzuki, editor of Chubu Nippon Shimibun (Chubu Nippon Shimibun is an influential Japanese newspaper, published in Nagoya, an important industrial centre of Japan, with a circulation of more than two million copies).

QUESTION On the restoration of normal relations between Japan and the U.S.S.R.

In spite of the fact that nine years have elapsed since the end of the Second World War and that, particularly since the Geneva Conference, the desire is growing among the peoples of many countries to restore peaceful co-existence between

East and West, normal relations have so far not been restored between Japan and the U.S.S.R.

Greatly regretting this state of affairs, I should like to know your opinion as to which barriers at the present time hamper the restoration of normal relations between the two countries?

ANSWER The chief barrier hindering the restoration of normal relations between the two countries, in my opinion, is the fact that certain circles in Japan follow the dictate of the ruling circles of the United States, which strive to retain Japan in the position of a dependent country. Japan, of course, cannot remain for long in this position of being a semi-occupied country.

As for the Soviet Union, it expresses its readiness to make normal its relations with Japan, bearing in mind that Japan will display a similar readiness.

QUESTION On Japan's rearmament. The Japanese people do not wish their living standards to be cut as the result of rearmament or an increase in the armed forces. However, they believe it to be permissible that an independent and sovereign state should have its independent, armed forces, in conformity with the minimum requirements of self-defence, and with its economic possibilities.

What is your opinion with regard to Japan's armed forces for self-defence?

ANSWER The Soviet Union stands for a substantial reduction in armaments by all states and for the unconditional prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other types of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time the Soviet Union proceeds from the assumption that any sovereign state can possess the armed forces necessary for purposes of self-defence.

It is well known that the Soviet government's proposals on a peace treaty with Japan provided that an independent, peace-loving and democratic Japan can have the armed forces necessary for self-defence.

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TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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