

The Workers And the Second World War

Speech by

JAMES P. CANNON

To The

**Tenth National Convention
Of the Socialist
Workers Party**

(Oct. 2-4, 1942)

*With the Political Resolution
Adopted by the Convention*

PIONEER PUBLISHERS
116 University Pl., New York, N. Y.

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Foreword

The first convention of the Socialist Workers Party since the entrance of the United States into the war was held on October 2, 3 and 4 in New York.

The main work of the convention was the adoption of a resolution dealing with the war and its many and profound consequences upon international and American economic and political life. The resolution reprinted here was adopted unanimously by the convention. The political report, a speech by the secretary of the Party, James P. Cannon, opening the convention is also presented in this pamphlet.

Present at the convention were delegates from branches of the Socialist Workers Party from most of the principal industrial centers of the country. The delegates were nearly all active unionists; both men and women, white and Negro.

The gathering was marked by unanimity, not only on the political resolution, but on all important questions, as well as enthusiasm and confidence as to the future of the revolutionary socialist movement in the United States and internationally.

Published for the
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY
by

PIONEER PUBLISHERS

116 University Place

New York, N. Y.

Printed in the United States of America
November, 1942



The Workers and the Second World War

Report of James P. Cannon, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, to the Tenth Convention of the American Trotskyists, October 2, 1942

Comrades:

Since we last came together in national conference a year ago in Chicago we have had to record with sorrow the loss of numerous soldiers of our cause who have fallen in the fight.

In far away China a brave and selfless revolutionist, the pioneer of Chinese communism, Chen Tu-hsiu, succumbed at last to the blows of persecution, imprisonment, slander and poverty which had rained down upon him through so many years of his struggle. He died, as befits an honest revolutionist, in the ranks of the Fourth International.

In France a noble fighter for international communism, one of the founders of the French section of the Fourth International, Jean Meichler, perished before a Nazi firing squad. We do not doubt that he died bravely.

Our own party has lost five of her best and most devoted sons who served the party and the working class in the most dangerous posts as merchant seamen. Comrades Edward Parker, Carl Palmer, David Udell, Ronald Tearse, Edwin Jaffe have lost their lives at sea, our first victims of the imperialist war.

We honor the bright, untarnished names of our noble dead. The Fourth International will carry on their work and keep their memory green.

It is more than two years now since the assassin Stalin took the life of Comrade Trotsky and sought thereby to kill the movement that he had created and inspired. This present conference of our party, the largest and most imposing in our entire history, representing an active and growing party, self-confident, unified and strong — this conference is living testimony, it is living proof, that the assassin failed in his main objective. The ideas of our greatest leader and teacher live and guide our work and struggle.

The memory of our martyr is with us always, the inspiring force of our indestructible movement.

The Fifth Convention of the Socialist Workers Party, which is the Tenth National Convention of the American Trotskyists, meets in the midst of the Second Imperialist War, a war in which the United States is now an open and active participant. The war, this terrible paroxysm of an outlived social system in its death agony, dominates everything in the world today. Upon the outcome of this war depends the future of humanity. But we must understand that this war is not an abnormal phenomenon. It is not an accidental catastrophe; not an interlude to be followed, in the course of events, by a long period of peace and normal functioning of capitalist society. On the contrary, this war is the most characteristic expression of bankrupt capitalism. The war is the very image of capitalism, as it is now, and as it will be until the workers and the oppressed peoples rise in revolution and make an end of it.

How unrealistic, how ridiculous, are those people who speak of settling problems "after the war"; who set up "Post-War Planning Committees," etc.; who proceed on the theory that the natural order of things is simply arrested now for a while, and then the war will end and then we will settle all questions and begin all over again. Utterly utopian are all such ideas. All the great problems will be settled in the war and through the war. That is the basic thesis of the Fourth International.

Capitalism today signifies permanent war and universal militarism. And from this conception we draw our tactics and our strategy. We foresaw the war. We prepared for the war, and we understood that the war would pose all the social problems for solution by military means. That is why our program is a war program, a military program, which excludes any form of pacifist abstentionism. That is why our ranks are animated by the conception that in the arena of militarism, which is today the main arena, we will learn how to participate and how to prevail.

We meet ten months after the formal entry of the United States government into the war. The Second World War is a continuation of the First World War, but not a simple repetition by any means. A continuation signifies, as Comrade Trotsky wrote, a sharpening and a deepening of all the features of the war. And just as this war is not a simple repetition of the first one, although a continuation, neither is the situation confronting the revolutionary vanguard, nor its tasks and its problems, a simple repetition of the situation and the tasks and the problems of the revolutionary

vanguard at the outbreak of the First World War and during its course.

All the differences are in our favor, if we understand the situation to the bottom. The decay of capitalism, which was signalized by the First World War, has become the death agony of capitalism in the Second World War. The enemy, in spite of all superficial appearances, is weaker. On the other hand, the vanguard of the proletariat is better prepared and stronger today than it was in the analogous period of the First World War. If we are able to look beneath the superficial appearance of things we must see that this is the fundamental reality.

In 1914 the workers' vanguard met the war unprepared. The workers' parties and workers' organizations openly betrayed the proletariat in the war only at the last moment, not before. And the betrayal, the catastrophic collapse of the parties of the Second International and the trade unions caused surprise even to the most perspicacious of the leaders of the revolutionary vanguard. When Lenin saw the edition of the Berlin *Vorwärts*, the official organ of German Social-Democracy, with the statement supporting the war, he expressed the opinion that it was a forged edition, put out by the German general staff to deceive the people of other countries. He knew that the parties of the Second International were corroded with opportunism, but not even Lenin was prepared for their complete betrayal in such catastrophic form as took place on the fourth of August, 1914.

The First World War produced deep crises in all the workers' parties; the real discussion of the attitude to be taken toward the war began only after the war was under way. The war even produced discussions and splits in the ranks of the workers' vanguard. There were defections among the Bolsheviks. This is history that is perhaps unknown to many comrades because Bolshevism has been represented as something that was born perfect and carried through to victory without any internal difficulties or errors or defections. Not true at all. Bolshevism, like every other current in the workers' movement, grew and developed in the tests of action and took its final shape only in the fire of great events.

Just consider only these few facts among many which are recorded in the documented volume on "The Bolsheviks and the World War" published by the Hoover Library. The Bolshevik Committee of Organizations Abroad disintegrated. Of the five members, two enlisted in the French army; a third member withdrew. Lenin and Zinoviev remained as the representatives of the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks abroad to elaborate the war program of the party. At a Paris meeting of the Bolsheviks in

August 1914, eleven out of ninety-four present favored a policy of defensism, more than 11%. The Geneva section of the Bolsheviks opposed with many objections the first theses submitted by Lenin and Zinoviev. Shliapnikov, a prominent Bolshevik worker from Russia, who spoke to the Swedish Social-Democratic Congress in November 1914, stated that the Bolsheviks in Russia had been taken by surprise; they had felt confident that the Socialist Parties of Europe would be able to stop the war and were dismayed when the war broke out in full fury with the support of the official Socialist Parties.

Needless to say, I mention these facts not at all to denigrate the Bolsheviks, but rather to show, on the contrary, what a heavy task confronted Lenin, even in his own party, in shaping the revolutionary policy toward war. Lenin's problem was the problem of clarifying the program of the vanguard after the war had started. It was the problem of rehabilitating Marxism on the international field and of taking the banner out of the treacherous hands of the petty-bourgeois opportunists and social patriots. Lenin had the problem of forming the first cadres, of getting hold of two, three or five people, in order to begin all over again the work of building a bona fide revolutionary international party.

Our Party Is Firm

The situation confronting the revolutionary vanguard in this war is different in many important respects. That is why those wretched sectarians who consider it sufficient to simply repeat, word by word, what Lenin wrote in 1914 and 1915 are so far from the reality of the problem of the vanguard today. This time, for this war, the reformist organizations took nobody by surprise. In all countries there never was any question at all what position would be taken by the Social Democrats of the various varieties. They announced their betrayal beforehand. This is an important difference from the side of the Social Democrats.

Likewise, the Fourth International and its sections are not a simple reincarnation of the cadres created by Lenin in 1914 and 1915. The cadres of the Fourth International stand on the shoulders of the original cadres of Bolshevism which were reformed during the war. They are enriched by all the experience of that time and all of the intervening time. Therefore they were able to anticipate this war, and to prepare for it. The entire period, especially since 1929, when the Fourth International cadres were constituted on an international scale under the direction of Trotsky, after his

deportation from Russia—this entire period since 1929 can be described as a period of clarifying the program, of drawing the lessons of the experiences, of sifting and selecting the cadres, in short, of preparing for the war and for the revolution which must issue from the war.

Consequently, the formal entry of the United States government into the war last December produced no crisis whatever in the ranks of our party. The war entry and ten months of participation in the war have found the leadership of our party united, the ranks firm. There has been no sign of social-patriotic trends or tendencies; no representatives of such tendencies have appeared or brought forward any proposals in our party.

It is from this reality that we proceed in discussing our war problems and tasks. We don't have to begin from the beginning by explaining what is social-patriotism and why it is wrong. We don't have to spend time gathering one, two or three people wherever we can find them in order to begin anew. No, the situation is not the situation which confronted Lenin in 1914. The sectarians don't understand this. That is too bad. But then, if they understood how to proceed from the real and the concrete they wouldn't be sectarians.

War greatly intensifies and multiplies the pressure of bourgeois society on the workers' vanguard. All the force of material and moral pressure of bourgeois society is brought to bear in the most intensified manner at the time of the declaration of war and immediately following. With this in mind, and remembering the experience of 1914-18, Comrade Trotsky repeatedly warned us of a crisis in our ranks to follow the outbreak of the war. This in spite of our long preparation and our clarification of program. Trotsky warned that even in our ranks we must expect a crisis when the pressure of bourgeois society was brought to bear in full force with the entry into war. Now, this prediction of Comrade Trotsky was not realized in the Socialist Workers Party. Sideline commentators and literary critics may point it out as one more flaw in Trotsky's infallibility. In reality, what is shown is that Trotsky built better than he knew. The ranks of the Fourth International throughout the world have stood up firmly against the war, against all the pressure and persecution of the class enemy. That gives us all the more assurance of our right to victory in and through the war.

Our unity is somewhat disturbing to certain people who don't seem to be able to take care of their own affairs but are very

anxious to arrange ours for us. I am speaking of the medicine men of petty-bourgeois radicalism. Being politically unemployed otherwise, they have apparently settled down to the rather ungrateful and miserable occupation of unacknowledged physicians for our party. They are greatly worried about the fact that we have so much unity in our ranks, that we are free from crises and factional fights and feverish struggle over conflicting programs. These quack doctors don't understand that we are well, we are healthy, we are free from a war crisis, not by accident or the grace of God, but because we cured ourselves of the petty-bourgeois sickness in good time. We had the good fortune to have an anticipatory crisis before the United States entered the war, a crisis which we conquered with the help of Trotsky. We secured our internal peace by a timely preventive war.

As far as our leadership is concerned we have, so far, required no new discussion of fundamental program in relation to the war. Our problem has been much simpler, the problem of how to maintain our position and carry on our work to the best advantage and with the greatest possible utilization of legality under the conditions of war. These are not easy tasks, but they are minor and secondary. And their accomplishment is greatly facilitated by the fact that we are united on the basis of a principled program. Lenin's problem in 1914 was the problem of clarifying the program and of selecting cadres on the basis of it. Our problem is that of the application of the program, of devising effective propaganda approaches to the patriotic workers of today who will be the revolutionary fighters of tomorrow. Our internal cohesion, based on our programmatic unity, enables us to turn our attention outward rather than inward. Hence the emphasis in our press and in all our agitational work on our transitional demands, and on the slogans of our military policy addressed to the rank and file workers.

On the eve of the United States entry into the war we had a rehearsal in the Minneapolis trial. We were given the opportunity to test the firmness of the party leadership and the seriousness of its allegiance to principle under persecution and pressure on the very eve of the war. That was an advantage for the party, if you look at the trial from a broad political standpoint and disregard for the moment the possible consequences for some of the individuals. The trial was a stroke of political good fortune for our movement, but we were entitled to that, too, because we had lived right.

The trial was a forum for us, a forum from which to popularize our program and proclaim our attitude toward the approaching war. I think we made full use of the extraordinary opportunity. Never in this country, and never in history anywhere, did a political group make such full and complete political utilization of a prosecution in a bourgeois court as our party did. We were able to accomplish this, in spite of small numbers and resources, because we knew exactly what we wanted to do. We knew our program and had no trouble in explaining it. Out of the trial came two big pamphlets of a popular nature, especially devised to explain ourselves in the simplest terms to the ordinary worker, the rank and file American worker, and one pamphlet devoted to a discussion of the methods and propaganda techniques and principles involved in our defense. These three pamphlets testify to a full and complete utilization of the trial for our purposes.

The war was declared on the very same day that we were sentenced—December 8, 1941. That certainly was a symbolic coincidence. Nothing could better symbolize our irreconcilable opposition to the imperialist war, and to the capitalist state preparing and waging the war; and nothing, also, could better symbolize our enemies' recognition of our attitude than this unexpungeable fact: that they declared war and sentenced the party leaders to prison on the same day and at the same hour—December 8, 1941.

Our Program Is Clear

There is not and there has never been the slightest possibility of misunderstanding our position on the war. We were given the opportunity on December 8—the day of our sentencing—to recant. On December 8, the very day that the radios were blaring with jingo speeches in Congress preceding the declaration of war, the defendants were given an opportunity to disavow what they had said in the trial. Nobody did it. Thus our first response to the war was an action in court, a thousand times more important from a political point of view than any ritualistic statement.

A statement, after all, doesn't constitute a fight against the war. There are some people who don't know that yet. A statement is a promise to oppose the war. But our stand in the Minneapolis courtroom was the thing itself. It was followed two weeks later by my formal declaration, as National Secretary of the party, on December 22, simply restating what we had said before, recanting nothing, changing nothing. Again, a couple of months later, on the occasion of the St. Paul municipal election,

Comrade Grace Carlson spoke out again in the spirit of the party program. Now the party convention, representing the whole organization, surveying the events which have transpired since the Emergency Conference of the Fourth International in May 1940, once again restates the program of Bolshevism in the political resolution which, I am sure, will meet with unanimous approval tonight.

So, I repeat, no misunderstanding has been possible. Neither friend nor foe could have any doubt of our position. Those who pretend otherwise are liars and provocateurs, not misunderstanding people and not honest opponents.

Our political resolution is not a new program. It is not even a complete restatement of the old program. It is intended only as a timely document, a timely supplement, summing up and interpreting in the light of our program, the most important events which have transpired since the Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution, adopted in May 1940.

Trotskyism is the only tendency on the international field that has been able to survive the war. The Second International is completely in the camp of the imperialist democracies. The Stalinists put themselves at the service of one group of imperialists or another alternatively according to the deals or alliances they can make. They sell out the interests of the proletariat of any country, including Russia, in the interests of the diplomatic maneuvers and bargains of the traitorous bureaucracy in the Kremlin.

The "London Bureau"—I venture to say that even comrades present here have forgotten or, perhaps, never heard the name of this vanished ghost—the "London Bureau" was that pretentious international organization of centrists who fought Trotsky and the Fourth International tooth and nail on the ground of our "sectarianism" and their greater "realism" and their greater capacity, self-acknowledged, to build mass parties. And the strongest section of this centrist international, known as the London Bureau, was a rival of ours, an American petty-bourgeois group known, in its final phase before its disappearance into thin air, as the Independent Labor League, the Lovestoneites. The Lovestoneites agreed with us on one point, that is, they saw the war coming and they prepared in their own way for it just as we did. We prepared by sharpening and clarifying our program, cleaning up the remnants in our ranks of petty-bourgeois weakness. They prepared for it by dissolving their organization before the war started.

Needless to say, the leaders of this group, who used to give us lectures on "Leninism"—with quotations—are beating the drums for the imperialist war. The "London Bureau" no longer exists on this mundane sphere.

Of the pretentious sectarian cliques and factions who used to shoot at the Fourth International from ambush and criticize us from the "left" — nearly all of them have disappeared from the scene, most of them in the most disgraceful manner.

But the Fourth International survives, struggles and grows more confident because it alone has a consistent program. The Fourth International is the genuine historical movement, not made arbitrarily, but really expressing the historical course of development and the historic mission of the proletariat.

Our political resolution begins with a reference to an imposing series of programmatic documents of the movement of the Fourth International. We don't have to sit down now and rack our brains to write a program of Marxism for the present-day world. We didn't find ourselves thrown into a panic and crisis when the war started and having to begin then to discuss what we should do, as was the case with the vanguard in 1914. We have a program.

Just let me read this imposing list of documents, which are cited in the opening paragraph of our resolution: The War and the Fourth International, the fundamental theses, 1934, eight years ago; the resolutions of the Foundation Congress of the Fourth International in 1938; the S. W. P. Convention resolution on the Soviet Union, 1939, hammered out in the struggle against the petty-bourgeois renegades; the Manifesto of the Emergency Conference of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution, 1940; the S. W. P. Conference resolution on Proletarian Military Policy, 1940; the Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Fourth International on the fall of France, 1940, and in defense of the Soviet Union, 1941; the S. W. P. Manifesto on the Soviet-Nazi war, 1941; the Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Fourth International on American intervention and our defense of China, 1941; the statement by J. P. Cannon on the entry of the United States into the war, 1942; and the statement of Grace Carlson as a candidate of the party in the St. Paul elections of this year.

I am not reading a list of journalistic articles. I am reading here a list of consecutively developed programmatic documents in which you can see from beginning to end one clear and con-

sistent line of concept and principled policy. Our convention resolution is on very firm ground when it says that we have a correct program which equips us for the struggle and that we have only to apply this program to the events of the day. The resolution proceeds from there to analyze the events which have transpired since the adoption of those documents. One consistent program. We have no need of any innovations. The program answers the fundamental questions. All that was said before in these documents which I have mentioned is true and timely and pertinent to the problems of the day. We are not interested in any proposal to change, to modify or to repudiate any part of our principled program which has stood the test of events and is more appropriate and burning in its application than ever before.

This applies to all the decisive questions that confront the vanguard in the world today. The nature of the war, the Soviet-Nazi struggle, questions of party organization, democracy and fascism, colonial struggle, China, India, Europe under the iron heel of the Nazis, the national question and the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe — our program has an answer to every one of those questions in principle. We need only to read our program and understand it and we will find the way to answer the current problems correctly.

We proceed from the basic analysis of the war that is contained in the Manifesto of the Emergency Conference of the Fourth International which is published under the title "The Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution," May 1940. We proceed from that analysis and apply it to four great new events which have transpired since that time. These outstanding events are : (1) the fall of France, June 1940; (2) Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, June 1941; (3) United States entry into the war, December 1941; (4) the great upsurge of national self-confidence on the part of the peoples of the Orient, the mass of the majority of mankind who are beginning to stir and to make the whole world shake when they move.

In each of these four world-shaking events, the weaknesses of capitalism, its hopeless bankruptcy, its suicidal plunges into the unknown, are clearly demonstrated. Each of these four events reveal new and most promising revolutionary prospects for the proletarian vanguard.

For Socialist United States of Europe

France, which after the last war and the peace of Versailles was the master of Europe, is today a dismembered and oppressed

nation. Hitler has conquered all of Europe and transformed it into a horrible concentration camp under Nazi domination. He has proclaimed a new order of permanent oppression and denigration of the peoples of Europe. Some see in these stupendous military victories of Hitler and his military conquest of the continent of Europe only cause for despair. They think that perhaps Hitler's victories are definitive, that Europe is thrown back for decades, or even for centuries, and they envisage Europe beginning again on all fours to crawl forward along the historic path through the medium of national wars. Others, despairing of the force of the people, of the proletariat of Europe, despairing of the one idea, the one program that will spell Hitler's doom, look to the Anglo-American imperialist bandits to liberate Europe from Hitler and transform it into a colony of Anglo-American imperialism.

Both of these perspectives, in our opinion, are utterly fantastic, utterly removed from the reality of things. And unfortunately the first tendency, the tendency to bow down before Hitler's conquest of Europe and regard it as definitive, merges all too easily with the second one of turning to the Anglo-American democratic bandits for relief from Hitler. That is the great danger of exaggerating Hitler's successes and Hitler's power and forgetting the power of the proletariat and the revolutionary program. You can be very sure that Hitler himself and his whole gang do not value their conquest of Europe half so highly as some despairing and disoriented people who are opposed to Nazism do. There is no doubt whatever that Hitler would gladly settle for half of his conquest if he could keep the other half undisturbed for the next period. What is the meaning of the speech he made the other day? It is an indirect way of saying: Let us have half of what we conquered and you can have the rest until we start the next round of the war.

But Anglo-American imperialism does not and cannot recognize Hitler's conquest of Europe. Hitler's domination of Europe means inevitably a further clash with America and England, as a minor partner, for the conquest of the world. Imperialistic interests forbid them to let Hitler have Europe in "peace" to exploit and incorporate in his so-called new order. That is why the war in Europe is still going on and will continue to go on until the workers end it by revolution. For this the workers need more than ever their own independent organization and their own independent program.

The resistance of the oppressed and doubly exploited peoples of Europe prevents any stabilization of Hitler's regime, leaving aside the interference of the imperialist rivals. The resistance of the oppressed peoples of Europe to Hitler can be the starting point for the revolutionary conflagration that will dispose of Hitler in passing and proceed to the permanent solution of the European problem by its socialist reorganization. The movement against national oppression can be, and may very likely be, the starting point of the inevitable European socialist revolution. But that is only on one condition: that the workers' vanguard sticks to its own program and does not adapt itself to the program of bourgeois nationalism.

Our resolution speaks very clearly and unambiguously on this point. We say the program of bourgeois nationalism is only another Versailles. They want only to turn Hitler's "new order" upside down, dismember Germany and return to the European mad-house of artificially divided states on a capitalist basis. That is the very cause of the war. The outlived national boundaries of old Europe have become insuperable barriers against the development of the productive forces. The system of private property combined with the system of national borders of the states, with their standing armies, and separate monetary systems and tariffs, strangled the economic development of Europe and plunged it for the second time in a quarter of a century into the maelstrom of destructive war.

It is sheer insanity to contemplate a return to this starting point. We say that under no circumstances can any section of the Fourth International adapt itself to these blind and mad people who want to go back to Versailles, who propose to solve the problem of Europe by restoring the very conditions which precipitated Europe into this war. Not backward, but forward!—that is the slogan Europe needs. Forward to the socialist reorganization of Europe. The leading and guiding slogan of that fight is, and can be only, "The Socialist United States of Europe."

Revolutionary Marxists are for self-determination as a principle of the program, and thereby they are for national freedom from all forms of oppression or national coercion. We are, and we should be, the foremost fighters and champions of resistance to Hitler. It is stated in our resolution that the workers of Europe must put themselves at the head of this movement of struggle against Hitler. The parties of the workers' vanguard—the sections

of the Fourth International—should participate in this movement with their own program, and lead it to its socialist goal.

This is one of the most interesting and timely questions which we have formulated succinctly in our resolution; it is being dealt with at greater length in the International Bulletin, as you have noted. It will be discussed further in our theoretical magazine. Our National Committee has participated in this international discussion by the adoption of its basic theses in those paragraphs of our resolution dealing with the question, and which will be elaborated and developed in future articles. We think our resolution indicates the correct line and have no doubt that it will prevail throughout the International when the discussion is completed.

In Defense of the Soviet Union

We don't have to say much about the Soviet-Nazi war in our convention. We discussed that question at the last convention, if you remember. We had to debate with Professor Burnham there. Professor Burnham said that we were allies or indirect supporters of Hitler because we were defending the Soviet Union. Comrade Goldman did such a good job of that debate that we don't have to repeat it here. But I must say that, again on this point, we are the one and only political movement that does not have to retract anything or keep quiet about anything that was said before. We understood this question also and we prepared for it. And we alone were correct.

The fugitives from Bolshevism expounded a magnificent theory to the effect that the original Soviet-Nazi pact was based on an "affinity of ideologies." This theory, spun out of thin air, along with the theory of "Soviet imperialism," succumbed to the very real and substantial conflict of social systems and economic interests between German imperialism and the degenerated workers' state. We maintained all the time—it was stated already in 1934 in the theses "War and the Fourth International"—that regardless of how the Soviet Union may be allied in the beginning of the war, the war in the course of its development must inevitably lead to an attack upon the Soviet Union by one of the imperialist camps, whether allied with it in the beginning or not, or by all of them united. We held that the Soviet Union, standing even as the product of a strangled and betrayed revolution, is in the most principled opposition to the imperialist states, and that war between them couldn't be prevented. We were prepared for this eventuality, and we now only have to restate what we declared

before, that we defend the Soviet Union for reasons that we have explained many times. The position taken in our last convention can be adopted in this convention with only a change of dates and a few supplementary remarks to bring it up to date. The principled line was absolutely clear and correct and remains so.

We don't support Stalinism, we support the workers' state. We support what remains of the greatest revolution in the history of mankind because we never abandon a conquest while it still has life in it. The worst and most despicable affliction—the characteristic malady of petty-bourgeois radicals—is this propensity to give up a battle before it is lost. Trotsky said, those who will not defend an old conquest will never be capable of fighting for new ones. The Soviet Union remains the greatest conquest of the proletariat in all its history. In spite of everything, it still stands. The Soviet workers know this. They still give the world a demonstration of heroism, of capacity for sacrifice, such as they could not even dream of in those countries where the workers do not feel that they have anything to fight for.

When we see what is done by those Soviet workers today, after all these years of strangulation by the bureaucracy, after all these years of bureaucratic degeneration, we get a glimpse of the boundless power of the proletarian revolution. We can see what miracles of energy will be released by the proletariat of Europe when it finally unites with the Russian proletariat on the revolutionary program. What could the state of the world be today if there had been just a little more energy and capacity in the vanguard of the proletariat to lead Germany to a successful proletarian revolution! All the objective conditions for the victory were present; only the leadership was lacking. Imagine the union of Soviet Russia and Soviet Germany as an economic and military power, with all the irresistible moral force that would be generated by such a union.

If the German revolution had not been defeated, if it had succeeded, we wouldn't be standing here today discussing the program of overthrowing American imperialism. We would more likely be discussing ways and means of finishing up the struggle against the remnants of the counter-revolution. The fact that the workers in Russia took power, the fact that they had a party able to lead the victorious struggle for power—this gives us the assurance for all time that the workers are capable of producing such a party and such a leadership in other countries and on an international scale. Even if the revolution failed once and twice,

history is still pushing relentlessly in the direction of its eventual victory.

We are proud of our record on the Russian question. Whatever may befall, whatever future defeats may be in store before the Russian revolution begins the ascending climb again, not one stain of dishonor will fall upon the banner of the Fourth International. It was the Fourth International, it was Trotsky and his disciples, who before any others began the struggle against treacherous and degenerating Stalinism. It was the Fourth International which explained, on the basis of Marxism, the causes of the degeneration. And in spite of all the slanders, the frame-ups, the persecutions, the blood of our comrades shed by the renegade bureaucracy, we never sought to take revenge on the Soviet Union; we never once faltered in its defense. If the Soviet Union should finally succumb to the strangulating grip of the bureaucracy on the one side, and the blows of imperialism on the other—even then no one can justly say by so much as one word that the Fourth International failed in its duty of defending the Russian revolution to the very end. That is one of the proudest assets of our movement.

The United States and the Colonial Peoples

When the United States entered the war it certainly was no surprise to us. It was no surprise to any grown-up person. Our position on the war, as I have remarked before and as our resolution says, was stated in the Minneapolis trial on the basis of the programmatic documents that we had previously adopted. Our position today is the same. Not only are we opposed to American imperialism and consequently to its war; we are also opposed to the theory that American imperialism is invincible and will conquer the world and live a thousand years. We see the United States driven by contradictions. It is caught in the hopeless decay of capitalism as a world system and is going down with it. The formal entry of U. S. imperialism into the war is not an expression of its strength, but of its incurable malady.

They have day-dreams in Washington of America replacing Britain as master of the world, of policing the whole of this vast globe with its teeming millions of people, of becoming the center of tribute and plunder to be extracted from the toil of all the peoples of the world. They dream, as this mad-man Hitler dreams, of a thousand years of world mastery. They will never realize their dream, and we will do our part to see that their disillusionment does not come too late.

The workers in the United States are the power; their power is far greater than that of all the master-minds, the exploiters, the generals and the statesmen. The workers of the United States have been betrayed by their official organizations, they have been betrayed by their whole official leadership. But these leaders, after all, are only transitory, fill-in men. Their days are numbered. The real spirit and quality of the American proletariat are shown by the fact that they more than doubled the membership of the trade unions in the space of less than ten years. Five million workers organized themselves in a series of great class battles. The American workers give formal obeisance to the war mainly because they have been deluded into the idea that that is the only way to fight Hitlerism. They want to fight Hitlerism—and they are right in that impulse—and the revolutionary class way of waging the fight, the way outlined in our program, remains as yet unknown to the vast majority.

But in spite of that, in spite of their support of the war, the American workers, every chance they get, demonstrate their hostility to every encroachment of the bourgeoisie at home. They resist step by step every attempt to take from them those things they really value and treasure, which they have won in struggle—their unions, their working conditions, hours, wages, etc. With the further development of the war and the terrible disillusionment that must come to the masses of the people when the burdens of the war lie more and more upon them; when the fight for the very smallest economic question becomes of necessity a political struggle—then, we can be confident, the political awakening of the American proletariat will not lag far behind. That awakening can come long before the imperialists' rosy dreams of world conquests are realized. These dreams will be interrupted forever by the American working class.

The fourth great world event, or rather a connected series of events, which we mention in our resolution, is the upsurge of national self-confidence in Asia. In 1917 the imperialist chain broke at its weakest link, backward Russia. There are many indications that this time Asia, which in two countries alone—China and India—has a population amounting to two-fifths of humanity, will prove to be the weakest link in the chain of world imperialism. In the First World War the peoples of Asia were practically non-existent politically, passive, scarcely heard from in the great reverberations of the world. In this war, from the beginning, the masses of Asia are in the very center of events and are exerting

a decisive influence upon their further development. Here is the source of the most optimistic revolutionary hope.

We know Lenin's program, the program of the alliance of the proletariat in the advanced countries with the struggle of the colonial peoples for independence and free national development. In this trend of events in the Orient we see again a brilliant confirmation of this masterful idea. The proletarian revolution in Russia awakened the Asiatic people. Now the insurgent people of China and India, in turn, can stimulate a mass movement of the workers in the imperialist centers and, together with them, begin the upward march of humanity from the black abyss of imperialist reaction, decay and war.

We alone expected these grave events and counted on them. The World Congress of the Fourth International in 1938, considering the approaching war, said that some of the colonial or semi-colonial countries would undoubtedly attempt to utilize the war in order to cast off the yoke of slavery. The World Congress of 1938 not only anticipated that the colonial people would rise during the war, but in advance characterized their war as not imperialist but liberating. That is precisely what the peoples of China and India are doing. They are utilizing the war to the best of their ability to gain some freedom for themselves. We fully support them in every step forward they make, regardless of the initial auspices of the struggle. We are not champions of the colonial bourgeoisie. We are champions of the leadership of the colonial proletariat. But we support each and every forward step that the national bourgeoisie is compelled to take, insofar as it helps the movement forward.

The Manifesto of the Emergency Conference of the Fourth International in May 1940 again stated: "By its very creation of enormous difficulties and dangers for the imperialist metropolitan states, the war opens up wide possibilities for the oppressed peoples. The rumbling of cannon in Europe heralds the approaching hour of their liberation."

What prophetic words were written two and one-half years ago by Comrade Trotsky when he drafted the Manifesto of the Emergency Conference! He foresaw that precisely in backward Asia, the weakest link of the imperialist chain may snap and create the conditions for the breaking of imperialist domination everywhere.

Consider the Chinese fight. Five years of military resistance to the power of Japanese imperialism, five years of military

resistance, not thanks to Chiang Kai-shek and his bourgeois regime, but despite it; despite the strangulation and restriction of the popular mass movement by the innately treacherous bourgeois rule. We see in that five years fight, carried on under such difficulties, what latent powers reside in the Chinese people, what energies would have been released had the great Chinese revolution of 1926-27 been properly led and not betrayed into the hands of its enemies. One of the greatest crimes of Stalinism is the betrayal of the Chinese revolution.

We know Chiang Kai-shek as the hangman of the Chinese revolution, aided by Stalin. But despite Chiang Kai-shek and against him, the Fourth International and its heroic Chinese section has supported China in the war against Japan; and, in the opinion of our National Committee, there is no valid reason to change now. To be sure, the United States imperialists would like to take the place of Japan in China. There is no doubt of that. There is no doubt that their aims in the Orient are not benevolent but predatory. The replacement of Japan in China and the subjugation of China to the exploitation of the United States money gang is undoubtedly one of their great aims in the war. But it is far from realization yet. Meantime, China exerts more independence than ever, both in the attitude of its people and in the distorted expressions which this attitude finds in the policy of the bourgeois government of China.

We had wonderful gems of wisdom on this question from the ex-disciples of the late Professor Burnham. China was supported by the Fourth International and, from force of habit, they also continued to support China up until December 1941. And then what happened? The United States outpost in Hawaii was bombed by the Japanese; the next day America declared war on Japan; and then, *ipso facto*, as they say in legal circles, we learned that no more support of the Chinese war against Japan could be allowed. The fact that the very first military consequence of the war was the further isolation of China, the cutting of the Burma Road, and the necessarily greater reliance of China on her independent struggle—these facts counted for nothing. Our policy was supposed to be determined, automatically, it would seem, by the developments of diplomacy in Washington and Tokio. Well, the very kindest thing I can say for that kind of theory is that it is absurd schematism. However, that is not a just appraisal, such as one might make of the position of a genuine sectarian leftist who is at least a revolutionist—as Trotsky said—in his own

imagination. I think this is an artificial leftism, representing a belated attempt to compensate for errors made in the other direction, errors which amounted to crimes and betrayals. This pseudo-leftism easily turns out to be political treachery on the part of people who are really beginning to be experts in this business.

We support China against Japan as we support India against Great Britain, as long as the war involves the Chinese masses and the element of independence predominates. We don't support the United States against Japan, and needless to say, we don't support Japan against the United States. We support China against all the imperialists, and in this particular case, against the immediate enemy, Japan. And in the further development of military events, if American imperialism replaces Japan, our attitude remains fundamentally the same. We won't quit supporting China; we will continue supporting it against the enemy of the moment, American imperialism instead of Japan. That is the Leninist policy which always seeks an opening for participation in the struggle, not a loop-hole to escape from it. Nothing has happened yet to change fundamentally the situation which prompted the Fourth International to declare its support of the Chinese war in 1937, five years ago.

India was awakened by the war and is properly taking advantage of the difficulties and weaknesses of the British Empire to advance her own rightful claim to independence. India's four hundred million people are rising. That is the great misfortune of world imperialism, and at the same time, it is the source of revolutionary hope and inspiration for the workers of the entire world. We foresaw this also. We prepared for it, we and our co-workers throughout the world.

The great struggle in India is beginning to develop under the leadership of the Congress, that is, the native bourgeoisie. We support this movement, this action, because, as Comrade Trotsky wrote in his Open Letter to the Workers of India, we support every single small forward step the bourgeoisie may feel obliged to take under the pressure of the masses. But what we see and what we count on is the sweeping movement of the masses. We support the first steps even though they are initiated or formally sponsored by others, in order to aid the mass movement to develop on a wider basis, break out of the narrow bounds of the program of the national bourgeois leadership, and eventually turn against them too, to the full unfolding of the movement of the masses on the program of the permanent revolution.

The workers' vanguard in India enters the struggle with a rounded-out program, with selected and capable cadres, with qualified leaders who have recently consolidated the groups in Ceylon, Burma and India into one centralized organization, the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India. This party has formally affiliated to the Fourth International.

The convention should formally send the Indian comrades our greetings and our promise to give them all possible help in their great historic struggle.

It certainly would be a good thing if this could be the key note of our convention: an action of international solidarity in behalf of a section of the Fourth International which is on the line of fire. That would symbolize the gratitude we feel for all the good things that have been given to us by the international movement, and its great leader, Comrade Trotsky.

This is, properly speaking, our tenth convention. We are not a newly fledged party. It is fourteen years ago this very month that we raised the banner of Trotsky and the Russian Opposition in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States. Then began the rebirth of the veritable movement of American communism under the banner of Trotsky. Behind us there are fourteen years of work and struggle; fourteen years of rich and varied experience, of the testing of programs and the testing of people. Out of that crucible has come a party that is strong and unified and confident of its future.

Next to the Russian section of the Fourth International—which lives we are sure and struggles in totalitarian darkness—next to the Russian section we are the oldest, and are universally regarded as the strongest and most experienced detachment of our international movement. That puts obligations upon us. From those to whom much has been given, much is demanded. We are obliged to give fraternal assistance, material and political, to our struggling comrades in other lands. We have done this since the beginning. We shall continue to do so. But the greatest gift we can give to them, the greatest service we can render to world-wide humanity, is to stick resolutely to our course, to our uncompromising and irreconcilable struggle against the most rapacious enemy of mankind, United States imperialism.

Ah, but the faint hearts say, American imperialism is so rich; it is so strong; who dares to challenge it? We do. We dare. We see not only its strength; we see also its internal weakness, its hopeless contradictions. We see the historic doom that has already

been pronounced upon this imperialist monster. We know that this is their day, but we also know, with no less certainty, that tomorrow is our day. Our enemies are strong, but our program, our cadres, our discipline are stronger and will prevail.

We are inspired in our fight by the most completely self-justifying, the most powerful driving incentive that has ever been known—our faith in man and his grandiose communist future. Whatever may befall any of us individually, participation in the fight for the communist future of mankind is the only justifiable life in this epoch, the happiest and the most satisfying life. Whether we as individuals take part in the final victory—and many who are here in this hall will surely do so—or whether some of us as individuals perish in the fight—that is not of much consequence. That is only the soldier's hazard, it is not the most important thing. The most important thing is that we live in the fight and for the fight. Let all the other things take care of themselves.

Political Resolution

This resolution was unanimously adopted by the convention

The basic position of the Fourth International and the Socialist Workers Party on the imperialist war and the tasks of the proletarian world revolution have been set forth in a series of documents published during the past eight years. Beginning with the fundamental theses on **War and the Fourth International** (1934), they include the resolutions of the Foundation Congress of the Fourth International (1938); the S.W.P. convention resolution on the Soviet Union (1939); the S.W.P. Conference resolution on **Proletarian Military Policy** (1940); the Manifesto of the Emergency Conference of the Fourth International on **The Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution** (1940); the Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Fourth International on the fall of France (1940) and in defense of the Soviet Union (1941); the S.W.P. Manifesto on the Soviet-Nazi war (1941); the Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Fourth International on American intervention and our defense of China (1941); the statement by J. P. Cannon on the entry of the United States into the war (1942); and the statement of Grace Carlson as a candidate of the party in the St. Paul elections of this year.

All these documents contain a consistent line of principle which guides all our activities. We are equipped with a tested program of revolutionary struggle thought out and fought out over a period of many years. Our task today is to hold fast to these principles as the guiding line for all our activities and to apply the program based upon them to events and problems as they arise in the course of the class struggle.

Our Attitude to the War

This, in Lenin's words, is the epoch of imperialist wars, proletarian revolutions and colonial uprisings. The Second World War is a continuation of the First on the part of all the imperialist powers on both sides. By 1914 world capitalism had already outlived its progressive stage. Its wars had become utterly reactionary, an expression of the impasse, stagnation and decay of monopoly capital. Since then, imperialism has assumed an even more reactionary, violent and oppressive character. This is true of both the fascist and "democratic" imperialisms. To support

the wars of imperialist powers is to defend the fettering of the productive forces by the outlived frameworks of private property and national states. The claim that this is a war of democracy against fascism is a fraud. Like the First World War, the Second is being fought for seizure of colonies, markets, sources of raw material and spheres of influence, except that this time the stakes are even greater, encompassing the entire world. This objective historical meaning of the war, and not the propaganda of the governments, determines our stand.

All these considerations apply in full force to the United States. Long before its advent we warned the workers of the inescapable participation of the United States in this war and stated that such a war could be only an imperialist war. The actual entry of the United States into the conflict has not altered our position, but confirmed it. We do not and cannot give any support to this reactionary war undertaken on behalf of America's monopolists to ensure their world domination of markets, foreign concessions, sources of war materials and spheres of influence. This is Wall Street's war, not ours.

Our struggle is the Leninist struggle against the war. We reject all forms of pacifism, including conscientious objection and draft dodging. The death agony of capitalism brings with it a period of uninterrupted wars and universal militarism when all great questions must be solved by military means. A "peace" concluded by imperialists could only be a breathing spell before a new war. Only a revolutionary mass struggle against the imperialism which breeds such wars can secure a real peace. Our task is to win the majority of the American workers and farmers to the program of socialist revolution. That is the only program of peace and progress.

That this is the epoch not only of imperialist wars but also of proletarian revolutions was confirmed in 1917 when the soviets became the state power in Russia, abolished private property and nationalized the means of production, including the land. It then became a class duty for every worker to defend the Soviet Union. That remains our duty today. We remain today as we have been from its birth unconditional defenders and devoted partisans of the Soviet Union. The war of the Soviet Union is our war, the war of the workers everywhere. The Soviet Union remains a workers' state, although degenerated by the rule of the Kremlin bureaucracy. To defend the Soviet Union, in spite of Stalin and against Stalin, is to defend the nationalized property established by the October revolution. Only traitors to the working class can deny support to the workers' state in its war

against imperialism, regardless of whether the immediate enemy be a fascist or bourgeois democratic government, and regardless of what temporary military alliances the Soviet Union may make with rival imperialist powers. In war, as in peace, there remains a fundamental distinction between the Soviet Union and its temporary military allies. We are Soviet patriots in war as in peace; we remain irreconcilable opponents of all the imperialists. All Trotskyists are united in this stand. The convention records the fact that Soviet defensism, as against the treacherous policy of "Soviet defeatism," recommended by the Burnham-Shachtman group at the last convention of the party, has prevailed throughout the Fourth International. Thereby the world movement of Trotskyism has demonstrated that it takes its revolutionary program seriously.

The war of China for national independence against the Japanese imperialists must likewise be ardently supported by every honest worker, above all by the workers of China whose fate is bound up with the struggle for the independence of the country. That China is compelled by practical considerations to enter into alliances with imperialist allies can present grave dangers for the future but does not alter the fundamental character of China's struggle today. The designs of Anglo-American imperialism to subordinate great China to their own predatory struggle are a long way from realization. In fact, the first results of the war in the Pacific have been to strengthen, not to weaken the independent position of China *vis-a-vis* her imperialist allies. A victory for China would be a tremendous blow against all imperialism, inspiring all colonial peoples to throw off the imperialist yoke. The bourgeois regime of Chiang Kai-shek, subservient to the "democracies" and oppressing and restraining the Chinese masses, prevents the Chinese masses from conducting a bold war for independence; but that does not alter the essential fact that China is an oppressed nation fighting against an imperialist oppressor. The struggle of the oppressed peoples for national unification and national independence is doubly progressive because, on the one side this prepares more favorable conditions for their own economic development while, on the other side, this deals blows against imperialism as a world system. Only the Chinese proletariat can mobilize the masses and insure their victory over imperialism. The Fourth Internationalists of China, understanding this, are fighting in the front ranks against Japanese imperialism while maintaining their political independence and their irreconcilable opposition to the regime of Chiang Kai-shek. Thus they assure

their great future at the head of the Chinese proletariat. Any other course would doom them to political annihilation.

The only correct program in this war is the Marxist program which combines revolutionary opposition to all the imperialists with the defense of the Soviet Union and China. Those petty-bourgeois and sectarian phrasemongers who "simplify" matters by renouncing support of the Soviet Union and China are in reality deserting the proletarian world revolution, the furtherance of which is integrally connected to support of the Soviet Union and China, as well as to opposition to all the imperialists in this war.

Events have fully confirmed the correctness of the program of the Fourth International. This can be verified by drawing the balance-sheet of the most important developments of the war.

Four world-shaking events have taken place since the Manifesto on **The Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution** was issued by the Emergency Conference of the Fourth International in May 1940. A month later Germany crushed France and with it bourgeois democracy on the European continent. The Third Republic collapsed, giving way to the Bonapartist dictatorship of the senile Petain and servile Laval. A year after France fell, Hitler unleashed his assault upon the Soviet Union. In December 1941 Japan, in answer to Roosevelt's ultimatum, smashed at Pearl Harbor and gave Roosevelt the looked-for occasion to enter the war. By January 1942 all the imperialist powers and all peoples had been drawn into the war arena. In the First World War the countries were divided between actual participants and spectators. Today the whole of humanity has become directly involved in the slaughter. There are no innocent or unaffected bystanders in the Second World War. This applies with full force to the Asiatic colonial peoples who played a relatively passive and insignificant role in the last war. Now they stand in the very center of the conflict and will have a decisive part in determining its course and outcome. This upsurge of national self-confidence of the colonial peoples of Asia is the fourth great event of the present period.

The Events in Europe

The fall of France not only testified to Germany's economic and military superiority on the European continent; it exposed the rottenness of French bourgeois democracy as well as the inability of the French bourgeoisie to defend their own nation against the fascist invaders. After crushing the workers'

bid for power in 1936, the capitalist politicians and their Stalinist, Socialist and Syndicalist lieutenants in the labor movement called upon the French workers to fight for the capitalist fatherland in order to defend democracy and national independence. Duped by the bourgeoisie and betrayed by their leaders, the French workers suffered the loss of their democratic rights and their class organizations together with national unity and independence. The main section of French capitalism has entered into collaboration with the fascist conquerors; another group has gone over into the Anglo-American camp.

The fate of France contains a great political lesson for the workers of the whole world. It has again demonstrated that the bourgeoisie puts its profits and privileges above either national independence or democracy. Whenever their social and economic interests and their political predominance are imperiled by the proletariat, the bourgeoisie will give up national independence, destroy democracy, substitute their naked class dictatorship and collaborate with the foreign oppressors. For the sake of preserving private property, privileges and profits, or even in the hope of preserving some of them, the bourgeoisie will turn against their own people. Official patriotism serves simply as a mask to conceal the class interests of the exploiters. The subsequent capitulations of the French bourgeoisie to Hitler have proved this to the hilt.

The aspiration of the masses of France and the other occupied countries for national liberation has profound revolutionary implications. But, like the sentiment of anti-fascism, it can be perverted to the uses of imperialism. Such a perversion of the movement is inevitable if it proceeds under the slogans and leadership of bourgeois nationalism. The "democratic" imperialist gangsters are interested only in recovering the property which has been taken away from them by the fascist gangsters.

This is what they mean by national liberation. The interests of the masses are profoundly different. The task of the workers of the occupied countries is to put themselves at the head of the insurgent movement of the people and direct it toward the struggle for the socialist reorganization of Europe. Their allies in this struggle are not the Anglo-American imperialists and their satellites among the native bourgeoisie, but the workers of Germany. Peace, security and prosperity can be assured for the people of Europe only by its economic unification based on the socialist collaboration of the free nations. Only with this perspective is national liberation worth talking about, still less fighting and dying for. The central unifying slogan of the

revolutionary fight is "The Socialist United States of Europe" and to it all other slogans must be subordinated.

The German proletariat made a revolution in 1918, only to be robbed of its fruits by the bourgeois Social-Democratic coalition. For fifteen years thereafter the proletariat remained loyal to the parties avowing workers' socialism. A revolutionary situation in 1923 was lost by the incapacity of the German Communist Party leadership disoriented by the Comintern, already then in the first stages of its Stalinist degeneration. In the last regular election (1932) the workers' parties polled 13,000,000 votes. Hitler came to power only by the help of the rottenness, incapacity and treachery of Social Democracy and Stalinism. Betrayed by their own parties the German workers were crushed by Nazism. It may be assumed that Hitler's diplomatic and military victories created a certain amount of chauvinist intoxication among the masses for a time. Now, however, they gaze on the ruin of Europe — and the ruin of Germany. They mourn millions of dead and wounded, the masses grow hungry as in 1916-18, and the end is far away. Chauvinist intoxication must begin to give way before the grim realities. The fear of a new and worse Versailles is the most potent weapon in Hitler's hands. But that weapon will fall from his hands with the first serious revolutionary developments in the "democracies" or in the occupied countries. The mighty German proletariat will say the most decisive word in the socialist revolution of Europe.

The workers of Britain are being impelled toward proletarian revolution by the collapse of the British Empire. The reformism of the British Labour Party and the trade unions was based on the crumbs thrown to a privileged section of the workers by a sated imperialist power; that reformism is losing its foundations. Therewith the road is being cleared for the stormy development of a revolutionary party of the Fourth International. Only the Socialist United States of Europe offers the British proletariat a perspective for hope. All the objective prerequisites for proletarian revolution are now present in the British Isles. The British Trotskyists stand before their great historic task of organizing and leading the British workers to their revolutionary destiny.

The Soviet Union at War

The events affecting the Soviet Union during the last year, as well as previously, are incomprehensible except to those who are guided by the Trotskyist analysis of the character of the Soviet Union. We alone have accurately explained the course of

the USSR, we alone do not have to conceal what we said yesterday. While Stalin boasted of the "irrevocable victory" of socialism achieved in the Soviet Union, we warned that Germany had become the spearhead of imperialist assault against the workers' state, and that only successful proletarian revolutions in one or more advanced countries could safeguard the Soviet Union. When the League of Nations expelled the Soviet Union and the entire "democratic" world cheered on Mannerheim's Finnish Army against the Soviet Union, petty-bourgeois deserters turned their back on the USSR which they suddenly termed "imperialist," but we remained firm defensists of the workers' state, partisans of its victory over the Finnish outpost of world imperialism. We explained that by the seizures of the Finnish, Polish and Baltic territories the Kremlin bureaucracy was not pursuing imperialist aims but was in its own bureaucratic and reactionary way seeking to safeguard the defenses of the Soviet Union. We condemned the Stalinist bureaucracy for these land seizures precisely because the strategic advantages secured by the seizures were far outweighed by the discredit they brought upon the workers' state in the eyes of hundreds of millions of workers and peasants who considered them joint operations of the Nazi and Red Armies.

Stalin sought to avoid involvement in this war, first by an alliance with France and England against Germany, and then by an alliance with Germany and Japan against France and England. Neither maneuver succeeded in accomplishing its aim of keeping the Soviet Union out of the war. Stalin's diplomatic maneuvers, and all the deceitful propaganda and treacherous actions flowing from them, served only to disorient the workers in capitalist countries, to alienate them from the USSR, and to leave them unprepared for Hitler's inevitable assault upon the USSR. Stalin's foreign and domestic policies did not strengthen the USSR, but weakened it immeasurably.

While Stalin was swearing undying friendship with Hitler, whitewashing the Nazis' crimes, and camouflaging their imperialist aims, Trotsky issued his prophetic warning: "Hitler's war in the West is only a preparation for a gigantic move toward the East — against the Soviet Union." When that move came on June 22, 1941, the workers under Stalinist influence were caught completely off guard. On the eve of the attack, TASS, the official Stalinist news agency, issued a statement from Moscow, denouncing reports of the impending invasion as false rumors inspired by the Anglo-American war mongers. Thus, after shielding Hitler's crimes from the start of the war, Stalin helped

to hide from the working class Hitler's preparations for assaulting the USSR. While the Trotskyists warned the workers in advance of the inevitable attack of German imperialism, the "all-seeing" Stalin led them blindfold to the edge of the abyss.

To Hitler's initial advantage of surprise was added the damage to the Red Army wrought by Stalin's purges which had decimated the general staff and officers' corps. The plans and fortifications of Tukhachevsky and his staff had to be put to use by new people. Surprise may have accounted for the first month's German victories. But the German victories of the next months, when both sides were relatively equal in material and manpower, and the Soviet troops superior in morale, can be accounted for primarily by the inferior staff work of the Red Army due to the purges. Hence the loss of the Ukraine, the Dnieper basin, the German advance to the gates of Moscow and Leningrad and the successes of the 1942 German drive into the Caucasus culminating in the assault upon Stalingrad. Thus Stalin and his bureaucratic gang are responsible for the catastrophic defeats of the Red Army, the terrible losses and privations which have brought the Soviet Union to the verge of destruction.

But the Kremlin bureaucracy is not the Soviet Union, any more than Murray, Green and Company are the CIO and the AFL. The vast moral and material resources created by the nationalized property established by the October revolution poured into the breach. The Red Army and war production were free from the fetters which private property imposes upon "national defense" even in wartime; no profiteers existed to limit war orders to monopoly corporations. The "scorched earth" policy could be applied by a land without private property with a determination and planfulness which are impossible to capitalist countries. The moving of industrial plants from endangered areas to places deep in the interior, the building of a second railroad across Siberia — such gigantic economic actions in wartime were made possible only by the system of nationalized property. Bureaucratic mismanagement could dissipate much of the superior resources provided by the nationalized property, but the decisive superiority of this property system was proven in war, as it had already proven itself in peace by the increase in productivity.

Above all, the system of nationalized property provided the basis for the unprecedented morale of the Soviet workers and peasants. The Soviet masses have something to fight for. They fight for their factories, their land, their collective economy. They fight to preserve the remaining conquests of the Oc-

tober revolution against the imperialists who would re-establish private property. After five months of terrible defeats, workers from the factories joined the heroic Red Army warriors at the gates of Leningrad and Moscow and helped recover Rostov in the dark days of last winter, in an outburst of proletarian revolutionary endeavor. There is nothing like this in the imperialist countries. Those who deny that the Soviet Union is a workers' state cannot explain the unprecedented morale of Soviet workers and peasants. But great sections of the workers throughout the world have grasped the fact that, unlike the people of the imperialist countries and colonies, the Soviet masses are fighting for their own conquests achieved by the October revolution. Soviet resistance has given the workers everywhere renewed strength and hope and has helped restore confidence in their own capacities as a class. These expressions of the strangled and desecrated Russian revolution, fighting for its life under treacherous leaders and the most adverse conditions, indicate what miracles the coming international revolution will achieve once it unfolds its real program and exhibits its full power.

The tremendous advantages of the Soviet Union are not, however, sufficient in themselves to assure victory against the powerful imperialist adversary. The fact remains that the economy at the disposal of Hitler is greater in production than that of the Soviet Union, for despite Stalin's boasts the nationalized production, built on the backward economy inherited from Czarist Russia, could not in its isolation outstrip the imperialist world in efficiency and technique. What the Soviet Union requires to assure victory is the political arsenal by which Lenin and Trotsky saved the young Soviet Republic from world capitalist intervention in 1918-21. It requires the revival of the soviets, the organs which mobilized the masses in all spheres and made possible the victory in the Civil War. It requires the release from the jails and concentration camps of the tens of thousands of pro-Soviet political prisoners, restoring them to their rightful place in industry and the Red Army. Workers' democracy in the trade unions! And, as part of the restoration of workers' democracy in the USSR, the legalization of all pro-Soviet political parties and their right to present their programs to the masses. These internal steps would guarantee the maximum mobilization of the energies of the masses for the struggles ahead. Instead, however, the Stalinist bureaucracy is attempting to tighten the hold of its totalitarian apparatus, suppressing the initiative of the masses and striving to restrict their struggles within completely bureaucratic channels.

Stalin's foreign policy is an extension of his reactionary domestic policy. Just as he stifles the revolutionary spirit of the aroused masses at home, so he fears to evoke revolutionary action of the workers in capitalist countries. Yesterday he leaned upon Hitler; today Stalin relies upon the aid and goodwill of Roosevelt and Churchill. Instead of summoning the workers, above all, the German workers, to a joint struggle against their common enemy, world imperialism, Stalin entrusts the defense of the USSR abroad to the Anglo-American section of the imperialist bourgeoisie. But the bourgeoisie are deadly enemies of the working class, concerned with aiding Stalin only insofar as and so long as such aid coincides with their own national aims and class interests. They fear a decisive victory of the Red Army over Hitler far more than Hitler's triumph over the USSR.

In his Order of the Day issued on May first, 1942, Stalin represented the struggle of the Soviet people as a purely nationalist war for the maintenance of national independence and the recovery of the conquered territory. This is a falsification. The present war of the Soviet peoples is an integral part of the international struggle of the working class and the oppressed nations against world imperialism, of which Hitler is only the most vicious representative. In deference to his Anglo-American imperialist allies, Stalin depicts Hitler's aggressions, not as an action undertaken on behalf of German and world capitalism, but as a medieval reversion. "The German Fascists," he states, "are feudalists and the German army is an army of serfs." He lies on both counts. The German fascists are capitalist imperialists, and their army is composed of conscripted workers and peasants.

Stalin's falsehoods help undermine the defense of the USSR. The Soviet Union cannot be effectively defended unless its real allies and its true enemies are known, recognized and distinguished from one another. The Nazis must be overthrown from within as well as combatted from without. How can Hitler's forces be disintegrated and won over? By arousing the German workers and peasants inside the army and on the home front, against Nazism, by calling upon them to struggle in fraternity with their Soviet comrades against the fascist enslavers for their own Soviet Republic. Only the truth, and not Stalinist lies, only a revolutionary program and not a blind dependence upon Anglo-American imperialism can inspire the German workers to overthrow Hitler and, together with the Russian workers and soldiers, go forward to create the Socialist United States of Europe.

The Stalinist bureaucracy will not and cannot carry

out this revolutionary program. The overthrow of this thoroughly degenerated gang has become more urgent than ever. While fighting in the vanguard against the fascists and doing everything possible to strengthen the military front, the Fourth Internationalists in the USSR maintain their irreconcilable hostility to the Stalinist bureaucracy, wage an unceasing struggle against it, and aim at its overthrow by means of a political revolution. The Fourth Internationalists throughout the world stand in full solidarity with their Soviet comrades in this combined struggle.

The beleaguered Soviet workers cannot hold out indefinitely under attack unless the workers of other countries come to their rescue. Unless the revolution rises and conquers in the capitalist world and the Soviet workers throw the Stalinist usurpers off their back, the Soviet Union will inevitably be crushed, either by the Nazi invaders, or by the present imperialist "allies" who remain irreconcilably hostile to the first workers' state, or by a combination of the two. Lenin and Trotsky's program of world revolution and international socialism which gave birth to the Soviet power and safeguarded the young Soviet Republic against the interventionists on 21 fronts in its first four years is the sole means of saving the USSR for the socialist future. We Trotskyists remain faithful to that program; we alone propagate its ideas, and work toward its realization. That is why we are today the best defenders of the Soviet Union.

The Colonial Peoples of Asia

The collapse of the British and French Empires in the Far East and the continuing conflict of the rival powers in the Pacific have destroyed the myth of imperialist invincibility and awakened the colonial peoples of Asia to new hopes of national freedom. A new note of national self-confidence is heard in China and India, the decisive countries of the Far East. While the imperialist vultures claw at each other, their prey seeks to escape from their clutches. The Chinese people are fighting against Japan to avoid the fate of India under Great Britain. The Indian people are seeking their liberation from Great Britain.

What do the colonial peoples of Asia want? They seek national independence. The peasants want land and an end to the usury which grinds them into the dust. The workers in the factories and on the docks, on the plantations and in the oil fields, want living wages and tolerable working conditions. They want the right to organize their trade unions and their political parties. They want to have a say about their own destiny. They want the

right to live, to work, to better their lives, and provide a brighter future for their children. They want the elementary rights of every people, of every individual.

But the imperialist slaveholders are waging the war to hold colonies or to seize them. They cannot afford to free their colonial slaves, satisfy their demands or needs, or even to make any substantial concessions to them. They prefer to risk the loss of their colonies rather than arm the native population, hoping to recover their lost possessions with a new turn of events, or else to conclude a deal with the new possessors after the war. So the Dutch calculated in Java; so the British in Malaya, Burma and India. All the imperialists are trying, each in its own way, to dam the rising tide of colonial revolt or to sluice it into their own channels. England, while holding down India, tries to stir up revolt against Japan in Korea. Japan, while holding down Korea and occupied China, seeks to provoke uprisings in Burma and India. Each side has willing agents amongst the native bourgeoisie, landlords and princes.

But neither the imperialists nor their native tools will be able to stem the flood of national revolution which keeps rising to higher levels as the war unfolds. The leaders of the native bourgeoisie, despite their inherent tendency to compromise with the imperialists, are compelled to take a more aggressive position in order to avoid isolation from the insurgent masses. Thus the growing resistance and independence of the masses is manifested in the Indian Congress rejection of Cripps' proposals and in the repeated declarations from Chungking that there can be no reversion after the war to extra-territorial rights and privileges.

The major portion of humanity lives in Asia, two-fifths in China and India. Their struggle for national freedom and social liberation is one of the most revolutionary factors in the present world situation. Theirs is a genuine fight for freedom, for democracy, for progress. We unconditionally defend the Chinese and Indian peoples in their fight for emancipation against their imperialist enslavers. The current struggles of the popular masses of China and India should be regarded as the first stage toward arousing and organizing the popular masses for a genuinely revolutionary solution of their social problems. These problems cannot be successfully fulfilled under bourgeois leadership. The deepening and broadening of the peoples' revolutions will inevitably accentuate the counter-revolutionary role of the reactionary colonial bourgeoisie, bringing them into irreconcilable conflict with the insurgent workers and peasants. Their revo-

lutions can finally triumph only under the leadership and through the revolutionary program of the youthful proletariat who will lead their peasant allies toward a Soviet China and Soviet India, keystones in a Socialist United States of Asia.

Latin America and the War

Since the outbreak of the war, Latin America has more than ever become the private preserve of American imperialism. The blockade against the Axis powers and the growing weakness of Great Britain has enabled the United States to climb to a virtually unchallenged position. The United States has dragged with it into the war, either as actual participants or as non-belligerent allies, its retinue of vassals among the ruling classes of Latin America. Through Export-Import Bank and private loans the Yankee imperialists have succeeded in buying the support they could not secure through diplomatic pressure. Their hand has been strengthened by the fact that the United States is today the main market and chief source of machinery and manufactured goods for many Latin American nations.

Thus far Argentina alone among the leading countries still continues to resist pressure to enter the war on the side of the dollar diplomats. The present neutrality of the Argentine bourgeoisie arises from its relative industrial strength, its lesser dependence upon American money and markets, its efforts to build up an independent Argentine economy by taking advantage of the antagonism between British and American capital, and finally fear of the consequences of an open break with the Axis.

The economic consequences of the war (shortage of commodities, mounting inflation, deterioration of the conditions of the people, etc.) are bound to impel the already impoverished and oppressed Latin American masses into conflict with imperialism and its war. The military, political and economic support of Yankee imperialism is today the principal prop of the hated dictatorships of Vargas, Batista, etc. Since, with the temporary exception of Argentina, all sectors of Latin American capitalism — from the pro-fascist Vargas to the formerly anti-imperialist Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana — have become the vassals of American imperialism, any mass movement against imperialism and its war must inevitably clash with these native ruling classes.

In alliance with the peasants, and in opposition to the venal Latin American bourgeoisie, the industrial workers will lead the struggle against imperialist domination and clear the road for the Socialist United States of Latin America. While the Stalin-

ist agents of the Kremlin uphold American imperialism together with such dictators as Vargas and Batista, the Trotskyist parties of South and North America alone propose a revolutionary program of emancipation to the Latin American peoples.

Long before its advent the Fourth Internationalists warned the workers of the inescapable participation of the United States in this war. As long ago as 1933 Trotsky wrote: "The superiority of the United States must find its expression in new forms, the way to which can be opened only by war. American capitalism is up against the same problems which pushed Germany on the path of war in 1914. The world is divided amongst the great powers. It must be redivided. For Germany it was a question of 'organizing Europe.' The United States must organize the world. . . . History thus brings humanity face to face with the volcanic eruptions of American imperialism."

This volcanic eruption, predicted in 1933, has now begun. United States entry into the war was hastened by the failure to overcome the crisis of American capitalism by the "New Deal." Roosevelt's October 5, 1937 "collective security" speech marks the open turn from the New Deal to the War Program. The unity of the Democratic and Republican parties in supporting the war, along with the complete collapse after Pearl Harbor of all varieties of isolationism, signify the total triumph of the Roosevelt War Program. The object of the War Program is to attain political mastery and economic monopoly of the globe. Nothing less will satisfy the aims and ambitions of American Big Business.

The United States at War

The outbreak of war between Japan and the United States came as a surprise to no informed person. The contest for supremacy in the Pacific has been brewing since these allied rivals crossed swords in Siberia at the close of the First World War. Presented with an ultimatum to get out of China, the Japanese imperialists refused to yield to threats alone. Like the Nazis they operate with the boldness and desperation of those who have nothing to lose.

American capitalism faces the gravest difficulties in undertaking to crush its rivals and conquer the world by military means. The United States can achieve its imperialist objectives only at the cost of millions of lives and hundreds of billions of dollars and only after an indefinitely prolonged struggle. Were it to achieve such a victory it then would have to shoulder all the tasks involved in Secretary of War Knox's dec-

laration that "the United States must police the world for the next hundred years."

The internal problems of American capitalism present equally great difficulties. The war is dislocating the national economic structure, twisting it into grotesque militarized forms. Already more than half of the national income is devoured by the war, and this proportion is bound to increase. Scarcity and rationing of goods on the one hand and soaring prices on the other are symptoms of the contractions of American consumption, of the collapse of normal capitalist economy. Unlike the last war, when American economy grew plump and powerful, American economy is today becoming disorganized and distorted. Even the strongest and richest of the capitalist nations is sliding into the abyss of bankruptcy.

As the war places stresses and strains on the economy the forces of the market are no longer sufficient to assure the working of the system. The government steps in more than ever before as an arbiter, regulator and economic dictator. The government becomes the chief market, it becomes an important factor in fixing of prices, it assigns productive capacity and raw materials, it fixes wages and regulates conditions of work. The government in its expanded functions operates more openly than ever as the executive arm of Big Business, directed first of all against the labor movement, as well as against weaker sections of the capitalist class.

Capitalist apologists have ridiculed the Marxist contention that capitalism must inevitably ruin the middle classes. They asserted that under American capitalism, the middle classes must bloom. Now the Marxist prediction is being realized at an accelerated pace under the war economy. Entire segments of the middle classes are being wiped out, not individually as in peace time, but in wholesale lots. Small merchants, filling station proprietors, small manufacturers, grocers, along with owners and operators in innumerable other occupations, are economically annihilated by a single decree from Washington.

The war economy enormously accelerates the concentration of capital. The government gives the handful of great corporations over 80 per cent of all war orders, guaranteeing them markets and profits for the duration of the war. The government buys or builds huge new plants for them, allots them priorities in raw materials and transportation. In 1941, many corporations earned higher profits than in 1929. The war is not only being waged to save the markets and sources of raw materials of the American monopolists throughout the world; the war itself is

likewise an extremely profitable enterprise for them. The preparations for the war revived their flagging heavy industry; throughout the conflict they fill their treasuries and strengthen their competitive positions.

The recent revelations concerning cartel arrangements and patent agreements between the international monopolies and the Nazis have exposed the sham contention of Big Business and its political agents that they are waging this war to destroy fascism. Rockefeller's Standard Oil, Mellon's aluminum trust, DuPont's arms and chemical trust, Morgan's General Electric and the other monopolies did business with the Nazis before the war; they set aside royalties and profits for them during the war. While demanding that the workers sacrifice wages and hours for the war effort, Big Business always places profits before patriotism.

It would be foolish to expect that the government or any Congressional Committee will make the punishment of the monopolists fit their crimes. They have been forced to divulge information about the Nazi-Big Business tie-ups because they were hampering the prosecution of the war and imperiling the basic interests of the entire capitalist class and because of the wrathful pressure of the little business men who are being crushed out of the war economy. The same men who head the monopolies infest the government and head the War Production Boards as dollar-a-year men. A few corporations caught red-handed are being let off with light fines. High administration figures have intervened openly to forestall anti-trust prosecutions of the big monopolies. It is already generally understood that there will be no prosecution of the big trusts during the war. The government and its supporters bow before the monopolists whose interests they serve.

The working people of this country cannot entrust the struggle against fascism at home or abroad to Big Business or any of its political agents. The workers need a program and leadership of their own to clear the field for a fight to the death against fascism. As the first step in this direction, they should demand the expropriation of the war industries, and their operation under workers' control!

Roosevelt's war economic policy strikes terrible blows at the workers and their families. The steeply mounting cost of living has already caused great suffering. Wage controls and compulsory bond buying are designed to cut the workers' living standards. More consumer goods are to be rationed or withdrawn entirely from the market. Taxes, especially hidden taxes,

will slash more and more deeply into the workers' income. Working hours will be increased. There will be no effective control over speculators, who will inevitably take advantage of the price-fixing provisions to fleece the people more mercilessly.

The administration has imposed its policy in the name of a fraudulent equality of sacrifice. But whatever formal restrictions are placed upon them, the corporations will pile up profits and hide them by depreciation reserves and other financial devices. The rich will buy what they want, if not on the open market, then on the black market. The workers and their families, however, will feel the pinch from all sides. They will be able to buy less and less with steadily diminishing earnings. Roosevelt's slogan of equality of sacrifice is a fraud. It is a cover for the program whereby the rich make the poor pay for their war.

Big Business is using the war as a cover for an all-out offensive against organized labor. The National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce have openly demanded that Congress re-establish the open shop by law. The anti-labor drive instigated by Big Business, promoted by the administration and Congress, and supported by the capitalist press, is endangering the very existence of the trade unions. As yet the trade unions have only been crippled, but the bosses will not be satisfied until they are completely wiped out. The main immediate task before the American workers today is to fight for the independence of their trade unions, for the right to strike, for the right of collective bargaining free of governmental interference.

In the face of the attack upon the trade unions, the official leaders of the AFL and CIO are retreating step by step. Under pressure from the administration, they have given up one position after another to the employers without a struggle. They have sworn away the strike weapon, they have given up double time pay, and they are ready to surrender much more—if the workers permit them to get away with it.

The worst offenders among the sell-out artists are the Stalinists. Under the Stalinist theory of socialism in one country, the revolutionary interests of the world working class have long been subordinated to the state diplomacy of the Kremlin. This criminal policy has led to a long series of working-class defeats on the international arena and has disoriented a great section of the proletarian vanguard. For the sake of maintaining the Kremlin's present alliance with Washington, the Stalinists are now executing their greatest betrayal of the elementary interests of

American labor. They call upon the workers to support the war, unite with the bosses and sacrifice to the limit, deluding them with the assertion that this will aid the Soviet Union, defend democracy and crush fascism. Their arguments are all false to the core. The stronger the American labor movement is, the more independent and class-conscious it becomes, the better will it be able to defend the Soviet Union against present or potential enemies. Those who weaken the working class and its organizations in any way directly undermine the defense of the USSR. The weakening of the labor movement opens the door for the entrance of domestic fascism.

The Fight for Democracy

In order to camouflage its imperialist policies and objectives, the Roosevelt regime claims that the war is being waged to defend democracy at home and extend the Four Freedoms throughout the world. Roosevelt's slogan of the Four Freedoms is as false as Wilson's slogan in the last war, "Make the World Safe for Democracy." While Roosevelt spouts phrases about democracy, he seeks to set aside even the forms of the democratic process in favor of government by decree. Such efforts to substitute dictatorial rule by decree on the part of the executive head of the capitalist government paved the way for the total destruction of democracy and the rise to power of fascism or Bonapartism in Italy, Germany and France.

The war is being used as a pretext to trample upon democratic institutions and violate civil rights. The workers, who constitute the most devoted and determined defenders of democracy, must oppose these attacks upon democratic rights and institutions through their own organizations and class action.

The fight for real democracy begins at home in the fight to preserve the existence of independent and democratic trade unions. The labor lieutenants of the capitalists are coupling their program of capitulation to the bosses with a campaign to stifle free expression within the trade unions. While they demand support for the war for the sake of democracy, they try to stifle democracy within the trade unions themselves. The Stalinists in particular are acting as bloodhounds for the bosses. Full democracy is necessary for the effective functioning of the unions and is the best guarantee for the preservation of democratic rights within the country at large.

The rights of free speech, free press and free assembly must be vigilantly guarded by the labor movement in war time. The sentencing in Minneapolis, on the day war was declared, of

18 members of the Socialist Workers Party and of Local 544-CIO, first victims of the Smith "Gag" Act, can be the forerunner of similar prosecutions against other labor militants. The Minneapolis convictions must be reversed in the appeal to the higher courts and the defendants freed, if a dangerous precedent is not to hover over the entire labor movement.

Against collaboration with the bosses! For the independence of the trade unions from governmental interference or control! For the maintenance and extension of democracy in the trade unions! No surrender of the right to strike! Against wage-freezing! For a rising scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living! Smash the anti-labor and union busting offensive of the bosses by the militant action of united labor! This is the kind of program the workers need.

The bosses' anti-labor campaign is being waged not only in civilian life but also in the army. By lying stories about fabulous wages in the war industries, blaming the workers for the lag in war production, brass-hat lectures about labor's "unwillingness to sacrifice," etc. the draftees are being incited against their fellow-workers. Unfortunately this vile campaign is meeting with some success, particularly because the trade unions have failed to take up the cudgels on behalf of the needs of the worker-soldiers. The unions must come forward for union wages for draftees, their right to hold meetings and to elect their own officers, a moratorium on all debts owed by draftees, training camps financed by the government but under control of the trade unions, including special camps to train worker-officers. Therefore we raise the slogan: For the democratic rights of the men in the armed forces! For military training camps under control of trade unions!

The Negro Struggle and the War

Far from arousing enthusiasm among the Negro people, the entry of the United States into the war has intensified their determination to utilize the crisis engendered by the war to win the struggle against Jim Crowism and for full social, economic and political equality. Official government propaganda about fighting for "democracy" and the "four freedoms" serves only to emphasize to the Negroes that they themselves are denied the most elementary democratic rights, discriminated against in the war industries and in the armed forces. "After-the-war" promises only remind the Negroes that they got the same promises during the first imperialist war, and that none of these promises was kept. Furthermore, the Negro people today derive inspiration and

self-confidence from the struggles of the colonial peoples for liberation from imperialism. While the ruling class demands postponement of the Negro struggle for the sake of "national unity," the will of the Negro masses to struggle is greater than ever. This is reflected in the fear of the petty-bourgeois Negro leadership to openly counsel the Negro masses to abandon their struggles until after the war—as they did in 1917—and above all in the emergence of the militant Negro March-on-Washington Movement. Such an independent Negro movement has been made historically necessary by the betrayals and indifference of the trade union bureaucracies, by the failures of the traditional workers' parties and Negro organizations, and by the weakness of the revolutionary party. We support the March-on-Washington Movement, despite the vacillations of its leadership, and seek to mobilize the whole working class in support of its objectives.

The struggle against Jim Crowism is as much the problem of the white workers as of the Negro people. Labor with a white skin cannot be free so long as labor with a black skin is branded. The great contribution of the Negro workers to the growth of unionism—in the auto plants, packing houses, coal mines, steel, etc.—is but the beginning of what can be done if the workers of all races firmly unite. As one-tenth of the population, the principal oppressed minority in the United States, the Negro people cannot achieve their freedom without the active and whole-hearted support of the white workers. A struggle of the Negro masses unsupported by the white workers can be deflected by the ruling class into a tragic racial clash between white and Negro workers. The cementing of a firm alliance between Negroes and white workers has been hampered by the Stalinists and other groups who speak in the name of equality but have betrayed and embittered the Negro masses time and again.

It is therefore above all necessary for revolutionists to demonstrate in practice in the trade unions and in the factories that they champion the rights of Negroes and battle against all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. One such demonstration is worth a thousand articles and speeches on the need for unity! The principal task of the party's Negro work in this period is to build the Negro cadres of the party. These cadres will be recruited primarily from Negro unionists whose joint struggles with the white workers against the employers provides them with the necessary experiences and background for revolutionary leadership of the Negro masses.

Democracy and Fascism

Just as Roosevelt's administration seeks collaboration with Petain, Franco, Vargas and sundry monarchists-in-exile in the field of international diplomacy, so at home it conciliates all ultra-reactionary forces so long as they support the fundamental policies of American imperialism. As the war unfolds and the workers strike out to defend their interests, the capitalists will tend to supplement government persecution with the use of extra-legal agencies, vigilante mobs and fascist gangs, to beat down and terrorize the workers. In Italy, Austria, Germany, France and Spain, democracy and the labor movement were annihilated thanks to those labor leaders and liberal spokesmen who taught the workers to entrust the struggle against the fascists to the "democratic" capitalists. No capitalist government can be depended upon in the fight against fascism either at home or abroad. The organized workers must form their own Defense Guards in order to smash fascist gangs and get rid of all anti-labor, anti-Semitic vermin. This kind of class action will lead to the formation of a Workers' and Farmers' Government, the only government that can carry through to victory the fight against fascism on all fronts.

The most elementary economic problems facing the workers today are political problems. The questions of food, rent, the price of clothing and other necessities, the owning and operating of automobiles are controlled directly by political authorities and agents. Wages and hours of labor and working conditions are routed through War Production and Labor Boards, etc. Wage-freezing is a major political threat. All these issues, affecting millions of workers, requires the united struggle by all the toilers, including the unorganized and white-collar workers, against the government of Big Business. Yet organized labor lacks the elementary instrument to carry on such a political struggle. While Congress is the sounding board for the anti-labor drive, American labor has not a single representative of its own in Congress. What a mockery of democracy it is in which over twelve million organized workers and their families are without one elected voice in the government! It is time the workers ended company unionism on the political field and proceeded to organize an Independent Labor Party based upon the trade unions.

Perspectives of the War

The war has hurled everybody and everything into the crucible. The oldest empires are collapsing; long-established

states and governments are being overthrown; economic structures are being shattered and reshaped; workers' parties and Internationals are being sunk without a trace. Everything is being submitted to the test of fire.

The imperialist rulers of both camps are fighting tenaciously to maintain the existing system which has brought about the prevailing slaughter, misery, chaos and hopelessness. The rival monopolist cliques want to reconstruct the world for their selfish ends. They have not the slightest concern for the welfare of their own peoples or the oppressed in other lands. Each strives to conquer the world or a larger share of it for their own enrichment and power. Both imperialist blocs have the same predatory aims, although they employ different terms and slogans to justify their role in the war. Hitler's "New Order" is simply German capitalism's re-edition of the old capitalist anarchy and oppression. The Anglo-American combine has no more radiant prospect to offer than a new and more monstrous Versailles treaty that can only lay the groundwork for a Third World War.

Imperialism holds out the perspectives of interminable war, deepening reaction, impoverishment and misery for the masses at home, enslavement for the conquered and colonial peoples. The capitalist system has become so decadent, so bankrupt, so retrogressive that it can no longer give the most meagre reforms or improvements. This malignant tumor must be removed before it completely ravages and destroys humanity.

The Revolutionary Outlook

Only the direct intervention of the masses themselves can accomplish this imperative task. Reactionary to its core, the imperialist war, despite itself, is uprooting the old order and speeding up the processes of revolutionary renewal. The Second World War, preceded by a protracted period of reaction, is today preparing the conditions for a new revolutionary wave. The coming revolution will be far more profound than the pre-war political reaction and as universal as the present war. The imperialist world war will inevitably turn into its own opposite: the proletarian world revolution.

At present workers the world over are on the defensive before international imperialism. But this is only a passing phase of the war. Just as the earth turns on its axis, so does our society rotate around the class struggle between capital and labor. There are alternating periods of light and darkness for the workers in the course of this struggle. The present encircling darkness will not endure. Already the first rays of revolution in the East herald

the approach of a new dawn.

We Trotskyists are the heralds of that new day. We summon it; we await it; we prepare ourselves and the working class for it. Before the outbreak of the Russian revolution of 1917 there were the dark days of 1914 and the even darker days of 1915-16. We must do today what Liebknecht and Luxemburg, what Lenin and Trotsky did then. We alone propagate their ideas and carry on their traditions of struggle against imperialist war and for international socialism.

We Trotskyists base our program, our perspectives, our strategy upon the optimistic revolutionary perspective. We have far more confidence in the power of the workers to create a new society than the capitalists themselves have in their ability to maintain their outlived system. We are sure that out of the present inferno will emerge liberating movements of the masses on the model of the Russian revolution of 1917. The workers and the colonial peoples will rise up against imperialism; conquer political power; make a socialist peace; re-organize industry and the war-torn economies on a rational basis. The coming revolution will usher in the socialist society of peace, security, human solidarity and unlimited progress.

We American Trotskyists have every reason to place confidence in the power and prospects of the American working class. The workers who built the strongest and most militant union movement in the capitalist world during the past decade in unremitting struggle against the bosses and their agents, are only at the beginning of their creative career. They will build even greater economic and political organizations. They will move forward to the establishment of a Workers' and Farmers' Government as the keystone of the Socialist United States of North and South America. They will conquer the power and the means for these achievements through the program and under the guidance of our Trotskyist Party, the banner-bearer of international socialism.

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