

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1935.

Socialism And The War Danger

The CALL presents in this supplement a thesis on Socialism and the War Danger which will be presented to the Labor and Socialist International at its forthcoming sessions. The thesis has been authored by four men who have attained international reputations in the labor and Socialist movement. They are Theodor Dan of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, Otto Bauer of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party, and Jean Zyromski and Amedeo Dunois of the French Socialist Party.

The CALL finds, however, that it is in basic disagreement with the line proposed in the thesis. In order to allow for the fullest and most complete discussion, it has printed both the thesis and an answer to it prepared by the CALL Editorial Board.

We recognize that, due to space limitations, the answer is necessarily short and incomplete. Particularly, it ignores the present Italian-British situation, and does not elaborate its points. To remedy this error, the CALL columns will be open in coming issues for a thorough discussion; in the spirit of broad Socialist democracy, proponents both for and against the thesis will be allowed space to present a more complete argument.

The thesis has been translated by Friedrich Adler, secretary of the Labor and Socialist International. An introduction by Adler commenting on the thesis will be presented during the discussion of the document.

The Thesis

FOR three reasons the International and the affiliated Parties should lose no time in considering the attitude to be taken in case of war:

(1) The Socialist Parties must not, as in 1914, once more be taken by surprise and thus driven into a hasty, ill-considered attitude. They must carefully consider and prepare their action.

(2) The victory of National Fascism in Germany, the elevation of the Soviet Union and the agreement concluded between her and certain countries have completely modified the situation. The International must, in time, free itself from traditional opinions which are no longer in accordance with the actual situation.

(3) The present attitude of the International with regard to the most important problems of International policies must already be determined by a clear vision of the tasks which the International will have to fulfill in the event of war.

For these reasons the undersigned present the following statement of policy as a basis for discussion.

They propose the rules contained in this statement in their own name, not in the name of their respective Parties which are not responsible for these suggestions. The undersigned do not agree themselves on every single question treated in the memorandum. But they are unanimous as to the general tendencies expressed in the memorandum and the policy recommended.

I.

(1) Germany under Hitler's rule is the strongest bulwark of fascism. In case of war, a victory of Hitler-Germany would bring the whole of Europe under the heels of the most brutal form of fascism. On the other hand, Germany's defeat in a war would bring about the revolution of the working classes in the biggest, most industrialized continental country and thus make possible the victory of Socialism in Europe. Therefore if war should break out, it is strongly to the interest of international Socialism that German fascism should be defeated and the working-class revolution in Germany brought about.

(2) The Soviet Union has expropriated the big landlords and the capitalists. It has built up a great nationalized industry, made agriculture a collective service and greatly raised the educational standard of the nation. These revolutionary changes have been effected under a terrorist dictatorship; but when the Socialist proletariat of the world will be able to conquer the fascist tendencies of the general international evolution, and as soon as the rapid development of the productive forces of the Soviet Union enables it to overcome economic misery, to end the bitter struggle between town and country over still insufficient harvests, to raise the

standard of living and the educational standard of the masses and, consequently, to strengthen their self-respect and their will to self-determination—then the dictatorship, gradually reducing itself, will and must develop into a Socialist democracy. This evolution of the Soviet Union would create the model of a Socialist society and thus greatly enhance the propagandist force of the Socialist ideas all over the world.

A defeat of the Soviet Union in the event of war would wipe out all that evolution, bring about the downfall of the Soviet government and let its vast territory fall a prey to blood-thirsty counter-revolution. On the other hand, a victory of the Soviet Union would greatly add to its reputation in Europe and Asia, severely shake the power of international capitalism and thus greatly facilitate the world-wide victory of Socialism. Therefore, if there should be a war, the interests of international Socialism demand that the Soviet Union should be victorious.

(3) The victory of the democratic countries—Great Britain, France, U. S. A.—in the World War destroyed the autocratic powers in Germany and Austro-Hungary. It brought about the rule of democracy in Central Europe. But the power of the capitalist classes ruling in the three victorious countries has prevented the Central European Revolution of 1918 from going beyond the limits of capitalist democracy. If the World War was a victory for democracy, it was a capitalist, bourgeois democracy that won it.

In the course of a few years, the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe were destroyed by the antagonism of the classes and fell a victim to fascism or military dictatorship. With the exception of Czechoslovakia, all democratic powers founded in 1918 have been overthrown by the forces of counter-revolution. Fifteen years after its great victory, democracy has lost again the whole ground conquered in 1918. And as fascism overpowers democracy, the danger of war is again raising its head.

The nations of Central and Eastern Europe have learned that democracy is not safe as long as it is based on capitalist foundations. They have learned that capitalist democracy could not assure peace and liberty for more than a few years. The working class of the world have not been able to overthrow capitalism when it was weakened by the World War; they are now threatened by the danger of having to go through the hell of a second World War. These lessons must inspire the working class of the world with the determined will to use a new war in order to win power for the workers and, thereby, to overthrow the capitalist system.

There are, thus, three points of view which must determine the policy of international Socialism in the event of war. The interests of international Socialism demand that German fascism shall be defeated. The interests of international Socialism demand that the Soviet Union shall be victorious. The interests of inter-

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An Answer

The Dan-Bauer-Zyromski thesis is an attempt to postulate a position on war to be binding on all Socialist parties throughout the world and to urge the utilization of the war crisis as a moment for proletarian revolution. The thesis is further significant for its forthright expose of the capitalist varnishes for crass imperialist purposes.

"The peace loving" nations of Europe are properly revealed as "imperialist governments defending their own domination over the working class at home and over subject races in colonies," the League of Nations as the tool of such imperialist powers, the system of collective security as "an instrument of imperialism," the regional pacts as "nothing but the modern form of military alliance . . . made to serve imperialist purposes," and armies as weapons for "keeping down the working class at home." These premises, plus the recognition of Russia's working class character, are in direct accord with the views of revolutionary Socialists and a rejection of reformist Socialist views.

In complete contradiction to these premises, however, are the conclusions calling upon the working class to "support the League," "support of the system of collective securities," "support regional pacts," "support armaments," and NOT "hinder the conduct of the war." The policy of the thesis would differentiate the working class from the imperialists in words but not in deeds!

The conclusion of the thesis is not a logical result of the premises but, in a psychological sense, is a complete capitulation to precisely those "fatalistic views" which Adler decries in his introduction to the thesis, and, in a political sense, an unconditional surrender to the war plans of present day imperialism. Both arise from the lack of faith in the ability of the working class to evolve and ultimately pursue an independent role in the war crisis.

It is precisely because of this basic contradiction between revolutionary intentions and advocacy of reactionary practice that the thesis is dangerous unless it is subject to a thorough analysis. To the casual reader the impression is strongly emphasized of the revolutionary hopes of the authors; upon careful reading, however, it is clearly seen that the proposals for action are in basic contradiction to these hopes and further the cause of imperialism rather than that of Socialism.

The thesis avows three objectives in the event of war: (1) defense of the Soviet Union; (2) defeat of Hitler; and (3) seizure of working-class power. The objectives are sound. But are the methods proposed equally so?

1. The quintessence of the thesis is contained in the decision not to "refuse nor undermine national defenses," in those countries fighting against Hitler Germany on the ground that to do so

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national Socialism demand that in all capitalist countries the war shall be used to win power for the working class and to abolish the capitalist system.

II.

THESSE points of view must, even now, determine the international policy of the working class.

(1) International Socialism must, of course, continue to make every effort to prevent war. War is the most terrible of all crimes against humanity. Only if the masses will realize that capitalism and fascism alone are responsible for the disaster of war; only if the masses will know that international Socialism has done everything in its power to prevent the outbreak of war—then only will international Socialism be able to use the war in order to win power and to overthrow capitalism.

German National Fascism probably wants to postpone the war merely in order to complete its armaments, to win allies so as to be able to attack with greater strength. However, even this probability must not induce international Socialism to accept the idea of a preventative war against Hitler-Germany. It is likely that in the course of time fascist Germany will gather strength against democratic France; it is certain that during the same time the Soviet Union gathers strength against fascist Germany. It is equally certain that, as time passes, the fascist dictatorship in Germany will be wearing out and losing its prestige in the eyes of the German nation, and the revolutionary forces in the German working class will increase. Thus, if in the passage of time, German fascism may become stronger against capitalist democracy, it will yet lose strength against working class revolution. We are under no illusions; there is no eternal peace within the capitalist system. But we have the strongest possible interest to prevent, by our fight against war, its outbreak as long as possible.

(2) In fighting against war, international Socialism must support the governments of those countries which, saturated by the results of the last war, want to preserve peace. But if international Socialism supports the efforts of capitalist governments to preserve peace it must do so without any illusions and must try to destroy the illusions of the masses as to the aims which these governments are pursuing.

The governments which, today, try to safeguard the peace of Europe are conservative governments which want to preserve the balance of power brought about by the World War and to maintain the capitalist system; ours is the opposite aim. They are imperialist governments defending their own domination over the working class at home and over subject races in colonies as well as their position in the world; we are against all imperialism. We may be forced today, in the interest of peace, to support the policy of these governments; but their policy is not our policy. In the course of events we may and, indeed, we will be forced to turn also against these governments and to mobilize the masses against them.

(3) The conservative capitalist governments have no other means of maintaining peace than the formation of an overwhelming coalition against every aggressor, a coalition strong enough to make every aggression ineffective. The fear of such a coalition may make Germany abstain from aggression. As long as working-class Socialism has not yet won power in the most important countries, Socialism must support the policy of capitalist governments in order to save peace.

For that reason, international Socialism must support the institution of the League of Nations and demand that all governments should strictly observe their obligations under the covenant. It must oppose every government which violates these obligations as well as those governments which, in the interest of imperialism and alli-

ances, weakly condone these violations which prejudice and disgrace the League of Nations.

But if international Socialism must support the League of Nations, it must beware of dangerous illusions as to what the League of Nations will be able to do to prevent war. Controlled by the great powers, the League of Nations merely is what those powers make it. If the great powers are agreed not to tolerate any aggression nobody will dare to attack. If the great powers are not agreed amongst themselves the League of Nations, in the moment of danger, will not be able to decide nor to act. Therefore, every policy which tends to make the action of international Socialism in the event of war dependent upon the decisions of the League of Nations (to determine the aggression and to take collective action against it) is utopian. International Socialism in the case of war cannot depend for its action upon the decision of the League of Nations; it will have to act for itself.

(4) In fighting against war, international Socialism must assist the efforts to enlarge and support the Covenant by pacts designed to create a system of collective security. But it must not deceive itself as to the character and efficiency of such pacts.

Europe is already divided into two hostile camps. Whether in case of a conflict between the two camps a system of collective security will operate against the aggressor will depend upon the decision of Great Britain. Moreover, as long as Great Britain is governed by capitalist and imperialist governments, that decision will be determined by imperialist interests. If, for instance, Japanese imperialism should attack the Soviet Union and if, subsequently, Hitler-Germany and Poland should seize the opportunity to attack the Soviet Union in their turn, it will depend on Great Britain's decision (according to the Locarno treaty) whether France and Czechoslovakia may come to the rescue of the Soviet Union without risking a conflict with Great Britain. Great Britain's decision, however, will be determined by its imperialist interests in the Far East. Thus the collective security system puts British imperialism in the place of an arbitrator over Europe. The decisive role which Great Britain has secured for itself for many centuries, by means of the European "balance of power," she is now again assuming by means of the "system of collective security."

A new world war would threaten the loose structure of the British empire. For that reason, British imperialism has an interest in preserving peace. Therefore, international Socialism may support the efforts for the institution of a system of collective security, although this system obviously favors the interests of power of British imperialism. But if we do so actually for the sake of peace, we must not have any illusions nor let illusions be created amongst the masses as to the fact that as long as Great Britain will be governed by capitalist governments, the system of collective security, too, is an instrument of imperialism. And we may be forced in the further course of events to oppose it because of its imperialist character and because it may be used for imperialist purposes.

(5) In fighting against war, international Socialism must also support regional pacts designed to oppose a strong coalition of forces to any possible aggressor and thus deter Hitler-Germany from going to war.

But international Socialism must not deceive itself and must not let the masses be deceived as to the fact that these regional pacts are nothing but the modern form of military alliances and that they, too, are being made to serve imperialist purposes.

In this way, France in order to win Italian fascism as an ally against German fascism has given the former a free hand in Austria and has thus been partly responsible for the brutal suppression of Austrian labor. In this way France, for the same reason, has offered but extremely

weak resistance to the aggressive plans of Italian imperialism in Abyssinia.

Therefore, if international Socialism in the interests of peace supports regional pacts, it cannot and must not refrain from making the masses understand that in the hands of capitalist governments all these pacts are instruments of imperialist aggression and oppression.

(6) Ever since the end of the World War, international Socialism has urged international disarmament. Had it been strong enough to secure the carrying out of this demand, the restoration of equality of the defeated nations would have been effected—not by their rearmament but by the disarmament of the victors. This was prevented by the resistance of the capitalist classes and the governments of the victorious nations. The equality of the defeated nations has been restored by their rearmament and by the unilateral denunciation of the peace treaty. This shifting of the balance of power between the nations of Europe, resulting from Germany's one-sided rearmament, directly creates the danger of war.

At the present time, after Germany's rearmament and in view of the attitude of Italy and Japan in all questions of armaments, the plea for international disarmament on a scale large enough to ban the danger of war has become utopian. International Socialism must nevertheless assist all efforts to arrive at a limitation of armaments by agreement. But it must not indulge in the illusion—nor make others cherish it—that a measure of international disarmament really sufficient to safeguard peace could still be attained.

International Socialism cannot ask for the unilateral disarmament of countries threatened by Hitler-Germany's possible attack. Supporting, in the interests of peace, the efforts to constitute a collective force in order to check every possible aggressor, it cannot wish to disarm that force. Desirous that Hitler-Germany—if it went to war—should be defeated, it has no reason to desire that Germany's opponents should be lacking arms.

But international Socialism must not overlook the fact that, under capitalist governments, an army is not only an instrument for fighting a foreign aggressor but also for keeping down the working class at home. It must not close its eyes to the fact that in many countries the general staff and part of the officers are active supporters of reactionary and fascist tendencies. It must not overlook the fact that countries which today are opponents of Hitler Germany and allies of the Soviet Union may just as well use their arms tomorrow in a different situation: to fight the Soviet Union, to crush working class revolutions or to serve imperialist plans of expansion and aggression.

Therefore, as long as power remains in the hands of the capitalist classes, international Socialism must leave to them the political responsibility for armaments. It must recognize the necessity for all the countries threatened by Hitler-Germany to train their people in the use of arms and to supply them with the necessary means of defense; but it must oppose the militarist institutions which are apt to make the army an instrument of reaction. It must demand that the army be purged of all fascist and reactionary elements, that officers' privileges which are not necessary to the maintenance of military discipline should be abolished and that class privileges should play no part in the selection of officers. It must oppose the extension of military service beyond the time indispensable for instruction and for protecting the frontiers. It must above all strongly oppose the setting up of a large permanent "skeleton army" of professional soldiers within the armies of general conscription since these "skeletons" set up under the pretext of technical necessities are in fact nothing but strong armies of mercenaries used by capitalist governments to keep their own people in check. It must oppose all

possibilities to make war an opportunity for capitalist extra-profits and, therefore, demand the nationalization of the armaments industry and the total elimination of war profits by means of taxation.

III.

EVERY war is a crime against humanity. But not with regard to every war can the attitude of international Socialism be the same. Its attitude during the war must be dependent upon the effects which the possible results of the war may exercise upon the struggle for emancipation of the working class of the world. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the attitude of international Socialism in face of every conceivable war. Only its attitude with regard to a particular war between certain determined parties can be laid down in fixed rules. The following applies to a war between two coalitions or groups of powers, one headed by Hitler-Germany, the other including the Soviet Union. It is in view of this particular war that we want to determine the attitude of the working class of the world.

In 1914 two coalitions faced each other which were both composed of capitalist and imperialist powers. On the one side there was Russian Czarism, while on the other side stood Prussian militarism and Austria-Hungary, the jail-keeper of fourteen nations. At this time, the International could not take sides with any of the two opposing coalitions. The situation in the war which now threatens humanity is different. If Hitler-Germany and the Soviet Union face each other in a war, the International must take its stand against Hitler-Germany and its allies; it must wish to see her defeated by the Soviet Union and its allies.

But if, in 1914, the International could not decide in favor of either of the two coalitions, the Socialist parties accepted a policy of National Union with their respective governments and appealed to the working masses to defend their respective countries. By entering into a national union the Socialist parties abstained from using the war for winning political power and for overthrowing the capitalist regime. But in every future war this will be precisely the most important and decisive task; to make use of the opportunity which the weakening of capitalism by the war is offering in order to win political power for the working class.

These considerations lead to the following rules applying to the case of war which we have in mind:

(1) In the Soviet Union, naturally, the working class must defend the existence of the revolutionary State with all their force and all their enthusiasm against any attack. Even the Socialist parties of the Soviet Union which are in opposition to the Bolshevik dictatorship must unconditionally and unreservedly rally to the revolutionary defense and, during the war, must subordinate their claims to the necessity of fighting for victory in the interest of the whole working class of the world. On the other hand, the Soviet government will strengthen the revolutionary defense as well as the enthusiasm of the workers of western and central Europe for defending the Soviet Union by granting an amnesty to all Socialists and communists in opposition who have been imprisoned or exiled and by calling upon Socialist and communist groups in opposition to take an active part in the organization of the revolutionary defense.

There are parties affiliated to the Labor and Socialist International which aim at the secession of their respective nations from the Soviet Union. We do not deny the right of self-determination to Ukrainians, Georgians and Armenians any more than to any other nation; but we ask the Socialist parties of these nations, as we ask any other Socialist parties, to subordinate their particular national interests to the common interest of the working class of the world. Socialist parties who, during the war, should organize or assist nationalist insurrec-

tions against the Soviet Union or, for nationalist reasons, undermine the defense of the Soviet Union, would by so doing act contrary to the vital interests of the working class of the world. They would play into the hands of Hitler-Germany. They would take their stand on the other side of the barricade. It is therefore necessary to make it quite clear, in time, whether the Ukrainian, the Georgian and the Armenian Socialist parties are prepared, in case of war, unconditionally and unreservedly to assist the defense of the Soviet Union and to subordinate their national claims to that defense. Only if they are prepared to act accordingly can there be room for these parties within the LSI.

The Soviet Union will be forced, in case of war, to ally herself with capitalist powers. If the Soviet Government, even now, is forced to adapt its diplomatic methods to those of its capitalist allies; if the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, even now, disapproves of the communist parties of the countries allied to the Soviet Union in order to please these capitalist allies and asks them to submit to the demands of their capitalist war ministers—if this is happening now there will be certainly in the event of war, a still greater danger that the war-policy of the Soviet Union may be influenced by the pressure of her capitalist allies and that, therefore, her revolutionary, working-class character may be obscured or diluted. In view of this danger, international Socialism must insist that the Soviet Government conduct the war as a revolutionary war, a war of propaganda with a view to bringing about the working-class revolution in Germany and to facilitate in the other countries the use of the war for the overthrow of the capitalist regime.

Every revolutionary war is in danger of ending in Bonapartism. This danger is aggravated by the existing dictatorship of a small leading group within the ruling party of the Soviet Union. Socialism must avert that danger by trying to bring into action—without interfering, however, with the strong, united disciplined way of conducting the war—the popular forces in the Soviet Union thus meeting all menaces of Bonapartism by the self-consciousness of the masses of the people and their strong will to self-determination.

(2) In the countries allied with the Soviet Union, Socialists cannot and must not hinder the conduct of war: all sabotage would be a help for Hitler-Germany and a blow to the Soviet Union. Socialists must appeal to the workers to do their duty as soldiers as well as in the war-industry.

But Socialism must not forget that the aims of the capitalist governments fighting on the side of the Soviet Union are entirely different from its own. It must therefore maintain, with regard to these governments, its complete independence. It must not accept political responsibility for their conduct of the war. It must not enter into a "civil peace" with them.

The capitalist governments will go to war with the intention of destroying Germany's power forever. They will want to dismember Germany, to deprive the German people of its national unity and liberty, to make it an enslaved, tributary nation. We, on the other hand, will not go to war—if war there should be—to fight the German people but to fight German

fascism. Our aim can never be to dismember Germany or to enslave and plunder the German nation. Our aim can only be to bring about the working-class revolution in Germany and as soon as the revolution is victorious, immediately to make peace with the new working-class Germany on the basis of complete equality, without open or veiled annexations or contributions, and to combine with her in trying to bring about the union of all European nations in a Federation of Socialist Workers' and Peasants' States.

At the end of the World War, the capitalist governments of the victorious countries have brought to heel the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs but they have prevented the revolutions in Central Europe from going beyond the limits of capitalism. They have crushed the Hungarian revolution by armed force, favored counter-revolution in Soviet Russia. When another war leads to working-class revolution in Germany, the capitalist governments of the Western Powers will, all the more, try to save the capitalist system in Europe, which the German revolution would threaten, by counter-revolutionary intervention. Against this, our aim must be to help the victory of working-class revolution in Germany and to make its victory the starting point for transforming the whole social system all over Europe.

The capitalist governments will at first try to defeat Germany, in alliance with the Soviet Union. But every victory of the Soviet Union will add to her reputation in Europe and Asia and thereby endanger the capitalist system. Soon, the capitalists of the countries allied to the Soviet Union will be more afraid of the victories of their ally than of the victories of the common enemy. Having first tried to defeat Germany by shedding the blood of the Russian workers and peasants, they will on the very day after the common victory turn on the Soviet Union in order to save the capitalist system. Against this, our aim must be first to defeat fascism by a common effort and then to organize in common with the Soviet Union and the victorious German revolution, the Socialist economy in Europe.

Therefore, the Socialist Parties of the democratic countries allied to the Soviet Union, from the first day of war, must make the masses understand the difference between their own aims and those of the capitalist classes. These Parties must make it clear that the capitalist classes, by imposing unbearable burdens on Germany after the last war, by refusing to restore Germany's equality by way of disarmament, by humiliating and ill-treating the new-born German democracy, have themselves worked for the victory of German National Fascism and, by so doing, have been responsible for the return of war. They must make it clear that an imperialist war against the German nation carried on by fascist governments would rally the German people behind the fascist dictatorship; only if the working classes in the countries fighting against Germany take the power into their own hands will the German nation be sure that Germany's enemies do not aim at conquering, dismembering or outlawing it; and only in this case will the working-class revolution in Germany be promoted and war quickly brought to an end. They must make it clear that only if the working-classes in the countries fighting against Germany take over the power, it will be possible to conduct the war as a war of revolutionary liberation, to maintain solidarity with the Soviet Union, to hasten the German revolution and thus to bring about, as a result of the war, a social system in the whole of Europe in which there will be no more war.

By making the masses understand these points, the Socialist Parties in the countries fighting against Germany will prepare themselves, in the course of the war, to make use of it in order to seize power, to turn the war

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against Germany into a war against fascism and capitalism, to bring about the German revolution, and, as soon as it has been successful, to bring war to an end.

In the democratic countries fighting on the side of the Soviet Union against Hitler-Germany, Socialism cannot refuse nor undermine national defense. But it must try to make use of the war in order to transform it into a Jacobin revolutionary defense of a working-class and Socialist country.

(3) In fascist and semi-fascist countries which may belong to the coalition allied with the Soviet Union, Socialism can only call upon the workers to use the arms which fascism gives into their hands to fight their fascist rulers, to first overthrow them and then only to turn against Germany. An anti-fascist revolution of the working-class in the countries fighting against Germany should set the German workers an inspiring example how to overthrow their own fascism and, thereby, to end the war.

(4) In Germany and in the countries allied with Germany, Socialism must oppose war and rouse the laboring masses to revolution against

war, against Nazi-fascism and against capitalism.

At the beginning of the war, the German workers, disorganized, intimidated and fettered, will not be capable of revolutionary opposition to war. An appeal of the International to prevent war by an international general strike would find no way into Germany and would not meet there with any response. For that reason, no such appeal can be made; for since it could only be answered in the democratic countries opposed to Germany, it would mean a help to German fascism.

Even in the course of the war, the working-class revolution in Germany will find a serious obstacle in its way; during the last war, the western countries declared over and over again that they were only fighting the German rulers, not the German nation; and yet they imposed on defeated Germany the injustices and the burden of Versailles. Having had this experience, the German people will be afraid that if a revolution during the war disorganized the defense and led to another defeat, they might suffer a still more disastrous fate than at Versailles. The

German people will only rise against their oppressors if they have reason to hope that by overthrowing their tyrants, they will end the war and bring about a peace without injustice and plunder. Therefore, the sooner Socialism in the countries fighting against Germany seizes power and thereby cleanses the war of all imperialist purposes directed against the German people, the easier will it be to bring about working-class revolution in Germany.

If, however, working-class revolution in Germany should take place before the working-class in the capitalist countries fighting against Germany has been able to win power, then the German revolution will have to organize the Jacobin revolutionary national defense against the imperialism of the capitalist classes in the enemy's countries which threatens the German people. In this case, the Soviet Union will have to part with her capitalist allies and immediately make a separate peace with revolutionary, working-class Germany. In this case, Socialism in the capitalist countries fighting against Germany will have to oppose by all means any counter-revolutionary intervention in Germany, any intention to continue the war as well as any attempt to impose on Germany another imperialist peace which would maim or dismember her; and in opposing these intentions, by revolutionary means it will try to seize power.

(5) In the neutral countries, Socialism must not demand their joining the coalition which fights against Hitler-Germany; it must not demand their joining the war. If it did, it would accept responsibility for all the bloodshed and misery of the war and by isolating itself from the laboring masses of the people would make itself powerless. But Socialism must demand that the neutral countries apply against Hitler-Germany all the sanctions which international law provides against the aggressor: that they do not support Hitler-Germany by providing her with credits, arms, raw materials or foodstuffs.

Further, it will be the duty of the Socialist Parties in the neutral countries to maintain during the war the relations with the Socialist Parties of the countries engaged in war on both sides of the trenches and thus keep the International alive and functioning. This task will not be confined, however, to the parties affiliated to the LSI. The situation during the war will demand understanding and cooperation between Socialist and communist parties. The last war split the working class of the world. A new war, during which the workers of the world will defend the Soviet Union and try to win power in the capitalist countries, will and must reunite them.

A new world war will cause serious economic disturbances even in the neutral countries. The victory of working-class revolution in Germany, the taking over of power by the working class in the countries fighting against Germany, the victorious defense of the Soviet Union will rouse the workers also in the neutral countries and make it possible for them to win power.

(6) The International must lose no time in making the working masses of the world understand these rules of action in the event of war. Socialist parties have nothing to win by hiding their intention before the eyes of the capitalist world. They should let it be known that everywhere—even in those countries where in time of peace they fight for the emancipation of labor exclusively by peaceful and democratic means—they will strive in case of war for the seizure of power by the working-class, for the overthrow of the capitalist class-rule and the abolition of the capitalist system as their immediate aims. To make it clear that war will be followed by revolution is the best means of deterring the ruling classes and their governments. Peace will be better assured by the fear of the capitalist classes than by all Covenants and pacts. If the International asserts its will to use war for defeating capitalism, it is doing its best to work for peace.

An Answer

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would prevent realization of the first two objectives. This means, first, that the working class takes responsibility for the war, and that, second, the Socialist Parties declare a moratorium on the class struggle for the period of the war.

Or conversely, it means that the nationalist and imperialist forces in these countries shall take in the working class movement as a silent and acquiescent partner in the former's bloody business.

The thesis properly points out that the proletarian revolution in Germany will meet a serious obstacle in the fear of the workers that the capitalists will succeed in their aims, as the thesis states, "to dismember Germany, to deprive the German people of its national unity and liberty, to make it an enslaved, tributary nation." The thesis also shows that the sooner Socialists seize power in the countries fighting Germany, the sooner the German workers will lose this fear, and bring about a revolution.

The logical conclusion would be that the way to overcome this obstacle is for the workers in the countries fighting Germany to oppose the war from the very beginning and attempt to seize power. Instead of that, however, the thesis calls upon the working class in these countries to declare a "civil peace" with mental reservations, and "to DO THEIR DUTY as soldiers as well as in the war industries," again with mental reservations.

The only way out of this hopeless tangle is to have the capitalist classes abdicate in the course of their successful imperialist war and to hand over power to their tamed servant. But this is hardly likely!

Instead of rejecting the capitalist instruments whose imperialist character the thesis recognizes, the document urges their support both as a means of preventing the outbreak of war and using the war to defeat Germany and defend Russia. It completely fails to recognize the only alternative to these imperialist snares—reliance upon independent action of the working class. To prevent war, we must make clear in advance the ability and the unequivocal intention of the working class to paralyze the conduct of industry, make war impossible and seize power.

But the working class will not take power through the application of mental reservations. To utilize a war crisis for proletarian revolution, the working class must from the very beginning of the war go into a position of opposition, must organize the natural resentment that must develop against the ravages of the war, must prepare an offensive against the government

through strikes and demonstrations, must foment revolt in the army. And the working class can do none of this while it is "doing its duty as soldiers as well as in the war industry."

Just as working class governments can be the only reliable allies of a working class revolution in Germany, so too only a working class government can be a reliable ally of the Soviet Union. Only a working class revolution in one or more capitalist countries can give real defense to the Soviet Union. But if the working class is called upon to "do its duty" every time the imperialist powers fall out, such a proletarian revolution is permanently impossible.

We are interested in the defense of the Soviet Union, not out of patriotic reasons, but because we consider the Soviet Union to be a force for world revolution. But to give up rich opportunities for revolution outside of Russia in order to "defend the Soviet Union" will in the long run mean the defeat both of the Soviet Union and the world revolution.

In fact, the thesis raises the danger of an immediate attack upon the Soviet Union immediately following a war against Germany. The possibilities of such a danger are minimized. In the course of the war, in every capitalist government, including the "democratic" ones, a process of fascization, aided by the nationalism unloosed by the war, by the dominant influence of the military and imperialist elements, and by the moratorium on the class struggle, will set in. Those who accepted the war aims, with mental reservations, will be hounded, persecuted, forgotten. While the working class pledges itself "not to hinder the conduct of the war," the dictatorial forces of the nation will use the conduct of the war to hinder any future independent action of the working class.

And then, when the war of divided capitalist nations against Germany shall be converted into a war of united capitalist nations against the Soviet Union, who shall protest? Their voices will be gagged; their forces will be weak, unorganized; in brief, they, too, will be in the jailer's nation of fascists.

There is only one policy for the working class to follow in the event of war, whether its aim is the overthrow of fascism, the defense of the Soviet Union or the conquest of international power.

The capitalist cry to imperialist war must be answered by the working class war of emancipation. Only the working class can, by its own power, overthrow fascism and defend the Soviet Union. The Socialist Parties of the world must call upon the working class to answer the threat of war and of fascism with the seizure of power for Socialism.