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The war crisis : questions and answers

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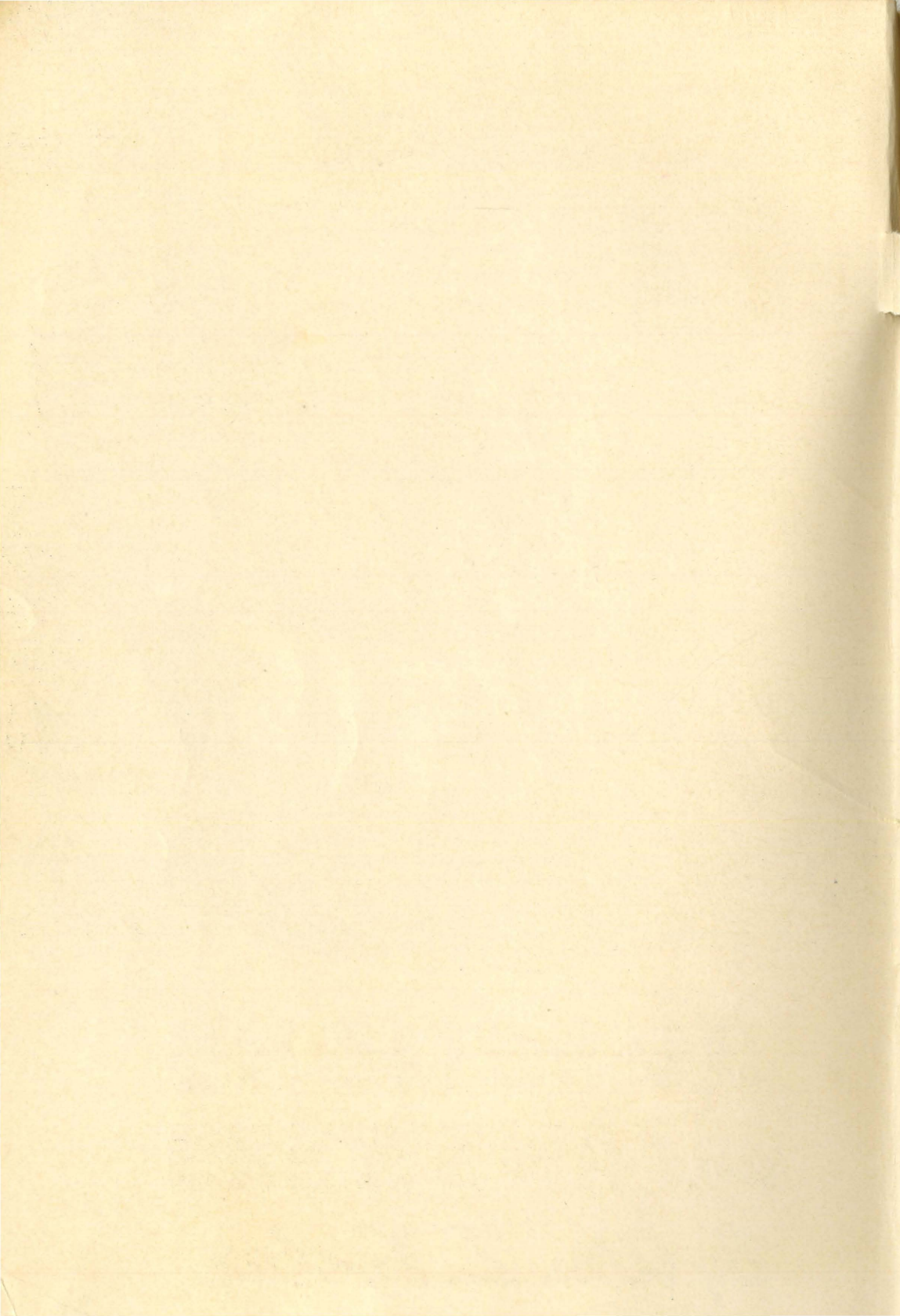


THE WAR CRISIS

**QUESTIONS
and ANSWERS**

By Wm. Z. Foster

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WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

THE WAR
CRISIS

QUESTIONS
AND ANSWERS

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CONTENTS

I. The Imperialist War	3
II. The United States and the War	21
III. The Soviet Union	46

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CHAPTER I

THE IMPERIALIST WAR

Q. Why did Chamberlain's appeasement policy fail? Why did war finally break out between Germany and Great Britain and France?

A. Because of the irreconcilable imperialist antagonisms between these great capitalist states over markets, sources of raw materials, spheres of political interest, strategic positions and colonies. The world does not contain enough riches to satisfy the insatiable appetites of these greedy capitalist hogs. Great Britain tried (and continues to try) to avert its head-on collision with its great imperialist rival, Germany, by steering that country's drive for imperialist expansion into a war against the Soviet Union. But this policy failed because Germany feared the power of the U.S.S.R. and also because it refused to give England a free hand in the world while it waged a suicidal war against the Soviet Union.

Communist spokesmen have long foretold the failure of Britain's anti-Soviet war strategy and the breaking out of a war with Germany.

Premier Kalinin of the U.S.S.R. warned, on April 26, 1938, that Great Britain's

“. . . idea of harmonizing the interests of the world pirates in China, of creating an entente cordiale with the fascist countries, and of leading them in a crusade against the Land of Socialism is doomed to failure . . . because the antagonisms within the capitalist world are so profound. Do what it will, British imperialism cannot escape a war with fascist Germany. And the British people will have to pay dearly for the provocative and treacherous policy of their ruling classes.”

Q. What are the war aims of the Allied powers?

A. Great Britain and France are fighting to defend and extend their great capitalist empires and Germany has a similar imperialist objective. The British and French ruling classes recognize two dangerous enemies who must be defeated: Germany and the Soviet Union. In Germany they see a powerful imperialist rival; one which has already become a threatening competitor in world markets, has shattered British and French rulership of Europe, and which, together with Japan and Italy, is menacing the whole system of British and French colonial and world domination. And in the lusty, growing U.S.S.R., the British and French Tories see an even more dangerous enemy, a class antagonist, whose socialism threatens the very existence of world capitalism.

The central war strategy of the British and French Tories is to defeat their enemies, Germany and the U.S.S.R., by setting them to fighting each other. If they can be made to cut one another to pieces in war then the British and French imperialists believe they could reorganize the world to suit themselves. It was this idea that they had in mind at Munich and throughout the period of "appeasement"—to strengthen Hitler and to force or induce him to take the field against the Soviet Union. They also hypocritically conducted their famous "peace front" negotiations with the U.S.S.R. in the same spirit. And now, even though their own empires are at war with Germany, they are still trying to force Germany to turn its guns eastward and fight the Soviet Union. Should Hitler agree to England's demands and lead this anti-Soviet war, then all would be forgiven him. There would be no more talk about abolishing Hitlerism, and the Fuehrer would emerge as a holy crusader to save civilization.

The assertions of Chamberlain and Daladier that they are fighting to preserve democracy, to do away with Hitlerism, and to establish a "United States of Europe," are only so much demagoguery to fool the masses into supporting the war. In reality, these people are even now seeking to destroy all democracy in their own empires and to restore the monarchies in

Germany and Austria. Their glittering war slogans play the same role in this war, in covering up the imperialist struggle, as did the slogans "making the world safe for democracy" and "the war to end all wars," and Wilson's fourteen points during the World War. If the Allies were to win the war they would discard all their fine-sounding slogans and promises, as they did in 1918, and go through with an even more devastating peace treaty than at the end of the World War. They would ruthlessly dismember Germany and enslave it economically; and should they be able to crush the Soviet Union, they would execute a million or two Communists and other militant workers, and try to enforce a fascist-like dictatorship over all Europe. In the one case they would seek to forever rid themselves of German imperialist rivalry, and in the other, to utterly blot out the proletarian revolution.



Q. Which are the aggressor states in the present war between the Allies and Germany?

A. In its recent statement the Communist International correctly puts the war responsibility upon the imperialists in both camps. It says:

"The ruling circles of Britain, France and Germany are waging war for *world supremacy*. This war is the continuation of many years of imperialist strife in the camp of capitalism. . . . The blame for this war falls on all the capitalist governments, and primarily on the ruling classes of the belligerent states." ("Peace to the People," *The Communist*, p. 1092, Nov., 1939.)

The aggressive character of both groups of imperialists has been repeatedly evidenced. There were the several aggressions of Germany in Spain, Austria and Czechoslovakia. Also Great Britain and France took on grave war guilt by sabotaging the peace front that the Soviet Union proposed to prevent the war. Next, Hitler went on to the offensive by invading Poland. Then, as Stalin said recently, "It was not Germany who at-

tacked France and England, but France and England who attacked Germany, assuming responsibility for the present war." The imperialist Allies assumed further responsibility by rejecting the peace proposals of Germany, the Netherlands and the Soviet Union.

Q. *Shouldn't the workers accept the lesser evil in the present war by supporting democratic England and France?*

A. The war between the Allies and Germany is a struggle between rival imperialist powers for the mastery of the world; hence the workers have no interest in supporting either group in the contest. Should one or the other of these two sides win the war it will try to cut the other to bits at the peace table, no less than on the battlefield. There is no reason to suppose that the Allies in victory would be more just or democratic than Germany would. In 1918, the Germans forced the infamous Brest-Litovsk treaty upon the Russians, and the Allies at the conclusion of the last great war were equally criminal with their Versailles Treaty which enslaved the German people, despoiled Soviet Russia and sowed seeds of the present conflict. We may be sure that when the present war ends, if the "democratic" British and French imperialists get the chance to write the peace treaty, they will be even more ruthless than they were in 1918. The Chamberlains and Daladiers, who are now rapidly fascizing England and France, represent the great capitalist interests of their countries, as Hitler does in Germany. In all events, they would seek to maintain decaying capitalism, with its increasing mass misery, crises and recurrent wars. They would set up such an international system of oppression as the world has not yet seen.

The interest of the workers and other toilers, therefore, is not to line up with one side or the other in the war on the ground that this side represents the "lesser evil." Their task is to organize their own forces and defend their own cause. The only possible just peace will be one dictated by the toiling masses of the world, one which will take the war-making

power out of the hands of the capitalists. In the last war the masses on one-sixth of the earth, tsarist Russia, did not accept the alternative of the lesser evil, but, taking their fate in their own hands, set up the Soviet Government.

In order to prepare to work out a lasting peace the workers must now protect their living standards and civil rights and educate the masses for the only final cure of war and exploitation—socialism. The Social-Democrats and other “labor leaders” who are seeking to enlist the workers on the side of the Allies, around the will-o-the-wisp slogan of the “lesser evil,” are giving just one more illustration of the fact that they are agents of the capitalist class.



Q. *What is meant by “The United States of Europe,” and will it work?*

A. The slogan, “The United States of Europe,” now being propagated widely in various forms in the capitalist press of England, France and the United States, and supported by Social-Democrats, Trotskyites and many liberals, is a dangerous snare that the workers must be on guard against. As early as 1915 Lenin showed the fallacies of this proposal, then being advocated by Trotsky and Bukharin.

By “The United States of Europe” slogan the capitalist warmongers hope (a) to provide a glittering utopia to delude the workers into believing that they have an interest in supporting the war; (b) to furnish a false explanation of the cause of the war, by ascribing to it organizational divisions among the European states rather than to the fundamental contradictions inherent in the capitalist system; (c) to lay the basis for organizing a war bloc of capitalist powers against the U.S.S.R.; and (d) to prepare the groundwork for an after-war combination of victorious imperialist states to dominate and enslave the world.

A “United States of Europe,” capable of establishing a just and lasting peace, is impossible under capitalist conditions.

The many bourgeois European states, separated by constantly sharpening economic and political antagonisms, will never voluntarily surrender their sovereignty to a European super-government. The experience of the League of Nations proves this beyond question.

The attempt to prove, by reference to the structure of the United States of America, that a "United States of Europe" under capitalism is practicable is false and misleading. The United States of America was formed in the youth of capitalism, when it was a growing system. The Union was built up of thirteen weak states, composed mainly of a homogeneous people with similar national traditions, with a common enemy in front of them, and with an empty continent at their doors awaiting development. But the present European situation is totally different. Capitalism is shrinking and in decay; its general crisis is continually sharpening all the economic and political antagonisms that throw the various capitalist states into violent conflict with each other. The only way these wrangling countries could possibly be brought under one strong capitalist government would be through the brutal suppression of their national independence by a group of ruthless imperialist powers. At best capitalist United States of America, with its 10,000,000 unemployed and two-thirds of its people living at or below the poverty line, can be no pattern for the European working class to strive for. And such a "United States of Europe" as could be organized under capitalism would be much worse. It would not only enslave the toiling masses more than ever, but also inevitably lay the basis for new and still more terrible wars. The workers must create no such monster of oppression.

The sole manner in which the peoples of Europe and of the world can be brought into a free union will be when they establish democratic people's fronts and Soviet governments in their respective countries. Then, with the exploitation of the workers drastically curbed (under the democratic people's front) or abolished altogether (under socialism), the economic and political antagonisms among the various countries will subside, imperialism will die out, the basis for war will be

gone, and the nations will live peacefully together as a fraternal federation.

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Q. Why are the top British and French labor leaders supporting their governments in the war?

A. The Citrines and Blums are supporting this imperialist war even as they did the imperialist World War of 1914-18. Such labor leaders, despite their Socialist pretenses, are, like the Greens, Wolls, Freys, etc., in this country, wedded to the capitalist system, and they constantly subordinate the workers' interests to the capitalists'. Their program is not one of class struggle but of class collaboration. Lenin long ago properly called them lieutenants of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the working class.

The British and French Social-Democratic labor leaders have made possible the reactionary rule of Chamberlain and Daladier by helping them strangle republican Spain, by sabotaging the European People's Front movement, by hailing the Munich sell-out as a great victory for peace, by preventing the formation of a world peace front of the democratic peoples, by assailing and slandering the U.S.S.R., and now, by helping their government drive the workers into the present imperialist slaughter. The policy of the British and French labor leaders is of one cloth with that of the German Social-Democrats who saved European capitalism after the World War by beating down the German revolution.

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Q. What is the present character of the fight against fascism?

A. Confronted by the deepening general crisis of the capitalist system as a whole, the great bankers and industrialists everywhere tend more and more toward reactionary policies which are fascist and semi-fascist in essence. They seek to dominate their own countries by cowing the masses through demagoguery and terrorism, and to solve their intense interna-

tional antagonisms by ruthless wars of conquest. In Germany and Italy fascism is full blown; in England and France the great finance overlords are adopting many of fascism's essentials into their system of reaction; and in the United States similar reactionary currents are also developing among the big bankers and industrialists.

Prior to the war the democratic struggle against these reactionary forces, which all head in the general direction of fascism, had two main phases; first, the formation of people's fronts in the several countries, of workers, farmers, intellectuals and small business elements, to combat the fascist-minded monopolists; and, second, the struggle to organize a great international peace front of the democratic peoples to halt the fascist aggressor states. The central tasks of these co-related movements was to democratize the various countries and to stop the war advance of the fascist aggressors.

Now, however, with the beginning of the war between the Allies and Germany, the former distinction between the "democracies" and the fascist countries has lost its significance. The imperialist war, the product of capitalist reaction, has become the organizer of every form of reaction. Under cover of the war the fascists and other reactionaries are directing blows against the liberties and well-being of all the peoples. The war is the great threat in all capitalist countries to the organizations, living standards, democratic rights, national independence and very lives of the masses. Hence the great task of the world democratic forces—workers, farmers, intellectuals, etc.—is to stop the war, which means to fight against all imperialist camps. This task, in the United States, requires above all else to keep this country out of the war. Only to the extent that a fight is directed against this war and for peace can there be effective struggle against reaction, whether in its fascist or other forms.

Q. Why criticize France for suppressing the Communist Party —don't all governments necessarily suppress democracy in war times?

A. By no means. Revolutionary and people's governments, while taking necessary disciplinary measures, actually develop their democracy during war times. Thus the Soviet people, while defending themselves in war against England, France, Japan, the United States and White-Guard Russians during 1918-20, continued to build their socialist system; the Spanish people, while fighting against the combined German, Italian and Spanish fascists in the recent war, elaborated the democratic institutions of their government; and the Chinese people, as they now resist the Japanese invaders, are at the same time laying the foundations for a great Chinese democratic republic. All this is logical and natural; because when a revolutionary or people's government is forced to wage war it is a just war. Hence the people understand and support it; and in order to develop their full fighting strength democratic institutions are both desirable and necessary.

But when capitalist governments go to war it is to further the imperialist interests of their ruling classes and in consequence the workers and other large sections of the population are either cold or hostile toward the war, as opposed to their interests. Whereupon the capitalist governments, with the aid of Social-Democratic and other conservative labor leaders, proceed to coerce the masses to submit to the war-mongers and profiteers by abolishing their democratic rights and setting up dictatorial controls. The claim is false that the abrogation of democracy is necessary for military efficiency; it is done to force the masses into war.

Especially during war the capitalists seek to destroy the Communist Party, the best defender of the people's rights. A suppression of popular rights happened in all the belligerent countries during the World War; it is also taking place now in England, France and Canada (not to speak of fascist Germany). Even in the United States, which is only being prepared for war, a determined assault is already being made

against the people's democratic rights and organizations, and above all to smash the Communist Party.

The workers naturally resist this whole repression tendency in capitalist countries during war time, and especially are they militant in the measure that the Communist Party has strength among them. They fight to organize their unions, to defend their wage standards, to combat rising prices, to protect their civil liberties, to resist military dictatorship, to demand the cessation of the war, and, where capitalism goes into crisis, to establish socialism.

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Q. In the course of history, when have the forces of liberty of other countries given military or financial aid to a people fighting for freedom?

A. Modern history presents many such instances. In fact when a great battle for freedom has developed in any country, whether in the early bourgeois-democratic revolutions or in present-day liberation and proletarian struggles, it invariably produces profound repercussions in other lands. Both the democratic and the reactionary forces, sensing more and more clearly the world-wide character of the class struggle, tend to rally internationally in support of their corresponding groups in the struggle center and to assist them with men, money, munitions or military aid, as the case may be.

The American Revolution of 1776 produced just such an international line-up of democratic and reactionary forces, English, Irish, Scotch, French, German and Polish fighters hurried to America and volunteered as soldiers in the Revolutionary Army; a powerful liberal faction formed in the British Parliament and openly defended the American cause; while the Tories throughout Europe viewed the revolution with alarm, hatred and opposition.

The French Revolution of 1789 provoked an even sharper world division between reactionaries and the forces of progress. Hardly had the revolution begun than the kings of Europe organized against it. After twenty years of war they finally brought France to her knees, but they could not eradi-

cate the profound effects of the great revolution. In the United States, Great Britain and many other countries, on the other hand, the forces of democracy quite generally supported the revolution. Two generations later the Paris Commune also served as a world rallying point for democratic support and reactionary opposition.

The American Civil War of 1861 (our second revolution) once more caused a similar world line-up of the forces of progress and reaction. The workers of Great Britain and to a considerable extent also those of other European countries, with Karl Marx as their eloquent spokesman, gave the Northern cause their hearty support; whereas the Tory British Government wanted to go to war on behalf of the Southern Confederacy and it was restrained only by powerful mass opposition among the British people.

The Russian Revolution of 1917, the most profound revolution in all history, naturally produced the very sharpest division between reactionaries and progressives on a world scale. Millions of the oppressed in all countries hailed the revolution with joy and lent it every support in their power. On the other hand, barely was the revolution born than the great capitalist governments began a bitter but fruitless armed intervention against it, in 1918-20. They have never since ceased their attacks and now they are busier than ever trying to organize a general anti-Soviet war. But the heroic Soviet people, aided by the powerful support of workers, farmers and democratic middle class elements throughout the world, have been able to beat back all these capitalist assaults.

The Spanish civil war, just ended, also had its worldwide reactionary and progressive effects. The Soviet Government gave all practical assistance to the republic, and workers from all over the world went to Spain and fought with rifles in hand for democracy. But the reactionary hostility of Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain, Daladier, Roosevelt and the treacherous international Social-Democracy finally overwhelmed the brave Spanish republic. The struggles of the Chinese, Czechs and Ethiopians for their national independence each also has had similar international effects.

The Soviet Union is true to this great democratic and socialist tradition of internationalism. Its active support of the Spanish republic; its offer to fight alone in defense of Czechoslovakia after Chamberlain betrayed it; its demand for economic sanctions against the Italian invaders of Ethiopia; its shipments of arms and munitions to the Chinese republic; its recent liberation of the peoples of West Ukraine and White Russia from the brutal Polish landlords; its present armed cooperation with the Finnish people to rid their country of the Mannerheim White Guards, the war-making tools of American, British and French imperialism; these actions constitute today's highest expressions of the long tradition of the world solidarity of the forces of democracy and socialism against the exploiters and reactionaries.

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Q. Are the smaller and weaker nations doomed to be absorbed by the great imperialist states?

A. The capitalist giant powers more than a generation ago completed dividing the colonial world among themselves, and now, under the pressure of the deepening international crisis of the capitalist system and in an attempt to solve their growing problems at the expense of other peoples, they are busily gobbling up the smaller capitalist countries and semi-colonial lands. Thus, imperialist Great Britain is trying to reduce the Scandinavian countries, Turkey, Switzerland, several Balkan states, imperialist Holland, Belgium and Portugal and even France itself, to the status of various kinds of dependencies; Germany has swallowed Western Poland, Austria and Czechoslovakia, and is hungry for more; Italy has grabbed Ethiopia and Albania, and has a paw on Spain; Japan is trying to seize all China; and the United States is skillfully maneuvering to take the Latin American countries under its imperialist wing.

These profound developments raise in most acute form the question of how to preserve the national independence of the weaker countries. It is worse than futile for these peoples, misled by the reactionaries at the head of their governments,

to rely for protection upon the great imperialist powers, as Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Spain and Albania have already learned to their cost, and as other small states are also apparently slated soon to find out.

In some instances, notably in Latin America, the small and weaker states, by close cooperation among themselves, can make a powerful and successful defense of their national independence. In the long run, the smaller and weaker peoples will find out that in this decaying capitalist world, with ravaging imperialist wolves on all sides, their only reliable international friends and allies are the Soviet Union and the toiling masses in the imperialist countries. China and the Baltic nations are learning this lesson, and it is one that the weaker peoples generally will come to understand through their bitter experiences in the sharpening struggle among the great imperialist powers for world domination.



Q. Why do the Communists in the belligerent countries demand peace—why not let the war go on and concentrate everything upon a direct struggle for socialism?

A. The first decisive reason why the Communists are demanding peace is that, our Party's interests being identical with those of the masses, it necessarily joins with them in trying to put an end to the senseless butchery and horrors of the war. For the Communists to fail to fight for peace would mean to betray the masses into imperialist slaughter, demoralization and reaction.

Secondly, the struggle for peace brings the masses into direct conflict with the capitalist class, which wants war. If, despite the masses' overwhelming desire for peace, the imperialists continue the war, the fight for peace takes on greater intensity and sharper forms, and the masses will turn more and more towards socialism as the way out of their difficulties. Should the war be carried on to the point of exhausting one or all of the belligerent powers, undoubtedly it will be followed by a wide extension of socialism.

Thirdly, the masses never voluntarily turn to war, civil or international; their chosen ways to accomplish their political ends are peace and democracy. With the establishment of peace the masses would redouble their fight for freedom and prosperity. Capitalist economic contradictions have grown so acute that the present system can be kept going only by such emergency measures as government housing projects, vast armaments programs and various "lending-spending" schemes. Should peace be achieved, even after this short spell of war, it would be followed by a great economic crisis and an enormous sharpening of the class struggle. Broad people's front movements, aiming at shattering the position of finance capital and thereby clearing the road for a democratic advance towards socialism, would be the order of the day in many countries. The growing seriousness of the economic crisis and the intensification of the class struggle are the reasons why the capitalists are just about as much alarmed at the prospect of peace as they are at the continuation of the war. The fight for peace is the present-day fight for socialism.

The fourth elementary reason why the Communists strive to put an end to the war is the need of the Soviet Union for peace. The U.S.S.R., the great fortress of world socialism, needs peace in order to develop its economy. The more it gives a practical demonstration of the workability of socialism, the more of a revolutionary beacon light it becomes to the oppressed millions of the earth. The U.S.S.R. also needs peace so that it and the workers of the world will be better able to ward off the attempts of the capitalists to launch a general anti-Soviet war. War conditions, with war hysteria and suppression of democratic rights, provide the capitalists a far more favorable opportunity for their projected war against the U.S.S.R. than do times of peace. Should the reactionaries start their anti-Soviet war, however, it will produce heavy collisions between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. In these struggles Lenin's famous slogan would play a vital role; for, undoubtedly, the workers in the warring countries would seek to transform the anti-Soviet war into one against capitalism and for socialism.

Q. What are the fundamental causes of the present war in Europe?

A. The war between the Allies and Germany is an imperialist struggle for markets, sources of raw materials, colonies and spheres of influence, strategic positions, and hegemony over the world's territories and populations. It grows out of the most fundamental contradictions of the capitalist system; it is the inevitable product of the private ownership of industry and land, and the exploitation of the workers and other toilers, upon which capitalism is based.

The capitalists, who own the banks and industries, rob the workers by paying them wages with which they are only able to purchase commodities of much less value than those they produce, and the capitalists also rob the farmers through various monopoly controls over their land and products. This legalized robbery in industry and agriculture, which is the very essence of the capitalist system, creates class consciousness among the workers and provokes bitter economic and political struggles between the useful producers and the parasitic owners over questions of wages, hours, prices, taxes, democratic rights, and eventually for control of the government. It also operates to pile up huge surpluses of commodities in the hands of the capitalists, which the latter cannot consume nor their workers buy back. This is capitalist overproduction, and it results in periodic industrial crises, with shut-down factories, wholesale unemployment, and widespread mass starvation in the midst of plenty. The choking flood of unsalable commodities becomes always greater with the rise in the productivity of the labor of the workers and farmers, and also because of the planless, unorganized character of capitalist production. Capitalism's most basic and insoluble problem is that of markets.

In its earlier, or "progressive" stage, capitalism prevented itself from being smothered to death with this chronic tendency towards overproduction by industrializing the capitalist countries, and thereby expanding their domestic markets, and by developing the colonial and world markets. In this period

capitalism lumbered along, in general a progressive force building the industries, but with recurrent cyclical crises plaguing the various countries, and with the capitalist powers developing ever sharper trade and colonial rivalries, and occasionally wars with each other.

These domestic and international capitalist contradictions were enormously intensified by the growth of capitalist imperialism, which dates roughly from about the end of the nineteenth century. Lenin defined imperialism as the final, moribund stage of capitalism, and gave its characteristics as follows: (a) the consolidation of capital and production into great monopolies which dominate economic life; (b) the merging of bank capital and industrial capital, and the formation of a financial oligarchy; (c) the export of capital as distinct from the export of commodities; (d) the formation of international capitalist monopolies which share the world market among themselves; (e) the territorial division of the whole world among the greatest capitalist powers is completed.

In this stage of monopoly capitalism, or imperialism, the capitalist system sinks into decay. World capitalism goes into a deepening general crisis and becomes a thoroughly reactionary force, economically, politically, culturally. The contradiction between the expanding productive power of the toilers and the limited capacity of the capitalist markets to absorb their products becomes more acute and explosive. The cyclical economic crises grow deeper, more frequent and more prolonged. Capitalism, to keep going at all, has to resort increasingly to government housing programs, W.P.A. and relief systems, great armaments programs and similar economic shots in the arm. Mass unemployment becomes permanent and assumes gigantic proportions, and the pauperization of the masses of the people is unprecedented. The class struggle sharpens enormously; the capitalists trying to repress the workers and to increase their exploitation by fascist methods of terrorism, with the workers and other toilers replying by developing more powerful labor unions and fiercer strikes, strong Communist Parties, broad people's front movements,

international peace fronts, and, as in the case of the U.S.S.R., proletarian revolution.

The period of imperialism with its increasing economic crises and class tensions in the various capitalist countries throws the great bourgeois states into ever more violent collision on a world scale. Their international struggles to steal each other's markets, colonies, strategic positions and spheres of influence are enormously intensified. Armaments pile up and wars break out on an ever-larger and more destructive scale. Imperialist rivalry between the great capitalist states is further intensified by the uneven rate of capitalist development in the various countries, which has the tendency constantly to upset the world status quo between the several great powers and to sharpen their conflicts, at the same time opening up the possibility of the victory of proletarian revolution in separate countries.

The World War of 1914-18 was the expression of this desperate imperialist struggle, a climax of the irreconcilable contradictions of the world capitalist system which by then had exhausted its progressive role and was already advanced in decay. The imperialist war of today, still more threatening and sinister, represents capitalism much further degenerated, and far more poisonous and reactionary. As Lenin said, the period of imperialism is the era of wars and proletarian revolutions.

Capitalist leagues of nations, "United States of Europe," balances of power alliances, diplomacy, and peace treaties cannot liquidate the fierce imperialist rivalries and end war. On the contrary, they are only different forms and crystallizations of these same antagonisms and in the long run serve only to intensify the general crisis of capitalism and the drive towards war. The workers and other toilers and democratic forces, by organizing themselves nationally in people's fronts and on a world scale in a great peace front, can place hindrances in the path of the capitalist war-makers; but war can never be done away with finally until its root cause—capitalist exploitation of the toiling masses—is eliminated.

To end this exploitation requires the establishment of so-

cialism; the acquisition of the land and the great industries by the people. With socialist-planned production in operation, not for private profit but for social use, the present domestic and international economic and political chaos will be brought to an end. As the Soviet Union shows, an enormous stimulus will then be given to production, and the growing demands of the market will absorb it all and call for more. With no capitalists to rob them, the toilers will be able to buy back what they produce. There will thus be no unsalable surplus, and, hence, no industrial crises and unemployment; nor will there be any profit-grabbing imperialistic monopolists, striving to divide the world among themselves. Under socialism there can be no drive for foreign markets and colonies, none of the imperialism which produces war. Socialism alone can abolish war, free humanity from its present agony of suffering, and start the world forward into an era of true prosperity, culture, democracy and lasting peace. So long as capitalism lasts, wars will periodically tear millions of youth to pieces and wipe out whole populations with hunger and disease—and all for the profit of a parasitic ruling class.

CHAPTER II

THE UNITED STATES AND THE WAR

Q. What are the aims of American imperialism in the present war? And is the Roosevelt Administration a pro-war government?

A. The great bankers and industrialists, who are the backbone and moving force of American imperialism, are busily exploiting the war situation to their own advantage. Their chief war aims in the sphere of foreign policy are to reap huge profits from the sale of arms and munitions to the warring powers; to grab off the markets of their chief imperialist creditors, England and Germany, while the latter are "elsewhere engaged"; to bring all Latin America under American domination; to enter the present war if and when it is most favorable to their imperialist interests; and, last, but of central importance, to move toward a general capitalist war against the Soviet Union. Their war policy expresses itself in the domestic field by plans to intensify the exploitation of the masses through raising prices and speeding up the workers; to weaken the trade unions and other mass democratic organizations; to undermine existing social security legislation; to slash away popular civil liberties; and to create a generally reactionary atmosphere so that they can secure complete control of the government in 1940.

All these aims, domestic and foreign, sum up to a war policy; to a program of imperialist aggrandisement. The Roosevelt government has adjusted its previous superficial quarrels with the great capitalist interests and has become an instrument for carrying out their imperialist war policy. This fact is becoming more and more clear by Roosevelt's rejection of the peace proposals of Germany, the Netherlands and the U.S.S.R.; by his active leadership in lifting the arms embargo; by his aggressive attitude toward the Latin American coun-

tries; by his militant policy in the Far East; by his hostile treatment of the Soviet Union; by his intervention policy in Finland; by his heaping up of vast military armaments; by his proposed war budget, as well as by such significant developments as the growing government attacks upon the trade unions under the anti-trust laws, the drastic government pressure for "trade union unity," the warmongering of the Dies Committee, and the attempt to outlaw the Communist Party through the Department of Justice; the growing attacks upon existing social security legislation, the tendencies to abolish W.P.A., and direct relief, etc. The conclusion is inescapable that the Roosevelt Administration has an imperialist policy, which has already involved the United States in diplomatic and economic phases of the war and is leading it toward armed participation.

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Q. Can either the Republican or the Democratic Party be called the party of peace?

A. Neither is a party of peace. Despite minor differences between them, both the Democratic and Republican Parties are advancing the policies, foreign and domestic, of American imperialism, and these sum up to a program of war.

In the lifting of the arms embargo by Congress, an unneutral act which drew the United States closer to war, the Democratic Party, as the party controlling the government, was the principal instrument used by the great capitalists to put across this important feature of their war program. Although in the main the Republicans voted against lifting the embargo, this was not because they are a peace party or unfaithful to the interests of big capital, but because they are striving to corral the peace-loving masses for the 1940 elections by a peace demagoguery. But enough Tory Democrats and Republicans were rallied to give a substantial majority in both houses to the Administration's proposal to lift the embargo.

One of the most fundamental planks in the war program of American imperialism is the organization of a general war

of the capitalist powers against the Soviet Union. Both the Republican and Democratic Parties are falling over each other with eagerness to satisfy the anti-Soviet urgings of the great capitalists, to whom the very existence of the U.S.S.R. is a horrible nightmare. Republican leaders are trying to outdo the Democrats by demanding a rupture of diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. and a huge war loan to Finland.

Neither the Republican nor the Democratic Party is a party of peace. In order to conduct a real struggle to keep America out of the imperialist war, to help re-establish world peace and to defend the standards of the masses, it is necessary that there be built a great new anti-imperialist peace party, with the workers and toiling farmers as its main base.

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Q. *What would be a sound peace policy for the United States?*

A. The broad outlines of a constructive American peace policy may be indicated as follows:

(a) *Foreign Affairs.* Give no aid to any group of the warring powers, either by direct assistance or embargo, in the imperialist war, and adopt a policy of neutrality, of keeping America out of the war; no more intervention in Finland, the American instigation of that country against the U.S.S.R. being responsible, along with England, for the present conflict; in the Far East, end the shameful shipment of war materials to Japan, and give financial and other assistance to China; in Latin America, curb the growing activity of American imperialists and reshape United States policy on the basis of the enunciated principles of the Good Neighbor Policy; towards the U.S.S.R. abandon the present attitude of hostility, which dovetails with the plans of American, British and other imperialists to organize a general war against the Soviet Union.

(b) *Armaments.* No support to the huge government expenditures for expanding the naval, air and army forces; halt the wave of militarist jingoism in the universities, schools, C.C.C. camps, etc., oppose the M-Plan of industrial mobilization.

(c) *Domestic Economy.* Stop orientating the country on the basis of achieving prosperity through war orders; intensify, instead, efforts to strengthen the purchasing power of the masses, with such measures as extension of W.P.A. and direct relief, broadening of farm relief, a vast housing program, rehabilitation of the railroads, a national health program, increasing wages and sharp reductions in the working day and working week. Active measures should also be undertaken to check the monopolists and profiteers, these measures to include the nationalization of the banks, railroads and munitions industries.

(d) *Civil Rights.* Halt the growing curtailment of the civil liberties of the American people; stop the red smear campaign of the Dies Committee and the persecutions of the Communist Party by the Department of Justice; check the spread of anti-Semitism and discrimination against Negroes and aliens; relax the government pressure against the trade unions and facilitate the organization of the unorganized; combat the organized press and radio campaigns of war hysteria. To safeguard the Bill of Rights is a first line task in preventing this country from becoming involved in the imperialist war.

(e) *For the Establishment of Peace.* The United States Government should demand an immediate cessation of hostilities. The United States should orientate upon close cooperation with the Soviet Government, with people's front and other genuinely democratic governments, with the smaller nations and colonial peoples, and also march in line with the labor, farmer and other organized democratic and peace forces of the world. So-called peace arrangements made merely with the imperialist circles of Great Britain, Germany, Japan, France and Italy could only lay the basis for new wars.

The Roosevelt government is not following a peace policy. Its active aid to Great Britain and France in the war; its assistance to Japan against China; its intervention in Finland; its open hostility to the Soviet Union; its over-swollen armaments program, its growing orientation upon a national prosperity based upon war orders; its systematic attacks on the trade unions, the Communist Party and other progressive

organizations, and its rejection of the peace proposals of the Soviet Union, Germany and the Netherlands and Belgium—all total up to an imperialist policy which is leading this country rapidly into the war.

Therefore, the struggle to keep the country out of war and the question of electing a Congress and an Administration that will follow a peace policy for the United States will be the central issues of the 1940 elections. This will require the education and organization of the peace forces of the country, the creation of a great democratic, anti-imperialist, peace front, primarily based upon the workers, poor farmers and lower city middle classes. Only when the United States becomes a socialist country, however, can it pursue a fully consistent and unswerving peace policy.

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Q. Is there any real danger of the United States becoming involved in the present European hostilities, seeing that, according to the Gallup poll, 96 per cent of the American people are opposed to our participation in the war? How can we fight for peace?

A. There is a danger. The mere existence of widespread vague isolationist peace sentiment among the masses (with occasional spontaneous activity) is insufficient in itself to keep the United States from being dragged into the imperialist war. Under such conditions the capitalist war forces, controlling the government, the press, the radio and the other principal means of shaping public opinion, would be able to balk the peace will of the majority of the people and to force the country into the war. To help organize and strengthen the potentially powerful peace movement is the present-day main task of the Communist Party. To be effective, this mass peace sentiment must be concretized, linked to the daily struggle of the masses, and thoroughly organized in action.

(a) *Concretization.* General agitation against the war is not sufficient to keep this country out of war, and reliance merely upon this kind of agitation can be highly dangerous, by creat-

ing a false sense of security. The warmongers, almost without exception, are developing their pro-war campaign under pretenses that they are trying to keep us out of war. While shouting for neutrality, these elements take one step after another on the path to war. Under cover of peace demagoguery, the Roosevelt Administration lifted the arms embargo and is now carrying on war provocations over Finland, preparing a gigantic armaments program, organizing the dangerous M-Plan of industrial mobilization, trying to legalize the Communist Party, and creating a war hysteria among the people—all of which measures are definite advances toward war. And we may be sure that when the great bankers and industrialists decide that the time is ripe to plunge the country into the war they will act hypocritically in the name of peace and democracy.

The tactic of the warmongers, to hide their war program under a pretense of American neutrality, makes it absolutely imperative that the peace forces concretize their struggle against the war. Agitation against the war can be effective only if it is coupled with a determined struggle against every detail of the imperialists' war program. This necessitates a relentless fight to reverse the Administration's truculent attitude toward the Soviet Union; its attempts to militarize the country through its big armaments budget; its international schemes to further whittle away the cash-and-carry provisions of the Neutrality Act; its proposals to set up a war-time dictatorship through the M-Plan; its imperialistic activities in Latin America and the Far East; its persecution of Browder, Weiner, Gannes, Darcy, Schneiderman, etc., and its attempts to outlaw the Communist Party. Furthermore, the peace forces require a positive peace program of their own, covering both foreign and domestic affairs, as well as opposition to the war policies of the Roosevelt Administration.

(b) *Link the peace fight with the daily demands of the masses.* In order to make the peace fight successful, it is further necessary that it be thoroughly linked up with the everyday economic and political struggles of the worker and farmer masses. The imperialists' war program calls for breaking up

the masses' resistance to their war maneuvers and profiteering in the domestic sphere, by raising prices, speeding up the workers, slashing work-relief systems, restricting and weakening the trade unions and other mass organizations, undermining existing labor legislation, infringing upon the democratic rights of the people, and otherwise lowering the masses' economic and political standards, and hamstringing their organized activities.

Therefore, the masses come into direct collision with the warmongers whenever they take up militantly the fight against the high cost of living, for the extension of the W.P.A. and farm relief, for better wages and shorter hours, for the organization of the unorganized, for a Federal housing program, for a national health program, for the enforcement and improvement of existing labor laws, and against the government attacks upon the trade unions, the Communist Party and the various progressive mass organizations.

This fight for the immediate economic and political demands of the masses is a fundamental phase of the people's positive peace program. By the fight for their immediate demands the masses are led to support the broadest anti-war issues. There must be no illusions, however, that questions of foreign policies can be ignored, and the masses confined to immediate economic demands. This would be a compromise with the war that must eventually lead to defeat.

(c) *Organization of the peace forces.* The independent organization of the peace-minded masses is also a vital necessity. At present they are seriously disorganized. The majority of them, deceived by Roosevelt's neutrality slogans, are more or less within the orbit of the present Administration; while large numbers of others, influenced by the Republican Party's isolationist demagogy, largely follow that party's leaders, who have a no less war-like policy.

The danger in all this disorganization and confusion among the peace forces is obvious. The existing genuine peace organizations should be built up, and, above all, it is necessary that the trade unions show more concern regarding the government's foreign policies and enter into active cooperation with

other mass peace movements around these questions. Women's organizations are very important in all phases of peace work. The fight for peace also must be carried widely into the press and onto the air. Democratic mass conventions of all kinds should speak out on the peace issues; peace delegations should be sent to Congress and other legislative bodies, local peace conferences should be held, petitions formulated, meetings assembled. There is need for a great democratic peace front, to be formed of workers, farmers and intellectuals and other middle class anti-war elements; one that would head toward the formation of a broad anti-imperialist peace party.

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Q. Considering the deep-seated imperialist rivalry between the United States and Great Britain, why does the United States aid the latter in the present war?

A. The United States and Great Britain are ruthless imperialist antagonists. Their conflict of interest expresses itself by intense struggles for markets and spheres of influence in Latin America, the Far East, and Europe. This basic imperialist antagonism contains the seeds of future wars between the two great powers but it does not prevent temporary collaboration between the two countries (at the expense of the colonies and of their own workers) to further their immediately coinciding capitalist interests against imperialist Germany, imperialist Japan, and especially against the Soviet Union.

Thus in the present war the United States, while greedily grabbing British markets wherever it can, is at the same time furnishing Great Britain with substantial munitions support and, if necessary, will give her military aid. The main reasons for this seemingly contradictory course of fighting England and at the same time helping her are, in addition to immediate war profiteering, two-fold: First, American imperialism is opposed to the emergence of a too-powerful Germany, which would make still more difficult this country's struggle for world hegemony; secondly, it has not yet decided to bid a last farewell to its twelve billion dollars of repudiated war debts; and

thirdly, American imperialism does not, for the present at least, wish the violent break-up of the British empire—certainly not at the hands of Germany. Such a cataclysm would shake the whole world structure of capitalism. It could produce revolutionary developments in India, in the British Dominions, and in England itself, thereby clearing the road for big advances by the forces of international democracy and socialism all of which American imperialism dreads.

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Q. What effect is the war having on Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy in Latin America?

A. The outbreak of the European war has greatly increased the aggressiveness of American imperialist foreign policy in Latin America. With its chief competitors in Central and South America, England and Germany, occupied elsewhere with the war, American imperialism is making hay. Departing from the fair promises of the Good Neighbor policy and reverting to a new version of the imperialist Monroe Doctrine, the United States is striving to establish its hegemony over the Latin American countries by an intensified campaign for loans, investments and trade agreements (with strings tied to them), by a great diffusion of American propaganda and by increased political pressure. The United States is not only seeking to dominate the markets, industries and natural resources of the Latin American countries, but also to combine all these countries into a bloc to use as a war instrument in its world imperialist policy.

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Q. Why does the United States sell war materials to its imperialist rival Japan, with which to wage war on China?

A. According to American estimates, Japan's attack upon China has cost 1,000,000 Chinese soldiers their lives, resulted in the death of 10,000,000 civilians through hunger, disease and bombings, and created 40,000,000 starving refugees, be-

sides the death and suffering it has brought to huge numbers of Japanese soldiers. This frightful slaughter would not have been possible for the Japanese invaders had it not been for the huge supplies of war materials shipped to Japan from the United States. At present fully 80 per cent of Japanese imports of war materials comes from this country.

From the beginning the American people, highly sympathetic to China, have favored cutting off the vital war supplies to Japan. A recent Gallup poll showed an 88 per cent sentiment to this effect. But the bloody munitions trade goes right on, with the warmongers making huge profits. The argument of the Roosevelt Administration spokesmen that the government could not embargo Japan because it had a trade agreement with that country is given the lie by the alacrity with which, in the Finnish situation, they placed a "moral" embargo on war materials to the Soviet Union, despite the existing trade agreement.

American policy in the Chinese war situation is cold-blooded imperialism. There are three main prongs to it: first, to make all possible profits out of the munitions trade with Japan; second, to arrive at a bargain with Japan for trade and other rights in China at the expense of the Chinese people; third, to bring pressure upon Japan (by threatening to cut off its war materials) to force that country into war against the Soviet Union.

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Q. Will the war end unemployment?

A. At present industrial output in the United States has surpassed the previous all-time high record of May, 1929; yet there remain 10,000,000 unemployed. Nor is there the slightest possibility of this vast permanent army of jobless being absorbed into industry through European war orders. Even if the United States itself should enter the war there would probably still be left a big number of unemployed workers. In both England and France there is much unemployment. The recent small decline in the number of unemployed in the

United States is temporary and precarious. Already there are signs that industry may soon slow down again, and the conclusion of the war will doubtless bring a terrific industrial crisis that will probably at least double the present number of unemployed.

From these ominous facts and perspectives it is clear that the workers should entertain no illusions about the war ending unemployment and bringing them prosperity. There remains the gravest necessity (and it will increase) to fight for jobs and relief through government and trade union action. The Federal Government should develop a huge housing program; maintain and extend W.P.A.; work up a great national health program; expand its system of farm relief; build up a far more substantial system of unemployment insurance and old-age pensions; and check the rising cost of living.

At the same time the trade unions should seek to strengthen the purchasing power of the masses by movements for better wages and shortening of working hours. The five-day week and six-hour day are increasingly necessary. Had the workers, during the past ten years, not succeeded in reducing working hours from a national general average of 50 to 40 per week, there would now be an additional 5,000,000 unemployed.

The need to struggle for jobs through government and trade union action is all the more acute now, because the employers, in their efforts to secure huge war-time profits, are demanding that the whole program of government work relief be scrapped. The Roosevelt Administration is yielding to their growing pressure. Already actual starvation is developing in numerous cities. There must be no illusions that the war will bring jobs and prosperity for the workers.

Q. *What is the M-Plan?*

A. This scheme, the Industrial Mobilization Plan, is the government's program for organizing industry and regimenting labor in the event of war. Its object is to transform all American industry into a great machine to produce war sup-

plies and to make the working class a cog in that machine.

The President will have, in case of war, the widest emergency powers to reshape and apply the Plan as he sees fit. The execution of the Plan will rest in the hands of a War Resources Administration, which will have, as a subordinate body, a War Labor Administration. Both of these Boards will be appointed by the President.

A main object of the M-Plan is to hamstring labor so that it will be an obedient servant of the war-makers. One of the important steps will be to keep the trade union representatives very much in the minority on all the controlling boards. The War Resources Board, appointed recently by President Roosevelt and later disbanded in the face of sharp criticism, and which was slated to become the War Resources Administration when the M-Plan went into effect, was composed of a group of big business men, headed by Mr. Stettinius, chairman of the United States Steel Corporation.

The employer-dominated boards under the M-Plan will have wide powers over labor conditions. Existing labor legislation and commissions will be scrapped. The aim will be to fix wages arbitrarily, to curb or abolish the right to strike, to put a halt to organizing work, and to draft labor into the factories as well as into the military service.

The Administration is now trying to have the M-Plan accepted by the top trade union leaders, so that the workers may be tied hand and foot, as they were by the Gompers pro-war, no-strike, no-organize agreement with the government during the World War. The A. F. of L., C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods and other independents have adopted a critical attitude towards the M-Plan. They are demanding that the unions be given more adequate representation on the various boards, that the right of collective bargaining be guaranteed, and that existing labor legislation be not abrogated.

The trade unions, with such demands as those listed above, cannot, by these means alone, ward off the dangers in the M-Plan. Above everything, it is necessary for them and their allies, especially the farmers, to carry on a struggle to keep

America from being dragged into the war; this campaign to consist not only of a general agitation against the war, but also of a fight against every single step taken by the war-makers tending to involve this country in the imperialist hostilities. Reinforcing this direct struggle against war, it is further especially necessary that the unions develop an active defense of the workers' organizations, living standards and democratic rights.

Only in such a way can the country be saved from the war and the workers spared the enslavement that is contemplated by the authors of the M-Plan.



Q. What is the significance of President Roosevelt's insistence that trade union unity be established?

A. Undoubtedly a desire to have the entire labor movement support the Democratic Party ticket in the 1940 national elections was a strong factor in the President's earlier advocacy of unity between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. Since the European war broke out, however, a new and more dangerous element has entered. This is the government's need for a docile labor movement, in order that it may put across its pro-Ally war policy. What the imperialists want now (and what they secured from the Gompers clique during the World War) is a subservient trade union leadership, one that will not only support their imperialistic foreign policies, but also hold in check any militancy of the workers that could interfere with the making of war profits.

This is very difficult for the imperialists to achieve, however, with labor's progressive wing, the C.I.O. carrying on an active work of organization and defense of the workers' interests. Hence the Administration, and many big employers also believe that if the trade unions all were under one head—the subservient and reactionary A. F. of L. top bureaucracy—things would go much smoother for them. Therefore, the growing enthusiasm of government circles and of the reactionary press for trade union unity—for unity of the A. F. of L.

brand, which would split up the new C.I.O. unions, eliminate their progressive leadership, undermine their militant policies and help lead the workers into a war policy.

The pressure of the government upon the unions for "trade union unity," as well as its attacks against labor organizations under the anti-trust laws, raises the important issue of the right of the trade unions to function without government interference. The workers want trade union unity, but not under government dictation. They want a unity that will strengthen the labor movement; not a fictitious unity that would weaken the movement and degrade it into an auxiliary of the imperialist war machine.

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Q. What is the most practical path now for the achievement of trade union unity?

A. In working towards unity of the A. F. of L., C.I.O. and independent unions an elementary task is to create a working cooperation among these organizations, especially their lower sections, around the various economic and political questions of common interest to the workers. Experience teaches that these joint actions can be developed around such issues as keeping America out of war, organization campaigns, strikes, high cost of living, unemployment relief, labor legislation, civil rights, etc. The workers in all the unions are ready for united action. These movements not only go far to increase the present strength of organized labor, but also to break down the factionalism in its ranks and to prepare the way for complete trade union unity.

For the eventual consolidation of all the labor organizations into one unified trade union movement, the most intelligent thing to do now, in view of the reactionary attitude of the A. F. of L. leaders, is not to try to first settle all the jurisdictional controversies between the various unions (a long and difficult process) but rather to bring the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. into an organized relationship. There are various ways to do this; among them, the inclusion of the C.I.O. unions into

the A. F. of L. in a body as a special department, the setting up of a national co-ordinating committee between the A. F. of L. and C.I.O., or the establishment of a general trade union congress, something after the British pattern, to which the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and the independent unions might all send delegates.

Any one of these arrangements, or a combination of them, would give organized labor unity of action in the face of the increasing offensive of reaction; they would abate the factional struggle, and at the same time would also prevent the C.I.O. unions, with their progressive leadership and policies, from being submerged by A. F. of L. bureaucratic reaction. Later on, the unions could work out their jurisdictional problems.

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Q. Has the Communist Party abandoned the policies of the united front and the democratic front?

A. No. The Communists strive for a united front to solidify the working class on both the economic and political fields; they also persevere in their efforts to build up a great democratic front of workers, farmers, professionals and lower middle class for joint struggle against their common enemies, the capitalists.

However, the war has definitely altered the conditions for the application of the united front and democratic front policies. Large numbers of New Deal progressives, trade union officials and farm leaders, trapped by capitalist propaganda, have gone over bag and baggage in support of the Roosevelt imperialistic policies in the war situation. This involves on their part not only an abandonment of the masses' struggle for peace, but also the hamstringing of their fight for living standards and civil rights. Communists cannot cooperate with such pro-war elements. Hence the struggle for the united and democratic fronts in their organizations and movements develops at the bottom, among the rank-and-file members and lesser officialdom, who do not share their top leaders' enthu-

siasm for the war and who will struggle with the Communists against it.

There are, however, many outstanding leaders of mass organizations who honestly seek to keep the United States out of the imperialist war and who are alert to protect the masses' economic and political interests from the attacks of the profiteers, red-baiters and warmongers. With such forces the Communists seek to establish the broadest collaboration upon a united front and democratic front basis.



Q. What do you mean by designating the Communist Party the "front line trench of American democracy"?

A. In every struggle of the toilers the Communist Party is found in the front line of battle, whether it is the fight to keep America out of war, to defend wage and living standards, to organize the unorganized, to provide work and relief for the unemployed, to protect civil rights, to enact social security and other labor legislation, to establish trade union unity, or eventually to emancipate the workers by the establishment of socialism.

The Communist Party is the vanguard of the proletariat, and the capitalists recognize this by directing their hardest fire against the Communists. Our Party is always the first force the reactionaries attack in their offensives against the masses. Their present widespread assault upon the Communist Party through government agencies and the press and radio is a sure proof that they are developing a general offensive against America's peace and against the democratic masses generally. First our Party is attacked, and then the battle is extended to the trade unions, farmers' organizations, liberal groups, etc., under pretexts that they are controlled by "reds." It is the same technique that we have seen carried out in Germany, Italy and other fascist countries.

The Dies Committee and the Department of Justice are applying this Mussolini-Hitler red-baiting strategy. They are trying to destroy the Communist Party, while at the same

time they are increasingly slashing into other progressive organizations. Thus the Department of Justice attacks the trade unions under cover of the anti-trust laws, and Dies declares he is going to liquidate some five hundred progressive mass organizations, on the pretense that they are dominated by Communists.

Those trade unionists and liberals who are standing aside and letting the anti-Communist assault proceed, or are even egging it on, are, by this stupid course, storing up plenty of grief for themselves and their own organizations. In order to protect their movements and the cause of progress generally, it is imperative that they defend the legal rights of the Communist Party, the first line bulwark of American democracy.



Q. Why do the Dies Committee and the Department of Justice single out the Communist Party for persecution, and not the Trotskyites, Lovestoneites and Thomasites, who claim to be more revolutionary than the Communists?

A. The rulers of the United States, of whom Dies and Murphy are agents, are not fooled by the radical pretenses of the Thomases, Lovestones, Waldmans and Cannons. They know that such people slander the first socialist government in the world, the Soviet Union; assail the only revolutionary party of the American working class, the Communist Party; and undermine such progressive mass organizations as the C.I.O., the American Youth Congress, the Consumers Union and many others. This is precisely the destructive work that the capitalists want done, so why should they not protect their helpers?

When Thomas, Lovestone, Waldman or Cannon talk against the Communist Party, the Communist International, or the Soviet Union, it might well be Mr. Dies himself or one of his fellow reactionaries speaking. The recent red-baiting resolution of the American Labor Party, written and supported by these elements, could have been prepared by Matthew Woll, Hamilton Fish, W. R. Hearst, Westbrook Pegler

or Father Coughlin. When Mr. Dies assured Norman Thomas he would not "investigate" the Socialist Party he did this in friendly appreciation of Thomas's co-laborers with him in red-baiting. With the Thomas, Lovestone, Cannon and Waldman pseudo-Socialist outfits unblushingly acting as state's witnesses and informers against the Communist Party and the Soviet Union, nobody should be surprised if they are applauded and protected by the worst reactionaries.

Q. Do the Negroes and other oppressed peoples of America, the West Indies, Africa and elsewhere stand to gain anything from the present imperialist war if England and France are victorious?

A. Victory for either of the two groups of warring imperialists will bring no relief to the oppressed Negro people, nor to other colonial and semi-colonial peoples in this or any other country. Great Britain and France, holding the largest colonial empires in the world, are more responsible than any other powers for the unbearable world conditions in which the colonial people now find themselves. Hence, it would be absurd to expect any improvement for these exploited millions to come as a result of an Allied victory. And, considering the Nazis' deep-seated racial intolerance and imperial Germany's typical unsavory colonial record, there is also not the slightest prospect that a victory by that country would in any way relieve the situation of the colonial populations. Imperialism, by its very nature, produces and depends upon the oppression of colonial peoples.

Especially now that the war is on is the strategic time for the colonial and other downtrodden peoples to insist upon their rights. While their greedy exploiters are locked in battle among themselves over their loot, that is the opportunity for the downtrodden to make hay on their own account. The great people of India, by coming forward at this precise juncture with demands upon Great Britain for national independence, are showing good political horse-sense. They are setting an

example which the oppressed peoples of the world might well copy, and one that the working class of all the capitalist countries could also profitably learn from.

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Q. Does the Roosevelt Administration offer any real solution of the burning problems of American youth?

A. It does not. Of youth's many vital problems the two central and most decisive ones are (a) peace—to keep from being torn to pieces on European battlefields, and (b) jobs—to acquire the means for earning a livelihood and founding a home. And for neither of these key questions does the Roosevelt Administration—nor the Republican Party—provide any solution.

On the question of peace, the Administration's pro-war policy is a distinct menace to American youth. Its active support, economic and diplomatic, of the Allies and Finland; its huge armaments program; its militarization of the youth; its violent anti-Soviet attitude; its growing attacks against the trade unions, the Communist Party and various other progressive mass organizations, are all pushing the country along the road to war and the bloody massacre of our young people, and this dangerous trend can be thwarted only by the resistance of the peace-loving masses.

On the question of jobs for the youth, also, the Roosevelt Administration has nothing substantial to offer. Its C.C.C. camps and National Youth Administration projects are only drops in the bucket, as 4,000,000 unemployed youth can testify. And now, with his orientation upon an illusory prosperity through war orders and his billion-dollar cut of C.C.C., N.Y.A., W.P.A. and similar enterprises. Roosevelt holds out even less hope for the harassed and jobless youth of the country.

The youth, who are almost unanimously opposed to war, have urgent need to fight side by side with the workers, farmers and other toiling masses against the warmongers to keep

America out of war, to secure jobs for themselves through increasing the purchasing power of the toiling masses, and to protect the threatened Bill of Rights. This fight in defense of their most vital interests necessarily brings the youth into opposition against the Roosevelt Administration.

The youth need to be sharply on guard against the false friends who try to convince them that the trade unions, through their seniority systems and apprenticeship rules, are responsible for the young workers' lack of employment; against red-baiters who are aiming to destroy the influence of those Communist leaders and rank and filers who have played such an able part in helping build the organized youth movement; and against those forces—Mrs. Roosevelt included—who are tending to undermine the political vigor and independence of the youth movement by seeking to reduce it to the status of a ward of the Roosevelt Administration.

The world capitalist system is cracking, and it is primarily the youth of today who will eventually have to create the new order of society. Socialism, under which system the age-long strivings of the people of America and other lands for liberty will come to fruition, is a social system in which exploitation of man by man will be abolished, a new and higher era of culture and prosperity will be opened, and the monster, war, will be forever eliminated from the earth. Youth can lead in this great mission of liberation which history has irrevocably thrust upon it only if its militants and standard-bearers are thoroughly grounded in Marxist-Leninist theory. The works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin must become the guiding lights of the youth, and the Young Communist League must be built up as the mass organization of its fighting vanguard.

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Q. What was the meaning of Earl Browder's recent statement in Boston that the United States is ready "for a quick transition to socialism"?

A. The key sentence in Comrade Browder's speech, which was seized upon by the capitalist press and distorted into an alle-

gation that he was advocating a violent overthrow of the American government, is the following:

“They [the American bourgeoisie] know that America itself, despite the political backwardness as yet of our working class, is technically, objectively, the country which is the most ripe, the most prepared, for a quick transition to socialism, for which it lacks only the understanding and will of the masses to that goal.” (*Stop the War*, p. 12.)

This statement is unchallengeable. Objective conditions in the United States are ready for socialism. The great industries have been built up and organized; agriculture has been highly mechanized; a vast, technically educated proletariat has been created; and, especially during the last ten years of industrial crisis, American capitalism has shown that it can no longer keep its industries and farms in full operation and thus furnish employment and a living for the many millions of idle workers and impoverished farmers. The one decisive socialist factor that is wanting is a realization on the part of the workers and toilers that socialism offers the only way out of their multiplying economic and political difficulties. Economic conditions, plus education of the masses by our Party, will eventually also furnish this lacking factor.

The objective ripeness of the United States for socialism has been stated tens of thousands of times for many years past by Communists and Socialists, without government interference. If Earl Browder's statement regarding the readiness of the United States for socialism was made into a national sensation and even “a close friend of the President” voiced threats of prosecution of Browder for “conspiracy to overthrow the federal government,” it shows the great fear that is in the hearts of the capitalists, and also the high degree of war hysteria now prevailing; the grave danger to which our civil rights are exposed, and the urgent need for better organization and more energetic action by the democratic peace forces of this country.

Q. If the Communists do not take orders from Moscow how is it that the Party always supports the policies of the Soviet Government?

A. Communists give active support to the Soviet Union, not because they get "orders from Moscow," but because, as Georgi Dimitroff, head of the Communist International, puts it, the policy of the Soviet Union is "a policy dictated by socialism, which coincides with the interests of the working people of all lands." In supporting the Soviet Union, the Communists are thereby also furthering the best interests of their own working class and nation as a whole.

Scientists in early days had no need for instructions from London in order to appreciate the validity of Darwin's great works; the world's workers did not have to be compelled to accept trade unionism by the pioneering British workers; the European capitalists of today need no compulsion from this country to understand the advantages of American mass production methods. And so with the socialist policy of the Soviet Union, world leader of the oppressed masses; it wins support by virtue of its intrinsic merit, not because some one in Moscow tells the workers of the world they must accept it.

When the Soviet Union, in the realm of its domestic policy, sets up a system of socialism which abolishes the exploitation of the workers and farmers, liquidates unemployment, does away with industrial crises, and gives the masses rapidly rising cultural and living standards; and when, in the sphere of its foreign policy, the Soviet Union fights resolutely to prevent the outbreak of war, actively supports China, Spain and other invaded countries, and vigorously struggles for the re-establishment of peace—then the Communists, plus tens of millions of workers all over the world, correctly understand these activities as a socialist policy "which coincides with the interests of the working peoples of all lands." That is why they give the Soviet Union the loyal support that provokes the rage of the world bourgeoisie. "Orders from Moscow" are neither possible nor necessary in building the Soviet Union's vast prestige among the oppressed of the earth.

The Communists are the best Americans. By resolutely fighting to defend and expand democracy, to improve the toilers' living and working standards, to keep America out of the imperialist war—by educating the masses in the principles of socialism, which will eventually abolish industrial crises and unemployment, open the doors of prosperity to all useful producers, and lay the basis for permanent peace among the nations of the world—the Communists are acting in the best interests of the overwhelming masses of our people. There can be no higher or truer Americanism than that.



Q. Did not the Communist Party, with its recent policy of an international peace front of the democracies, swing to the Right, and is it not now swinging back again to the Left?

A. By no means. The main objectives of the Communist Party are always the same: (a) to protect to the maximum the welfare of the workers under capitalism, and (b) to prepare the masses for the establishment of socialism. But the strategy and tactics used, and the immediate tasks to be performed, in the accomplishment of these basic aims necessarily vary with the changing objective situation.

Thus the recent struggle of the world Communist movement for an international peace front of the democratic powers, based on the people's front of workers, farmers, professionals and small business elements in the various countries, constituted the great immediate international task for the eventual building of socialism that then confronted the world's toilers—the urgent need to prevent the threatening war from breaking out. In adapting its policies to this need the Communist Party did not “swing to the Right,” but, with true Leninist flexibility, gave correct leadership to the masses.

The outbreak of the imperialist war between the Allies and Germany presents a new world situation. Therefore, as the vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party must everywhere reshape its immediate policies on the basis of the new tasks confronting the toiling masses, in their immediate

struggle against the great capitalists, as well as their general fight for socialism. Thus, the Party now correctly centers its efforts upon keeping America out of the war, upon the fight to establish world peace, upon the defense of the workers' democratic rights, jobs and economic standards, against the encroachments of the profiteers and warmongers. If the Communist Party is now placing more immediate stress upon the question of socialism this is not because the Party has become more Left, but because the imperialist war, by shattering the foundations of capitalism, is raising the issue of socialism on a world scale in sharper forms.

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Q. *Why shouldn't the Communist Party as the American affiliate of the Communist International, be required to register under the Federal Registration Act as the "agent of a foreign principal"?*

A. The modern world is an intricate network of material and ideological currents and interests, and the peoples of all countries have spontaneously organized themselves internationally, linking up their innumerable national organizations with those of other countries. Such international movements are industrial, political, trade union, cooperative, financial, professional, scientific, fraternal, religious, artistic, etc., in character. Only the most reactionary governments have interfered with their development.

The American working class, as have other social classes in this country and abroad, has freely exercised this right of international cooperation and organization for the past seventy years. Thus the Socialist Labor Party, the Socialist Party, and the Communist Party affiliated themselves to the First, Second and Third Internationals respectively; the I.W.W. was part of the "Berlin International," the A. F. of L. is now a member of the International Federation of Trade Unions, and the C.I.O. has close working relations with the Latin American Confederation of Labor.

Most of the existing international organizations (industrial,

trade union, fraternal, etc., and including the Communist International) are decentralized, allowing their national sections a large degree of autonomy. Nevertheless, they one and all from time to time arrive at certain international decisions in their congresses and executives, and these decisions, which are often of wide political implications, are carried out by their respective national groups. Hence, if the Federal Registration Act can be enforced and the Communist Party charged with being the "agent of a foreign principal," its leaders arrested, and its organizations broken up, as the Department of Justice is now planning, then innumerable other international movements are also wide open to prosecution under the same law.

Especially will the Catholic Church be vulnerable. It has as its world head an "infallible" Pope, the representative of Christ on earth, whose decisions (many of which in effect are highly political) must be strictly carried out by the members in all countries on pain of excommunication (a penalty which means to condemn their souls to everlasting Hell). Not even the wildest red-baiter has ever accused the Communist International of possessing such a fearsome centralization as that. Surely if Communists can be held to be "agents of a foreign principal," Catholics can be similarly condemned, and who can say that Ku Klux Klan elements will not attempt it.

The real reason why the reactionaries want to break up the Communist Party is, of course, because of its resolute stand against the war, its militant defense of the toilers' demands, and its persistent advocacy of socialism. The Federal Registration Act, which is being invoked on the pretext that the Communists are "foreign agents," is a crass infringement upon the people's long established right of international cooperation and organization. The use of such legislation against the Communists foreshadows that other movements, especially of labor, will eventually fall under its ban. This law stems from the same reactionary, super-nationalist spirit that is now striving to smash all internationalism among the German and Italian peoples.

CHAPTER III

THE SOVIET UNION

Q. What is the peace policy of the Soviet Union?

A. The Soviet Union was born in the struggle of the Russian workers and peasants against the imperialist World War of 1914-1918. Ever since, as a socialist state, it has followed an active policy of world peace. It wants peace so that it may develop its own prosperity and so that its people can live in harmonious cooperation with all other nations.

The unceasing struggle of the Soviet government for peace has taken on various forms through the years. In the League of Nations the U.S.S.R. proposed complete international disarmament, and when the imperialist states rejected this, it submitted proposals for partial disarmament, which were also voted down. Then it embarked upon a policy of making non-aggression pacts with all possible countries. When war began to loom ominously after the accession to power of Hitler in Germany the Soviet government, while giving active aid to China, Spain and other invaded countries, became the world leader in the struggle to develop a great international peace front of the democratic peoples to halt the fascist aggressor states and to maintain international peace. If this policy of collective security was finally defeated and the war-makers secured a free hand, the reason therefor was the failure of the Social-Democratic, trade union and progressive forces of the world to give active support to the Soviet Government's fight for a general peace front.

Now that hostilities have broken out between the Allies and Germany, the Soviet Union, pronouncing the war an unjust one, an imperialist war in which the masses have no stake on either side, has correctly adopted a position of neutrality and it demands that peace be re-established. As it was the leading fighter to prevent the outbreak of war, so the Soviet govern-

ment is the great champion of bringing the present cold-blooded mass slaughter to an end.

A major feature of Soviet policy is to prevent the spread of the war. Here the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact played a big role; for without it by now all Europe would have been in the flames of war, and the Red Army is a powerfully deterrent factor to the widening of hostilities. This fight against the war's extension is vital, and for us its application is to keep the United States from entering the war. Great Britain and France especially are making all efforts to extend the war by dragging in the neutrals, and to inflame the Finnish situation into a general capitalist war against the Soviet Union.

Another basic phase of the Soviet government's peace policy is to lessen the terror and hardships of the war for the world masses by its condemnation of the British blockade, which threatens to starve the populations of Germany and the food-importing neutral European nations; its opposition to the use of gas, the bombing of open cities and other ultra-barbarous war methods; its opposition to profiteers in all countries; its outspoken condemnation of the reactionaries throughout the capitalist world who are utilizing the war situation to rob the people of their democratic rights.

Last, and most basically important, while the great imperialist powers are locked in war, the Soviet Union is helping to lay the foundations for an eventual firm and enduring world peace by building up its system of socialism. Recent months have seen its position enormously strengthened in the Baltic, in the Balkans, in the Far East, and generally as a world power. The Soviet Union is a great beacon light for the masses in a war-torn world; it illuminates the path that the oppressed of this earth must follow in order finally to escape from the hell of capitalist exploitation and devastating war.

Q. *How do you explain the rapidly growing tension between the United States government and the Soviet Union, despite*

the fact that there is no rivalry for markets or territory between them?

A. The United States is the central fortress of world capitalism and its ruling circles have from the beginning watched with undisguised enmity the growth of the young socialist giant, the U.S.S.R. In this hostile spirit the U. S. Government sent its troops, along with England, France, Japan, etc., to participate in their counter-revolutionary efforts to destroy the Soviet Government by military action in 1919; it also gave moral and financial support to various White-Guard movements in the Civil War of 1918-22. Furthermore, for years it tried to strangle the U.S.S.R. by economic boycott, and it was the last of the great powers to grant diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Government.

For a time, under the Roosevelt Administration, this deeply hostile attitude of the U. S. Government toward the U.S.S.R. relaxed somewhat. Roosevelt, then following a policy partially in opposition to the great banking and industrial interests, recognized the Soviet Government in 1933.

But now Roosevelt has patched up his differences with the great capitalist interests and therefore has lapsed back into the anti-Soviet attitude characteristic of the Hoover-Coolidge days. He and the State Department are allowing no occasion to pass unutilized (*City of Flint* case, Finland, etc.) in order to create tension between the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. What the great exploiters of the world are striving for above everything else is a united war of all the big capitalist powers against the Soviet Union, and the United States Government, in collaboration with Great Britain and France, is becoming increasingly active in developing this anti-Soviet campaign.



Q. What has prevented an agreement among England, France, Germany and the other great capitalist powers jointly to make war against the U.S.S.R.?

A. To destroy the Soviet Union by military action has been

the great dream-wish of world capitalism since the Bolshevik revolution took place in November, 1917; because the exploiters see in the socialism of the U.S.S.R. the handwriting on the wall for the capitalist system. Nor have they ever ceased plotting against the Soviet Union, from the days of the military intervention of England, France, Japan and the United States in 1918-20, down to their maneuverings in the present Finnish situation. But to line up all their forces in a full dress capitalist attack upon the Soviet Union has so far proved an impossible task, for three major reasons:

First, there are the sharp antagonisms among the imperialist powers themselves that hinder capitalist unity against the U.S.S.R. Fighting like wolves against each other over markets, the great capitalist states have been compelled to modify their anti-Soviet actions in order to get the Soviet's trade. Then there was the important instance of post-war defeated Germany seeking for years the U.S.S.R.'s political support against the victorious capitalist vultures who were picking it to pieces. And there was the case of Hitler Germany being afraid to carry out its advertised attack against the Soviet Union, and making the non-aggression pact because England would have exploited the war to build its own fences. The Soviet Union has known how to utilize these imperialist antagonisms in order to prevent the capitalist powers from uniting against it.

Second, there is the socialist prestige of the U.S.S.R. among the world's workers, which operates as a deterrent force to anti-Soviet military adventures. Despite the universal and ceaseless barrage of anti-Soviet propaganda by the world's capitalists and their Social-Democratic labor leaders, huge masses of workers in all countries, including the United States, realize that the Soviet Union is the champion of their cause and that they should rally to its support. This vast pro-Soviet feeling among the toiling masses hangs like a millstone around the necks of the anti-Soviet plotters, and on many occasions it has broken up well-laid schemes of imperialists against the U.S.S.R.

Third, there is the great strength of the Soviet Union itself.

Always a restraining force in preventing capitalist military attack against the U.S.S.R. has been that country's vast power—its strategic location, its great resources, its formidable Red Army. The capitalists, with the fear of revolution lurking in their minds, have especially dreaded sending their armies of oppressed workers and peasants to fight the socialist armies of the Soviet Union, for they know the power of communist propaganda among their troops as well as the effectiveness of revolutionary soldiers as fighters.

If, however, the Soviet Union has been able thus far to prevent a general capitalist attack upon it, this is no guarantee for the future. The capitalist world, plagued by industrial crises and war, now views the socialism of the Soviet Union with more fear and hatred than ever. The exploiters are mortally afraid of a wide growth of socialism, in their own countries and by a strengthening of the U.S.S.R., as the result of the present imperialist war. Their great aim now is to forestall this by transforming the war between the Allies and Germany into a general capitalist war against the Soviet Union. Their violent world anti-Soviet campaign over Finland is an effort in this general direction. Never was there a greater need for the workers to understand the world significance of the Soviet Union; never was the necessity more urgent for them to rally in support of its program of peace and socialism.

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Q. Why did Hitler abandon the idea of his much advertised attack against the Soviet Union?

A. If Hitler has temporarily at least given up his long-planned assault upon the U.S.S.R. the reason therefor is because he became convinced that it was an impossible task. The fact was driven home to him that the Soviet Union with its united socialist people, its great new industries and collectivized agriculture, and its powerful Red Army, constitute a vast power which it would be suicidal for him to assail, even with the promised assistance of England, France, Italy and Japan.

The turn in Hitler's policy regarding the Soviet Union found its immediate cause in the break-up of the gangs of Trotskyite-Zinovievite-Bukharinite wreckers and traitors by the Soviet purge of two years ago. Hitler's anti-Soviet strategy was based upon Von Clausewitz's theory that Russia could be defeated only if a revolt to demoralize the country from within took place simultaneously with the military attack from without. Hitler was organizing his wreckers inside the U.S.S.R. as the force to stage the necessary internal upheaval, as an auxiliary to his planned armed offensive. But the prompt and vigorous action of the Soviet government in the purge destroyed this traitorous organization. This fact, as well as the further fundamental consideration that if he went into a war against the U.S.S.R. England would profit from the weakening of Germany, made Hitler reconsider the whole matter. His cherished plan for invading the U.S.S.R. and overthrowing the Soviet Republic was wrecked. He had to put it all on ice and turn his attention to the West for imperialist conquests. This change in orientation soon brought Germany into head-on conflict with aggressive British and French imperialism and the present war resulted.

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Q. What did the U.S.S.R. accomplish by the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact?

A. Speaking to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., when the pact with Germany was up for adoption, Premier Molotov stated its general purposes as follows:

“This pact not only eliminates the menace of war with Germany, narrows down the zone of possible hostilities in Europe and serves thereby the cause of universal peace; it must open to us new possibilities for increasing our strength, of further consolidation of our positions, of further growth of the influence of the Soviet Union on international developments.” (*The Meaning of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact*, p. 15.)

So it has turned out. The U.S.S.R. has avoided an otherwise certain and devastating war with Germany; the general European war front has been definitely narrowed down by the neutral position of the Soviet Union, and the U.S.S.R. has greatly strengthened its position in the Baltic, the Balkans, the Far East and on a world scale. Moreover, through this non-aggression treaty, the Soviet Union split the fascist axis, destroyed the anti-Comintern pact, halted Hitler's drive to the East, and weakened the grip of British, French and Italian imperialism in Eastern Europe and of Japanese imperialism in the Orient. All told, it was a big victory of Soviet diplomacy over the forces of world imperialism. Even the bitterest capitalist enemies of the Soviet Union are compelled to admit this obvious fact, although many confused liberals cannot yet understand it.



Q. Would not a Soviet-Japanese trade pact violate the interests of the Chinese people?

A. The Soviet Union makes no agreements, whether for trade or non-aggression, that infringe upon the welfare of the masses of the people of any country, and, above all, not on those of peoples attacked by imperialist aggressors. The U.S.S.R.'s support of the Spanish people, its long assistance to republican China, its offer to defend Czechoslovakia alone (a proposal attested to by Benes) after Chamberlain had betrayed her, and many similar examples prove conclusively that the U.S.S.R. does not advance its interests at the expense of other peoples.

The Soviet Union has long had trade agreements with Japan, and that the present negotiations do not conflict with the needs of the Chinese people is shown by a statement of Dr. Hu Chih, Chinese Ambassador to the United States, in the daily press of December 9, 1939. He says: "There has been no indication that the Soviet Union has abandoned or will abandon her policy of assisting China." He further declared that Soviet aid to China had not ceased, despite Russian overtures

for a new trade arrangement with Japan. Chiang Kai-shek's telegram to Stalin on his birthday, thanking the U.S.S.R. for assistance given, spoke volumes on the role of the Soviet Union in China.

Q. *Please make reply to the charges of "red imperialism" against the U.S.S.R.*

A. Imperialism is the final stage of capitalism. It grows out of the private ownership of the industries and the land, and the exploitation of the workers and other toilers for private profit; and it develops when the basic capitalist industry and banks become monopolized and the country dominated by a financial oligarchy. The foreign policy of imperialism is a relentless struggle against other capitalist states for markets, raw materials, colonies and world dominion; a struggle that seeks the enslavement and exploitation of the world's populations and results in constantly more devastating wars.

The Soviet Union has nothing in common with all this. It is a socialist state, in which the industries and the land have been socialized, the exploitation of the toilers has been completely abolished, and a classless society established. Thus, there is no economic, political or social basis for imperialism. The U.S.S.R.'s sole concern is the welfare of its own people and to live in friendly, cooperative relations with neighboring nations. It cannot possibly develop the ruthless foreign policy of conquest over markets, territories and peoples that is fundamental and inevitable to imperialism.

During its twenty-two years of life the Soviet Government has had, on a number of occasions, to use its troops against those of other states, but this action always has been taken either in self-defense, or to help liberate neighboring peoples from their capitalist oppressors, or for both reasons combined. It was ridiculous to call it imperialism (as was done at the time) when the Red Army, during the early days of the revolution and with the cooperation of the local peoples, drove the Japanese imperialists out of the Maritime Provinces of the

Far East, smashed the British puppet government in Georgia, and evicted the Polish invaders from the Ukraine; and in so doing freed the laboring populations of these countries. By the same token, it is equally absurd now to designate as imperialism the liberation of the peoples of Eastern Poland and Finland with the help of the Red Army from their capitalist oppressors. "Red imperialism" is a contradiction in terms, a lying invention of enemies of the people and of socialism.



Q. How can you call this war imperialist when the Soviet Union might well have been in it had Great Britain accepted the mutual assistance pact proposed by the U.S.S.R. in August?

A. The only way the British and French Governments would have accepted the mutual assistance pact proposed by the Soviet Union would have been under compulsion; through pressure of the democratic forces in their respective countries, by a victory of the people. Such mass pressure was not exerted, however, in sufficient strength, and the Chamberlains and Daladiers remained in full command. Had the adoption of the proffered pact been forced by democratic mass pressure, and had a war resulted nevertheless, this war would have borne a very different character from the present one. As A. B. says in the October issue of *The Communist*:

“. . . if despite everything, England, France and the Soviet Union would have had recourse to the force of arms, this would have resulted from an anti-imperialistic fight for the liberty of small and weak nations, for their liberty and independence; this would have resulted from the continuation of the world struggle of the working class and all democratic and peace forces against fascism and fascist aggression, a struggle that has been on for the last four years and in which the Soviet Union was the strongest and leading factor. Such a war would have been a just war, a democratic war, a liberating war. In such a war the working class, its allies, and all democratic forces would have had to fight in the front ranks.

“On the other hand, *this* war, which England and France are now fighting, resulted from none of these progressive anti-fascist policies and struggle. On the contrary, it resulted from the abandonment of and opposition to collective security; it resulted from connivance with fascist aggression; it resulted from betrayal of small and weak nations and the sacrifice of their national independence; it resulted from *Munichism*, from a whole complex of anti-democratic and reactionary and pro-fascist policies and attitudes of the ruling imperialist circles in England and France, especially England. Hence *this* war of England and France is an imperialist war, an unjust war, a predatory war. This war cannot therefore be supported by the working class and its allies.”



Q. *How can a small country like Finland be a danger to a great power like the Soviet Union?*

A. With relation to the U.S.S.R., Finland is in a very strategic position. The Soviet naval base of Kronstadt and the great city of Leningrad, containing 10 per cent of Soviet industry, lie within range of the guns along the Finnish southern borders. Finland is an ideal jumping-off place for an attack against the Soviet Union by hostile imperialist powers. Recently Premier Molotov of the U.S.S.R. quoted the London *Times* as follows:

“Finland is really the key to Leningrad and Leningrad is the key to Moscow, and one who wishes to defeat the Soviet Union must have Finland at its disposal.”

Ever since the White Guards seized control of the country in 1918, after Soviet Russia had granted it national independence, the great capitalist powers have spared no pains to dominate Finland through catspaw governments. Twenty years ago Lenin declared that “England has the whole of Finland in its pocket,” and the same is true today so far as the Ryti-Tanner-Mannerheim government is concerned, with American imperialism also sticking its paw in the pie. That is why the

Finnish Government refused to come to a friendly agreement with the Soviet Government.

Finland has served as a handy base for imperialist assaults against the Soviet Union, many of them aided by American funds. On numerous occasions from 1918 to 1922 armed invasions of the U.S.S.R. were directed from there, the most important being the British-financed attempt of General Yudenich to seize Petrograd (now Leningrad), the heart of the revolution. Helsinki has been for many years a central nesting place of White-Guard plotters and the chief cesspool for flooding the capitalist world with anti-Soviet slanders.

The great cry now being raised by capitalist politicians and writers and their Social-Democratic flunkies in all capitalist countries, regarding the Finnish-Soviet conflict, expresses the frantic rage of the world imperialists at losing their valuable Finnish base of operations against the U.S.S.R.

The capitalistic tears of sympathy for "democratic little Finland" (which has the butcher of the workers, Mannerheim, at its head) are strictly of the crocodile variety. Where were the protests of President Roosevelt and the others when democratic Spain was being overrun by the German and Italian fascist armies, when its open cities were cruelly bombed and its citizens massacred and executed by hundreds of thousands? Those who are now crying so loudly over Finland had no protests to make or aid to offer then, but gave their support to the Franco slaughter. To the Roosevelt Government and to bourgeois relief organizations it makes a fundamental difference whose political ox is gored, whether it is that of the people or that of the exploiters. The truth is that the U.S.S.R. in self-defense and aided by the Finnish working class, is eliminating the imperialist nest in Finland and establishing friendly relations with the Finnish people. The British and American world rulers find this quite unsupportable and are making the welkin ring with their lamentations.

Q. Hitler cracked the Polish Army in three weeks; why, then, the slow progress of the Red Army in Finland?

A. Finland, despite its much smaller population than Poland, presents a far more difficult military problem. Military experts and bourgeois correspondents know this quite well, and they also realize that in view of the exceptional obstacles it faces the Soviet campaign is making as fast progress as could be expected. But this does deter such people, in their present unprecedented anti-Soviet campaign of slander, from belittling the efficiency of the Red Army.

The capitalist press is trying to "further explain" Finnish resistance on the ground that the workers and peasants are unshakably loyal to the White-Guard government and are bitterly opposed to the Soviet Union and the democratic People's Government of Finland. This is not true. The Mannerheim dictatorship has no firmer support among the toiling Finnish masses than the Beck dictatorship had among the Polish people proper. The sequel of the campaign will make this fact clear, and the world will be eventually amazed at the friendly attitude of the Finnish workers and peasants toward the U.S.S.R., once the power of the White-Guard military machine is broken.

The military problem in Finland is one of unusual difficulties, as a comparison between the Polish and Finnish campaigns readily shows. To begin with, in strategic position the German army had a gigantic advantage over the Polish army. Because of the geographical shape of the Polish state the German forces were able to surround the Polish army on three sides, so that when hostilities started these huge German armies could be and were flung in full strength against the Poles, with wholesale bombing of open cities and other terroristic methods never used by the Soviet armies. The Polish army, caught in a giant nut-cracker, at once began to crumble and to retreat precipitately. Poland was the more vulnerable because its vital industrial centers were close to the German borders and were swiftly captured.

Finland, however, has incomparably a more advantageous

strategical "interior" position. The only way it can be entered on land from the U.S.S.R. is either through the narrow, heavily fortified Karelia Isthmus; or from the North and East by columns which have to march hundreds of miles through the Arctic wilderness. From the latter directions almost the whole country has to be overrun before the key industrial areas can be reached. And whereas Hitler's army had both behind and in front of it a big network of railroads and auto roads, which enabled all its forces to act as a closely-knit unit, the Red Army has to send its several columns into vast trackless wastes utterly destitute of any kind of roads. These Soviet columns, more or less detached from each other by wide stretches of forest and lakes, have dangerously to lengthen out their lines of communications from their far-removed bases of supplies and each has to operate pretty much as separate units. The Finnish army, however, with its "interior" position and the country's railroads in its rear, has the great advantage of being able quickly to concentrate its forces at will against any desired point.

The winter season also greatly favors the Finnish White-Guard forces. While the German army operated against Poland in mild fall weather which facilitated the use of every branch of its armed forces, the Red Army is campaigning in Finland under Arctic conditions of sub-zero temperatures and deep snow, which make enormously more difficult the advance and entrenchment of infantry, minimize the effectiveness of tanks, and even largely hamper the use of airplanes. The Red Army is compelled to fight in the open, on the frozen ground, while the Finnish forces are planted behind already prepared positions.

The matter of fortifications is also very fundamental. Hitler's army had only lightly armed positions to overcome on the Polish frontiers; for the Poles, under British and French guidance, had built their main system of fortifications on their Eastern front, aimed against the Soviet Union. Whereas the Red Army in Finland, in addition to having to overcome a naturally unfavorable strategic position, execrable transportation, long distances, difficult natural terrain, and impossible

weather, also have to break through very powerful fortifications. This is because for many years past Great Britain and other imperialist powers have been busy fortifying and arming Finland against the U.S.S.R. The Mannerheim Line across the narrow Isthmus of Karelia, the only natural gateway from the U.S.S.R. to Finland, is one of the most heavily fortified areas in the world, at least the equal of either the Maginot or Siegfried Lines; and elsewhere the approaches to Finland are a network of machine gun nests and other military works. The country has been built into a veritable fortress.

In Poland, the Germans, because of favorable geographical features, good transportation, temperate weather, etc., were able to use almost their whole army—save enough necessary to thinly garrison the Siegfried Line against the only gradual mobilizing French forces. But in Finland, the Red Army, because of the narrowness of the Karelian Isthmus and the wilderness conditions on the other fronts, can utilize only a small fraction of its forces. With Finland's extremely favorable defense situation, even bourgeois military experts admit that the White-Guard army of about 300,000 should be able readily to hold off at least 1,000,000 men of an attacking army; whereas the *U. S. Army and Navy Journal* says, "The entire Russian invading forces number only 200,000 men." The cries in the capitalist press about the enormous numerical superiority of the Soviet forces in Finland is just so much anti-Soviet propaganda.

Another important factor to consider in the military comparison between Finland and Poland is that England, France and the United States and the Scandinavian countries are sending aid of all kinds to the support of their valued anti-Soviet fortress, Finland; although absolutely no assistance was given to Poland; neither England nor France sent a single plane, nor did they make any attack upon Germany on the Western Front. They hoped that Hitler's forces would keep on going East and clash with the Red Army.

In Poland the whole military situation favored a sudden and overwhelming *Blitzkrieg* by the German army, and just that took place. While in Finland all factors combine to re-

quire a hard slogging fight by the Red Army, and that is precisely the course of the campaign there. Conditions in Poland enabled Germany to register immediately its vastly superior military force, but the Soviet Union can bring its greater strength to bear upon Finland only over a longer period. No one can doubt, however, the eventual outcome of the present struggle; the victory of the Finnish people and the Red Army over the fascist-led and imperialist-backed Mannerheim army.

Q. *In the Daily Worker of July 5-6, 1939, statements were made that in the Finnish general elections just held "The government coalition of Socialists, farmers and liberals carried forward its economic and social reform policy with renewed vigor today under the impetus of Monday's general election returns which placed coalition members in three-fourths of the Diet seats." Will you kindly let me know, therefore, when the government of Finland changed to a dictatorship of Mannerheim?*

A. Finnish "democracy" was only a facade, obscuring the true features of a brutal capitalist system, the tool of foreign imperialism. The controlling force in the country was the reactionary Civil Guard of 100,000 storm troopers, headed by the butcher of the people, Mannerheim. The trade unions were weak, the workers having been massacred in the struggles of 1918, 1923 and 1930. The cooperatives were in the hands of kulaks. The largest party in the Diet, the Social-Democratic Party, like such parties elsewhere, was a loyal servitor of the capitalists. The "democratic" government, with its mild program of reforms, was careful not to attack the prerogatives of the big capitalists and landlords, nor to interfere with the imperialists' policy of making Finland into a war weapon directed against the U.S.S.R. It is no surprise, therefore, that such a government, in the present critical European situation,

should drop its mask of democracy and become openly the tool of the imperialist war-makers.

Upon scores of occasions and in many countries bourgeois governments with a tinge of reform have, in periods of crisis, thrown aside their trappings of democracy and adopted a reactionary policy. Take, for example, the Roosevelt Administration. Elected by the great masses of the American people in the face of powerful capitalist opposition, it included in its program many progressive reforms. If the Communists endorsed these reforms (as they also did some of those of the Finnish Government) they never forgot that the Roosevelt Government was capitalist in character. Hence they were not surprised when the war broke out to see that Roosevelt swiftly bridged over his quarrels with the great bankers, jettisoned his New Deal reforms, and embarked on a policy that leads to war.

Nor should it occasion surprise that the Finnish Government, with its much thinner-skinned "democracy," emerged as "the dictatorship of Mannerheim" once the deeper interests of its capitalist masters were touched. With the outbreak of the war between the Allies and Germany the question of the defense of Leningrad became a most vital one for the Soviet Union. A truly democratic Finland would have easily conceded, in return for the money and territory offered by the Soviet Government, the few strategic points requested. But such a course did not suit the real masters of Finland—the native capitalists and landlords and the American, British and French imperialists. At all costs, they were determined to keep Leningrad in jeopardy. They wanted Finland to remain as an armed threat against the U.S.S.R.

Therefore, calling into action their ever-faithful lackey, the Social-Democratic Party, they had the Finnish Government reject the equitable Soviet proposals and assume a truculent attitude. The government, instigated by American, British and French imperialists, prepared for war; it reorganized itself so as to give the leadership to the Conservative Party; conceded full command of all armed forces to the notorious mass mur-

derer, Mannerheim, and his chief aide, the fascist General Wallenius, began a policy of provocations against the U.S.S.R., and the inevitable result of it all was the present conflict. The Mannerheim Government is not the representative of the democratic people of Finland, but the reactionary instrument of the Finnish ruling class, and an agent of Great Britain, France and the United States.

Q. *What is the difference in program between the new Finnish People's Democratic Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics?*

A. While the new Finnish Government has not yet formulated its constitution, it is possible, from its statements, to forecast its general outlines in comparison with those of the Soviet Government, roughly as follows:

In the U.S.S.R. industry is nationalized and socialized; agriculture is nationalized and organized into collective farms; private ownership of the social means of production has been abolished and all production is carried on for social use. In the new Finnish republic, however, industry, while strongly controlled by the state and the trade unions, will mostly be under private ownership, without domination by big industrialists; agriculture will be nationalized but not collectivized; the great privately-owned estates will be confiscated and distributed among the landless peasants.

The U.S.S.R. is a socialist republic, and now stands at the threshold of Communism; its government is founded upon the dictatorship of the proletariat, with one political party—the Communist Party. Whereas the Finnish People's Democratic Republic is a bourgeois-democratic state, with the workers and peasants the leading forces among the several economic classes; it may have several political parties, all represented in the parliament and probably also in the government.

The new Finnish People's Democratic Republic will guaran-

tee the toiling masses far wider democratic, economic, political, religious and social rights than they now enjoy; it will build up a broader system of social insurance and also definitely encourage the formation of trade unions and other mass organizations; it will systematically cultivate science, art and popular education. In all this, however, in order to be able to go as fast and as far as the Soviet Union is doing with its comprehensive program, the new Finnish state will have eventually to secure disposal over the full industrial and agricultural resources of the country and develop a thoroughgoing socialist organization of the people—economic, political, social.

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Q. Is not the advance of Soviet troops into Finland a violation of the Finnish people's right of self-determination?

A. On the contrary, the Red Army is cooperating with the toiling masses of the Finnish people to establish a self-determination and national independence that has been denied them under their reactionary government. Events will soon demonstrate this clearly, in spite of the thick cloud of lies woven by the capitalist press around the Finnish situation.

It was the Bolsheviks who granted full national independence to the Finnish people only a few days after the setting up of the Soviet Government in Russia in 1917. But the Finnish White Guards, backed by British gold and aided by German bayonets, shortly afterward violently overthrew the revolutionary Finnish Workers' Government and drowned it in blood. Following this counter-revolution, the present head of the Finnish White Army, Marshal Mannerheim, according to official American Government documents, cold-bloodedly executed 12,000 workers. Actually he slaughtered twice that many.

From that time on the Finnish people no longer enjoyed the self-determination and national independence originally granted them by Soviet Russia. Their reactionary government served continuously as a tool of British and German imperial-

ists. How deeply American imperialism is also interested in maintaining Finland as a valuable strategic starting point for war against the U.S.S.R. is illustrated by its present activities to keep the Finnish butcher, Mannerheim, in power. It was precisely because the masses of the Finnish people had no self-determination; because the Ryti-Mannerheim ruling clique were puppets of British and American imperialism, that that government brought about the present conflict by rejecting the just proposals of the Soviet Government, which would have guaranteed the peace and national integrity of Finland.

The new People's Democratic Republic of Finland, headed by Otto Kuusinen, will restore self-determination to the Finnish people, robbed from them by the Mannerheim White-Guards. It will put an end to imperialist intrigues in Finland and stop once and for all the use of the Finnish Government as a war weapon of world imperialism against the Soviet Union. The new Finnish Government has already worked out a practical agreement with the Soviet Government, one which will guarantee the Finnish people full national freedom, a perspective of peace, and an opportunity for the whole people (not merely a clique of landlords and capitalists) to develop a prosperous life.

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