

# Japanese Invade China

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000,000 yen, or approximately \$250,000,000. To meet part of these obligations \$130,000,000 in gold has been exported since March and a similar sum must soon leave the country, leaving gold stocks that will probably not exceed \$350,000,000. To cut imports the regime has called upon the people to cut down on the consumption of primary products and subordinate this already meager living standards to the needs of the military machine whose demands have caused Japan's budget to treble in three years and are responsible for a prospective deficit of 1,000,000 yen next year. Meanwhile prices are shooting up and heavier and heavier taxes are being imposed. At the same time the inevitable and imperative mobilization of the government subsidized merchant marine for war purposes cripples Japanese trade or, at best, raises costs to almost prohibitive levels if foreign ships are used.

Since 1931, billions of yen have gone into Japan's military adventure. So far, the returns have been negligible for the solution of Japan's crisis. But, having started on the path of expansion, Japanese imperialism cannot stand still, else it falls back. It must go forward, even if ahead lies ruin. The Japanese imperialists know that ruin is not inevitable so long as they can continue to exploit the masses in their own country and in increasing measure exploit the many millions in the great sprawling land across the narrow Japan Sea.

## C.P.-Supported Party for Invasion

Careful preparations were made before the present attacks on North and Central China were begun. At home, the Japanese imperialists fear only the discontent of the Japanese workers and peasants. More and more the burdens of the crisis have been placed on the backs of the masses. Far from attempting to alleviate this discontent, for Japanese capitalism has not the resources to make concessions to the workers, preparations have been made to canalize and suppress it. At the same time that an intense campaign of pro-war propaganda was launched, strikes were prohibited. The movement of protest against the rising cost of living and the military campaign which caused it was canalized into the Social Masses Party, supported by the Stalinists in the last elections in which it made considerable gains. Three weeks ago this Party declared its unqualified support of the Konoye government's invasion of China.

Before renewing its attacks on China, Japan tested out the temper of the Soviet Union. Emboldened by the deep inner crisis in the U.S.S.R. and the execution of Tukhachevsky and the other generals, Japan took a very truculent attitude concerning the question of Soviet patrols on the Amur River, which separates Manchuria from the Soviet Union, even to the point of sinking a Soviet gunboat and demanding the withdrawal of Soviet patrols. After several days of sharp tension, Moscow agreed to Japan's demands. Seven days later occurred the "incident" at Lukou-chiao which precipitated the conflict in North China.

## Chinese Bourgeoisie Sabotage Fight

What is most important to remember in seeking the key to the present conflict is that from 1931 until now the Chinese bourgeoisie, acting through its principal representative, Chiang

Kai-shek, capitulated virtually without struggle to the successive incursions of Japanese imperialism. It gave up Manchuria without firing a shot. It gave up Jehol and saved its own face by wantonly sacrificing thousands of soldiers it left there to fight without support. It consciously and deliberately sabotaged the attempted resistance of the 19th Route Army five and half years ago. It spoke loud and long of military preparations, but only a few weeks ago once more Chiang Kai-shek left the 29th Army unaided in the face of Japan's march on Peiping and Tientsin. During the past six years, the Nanking government has not only not opposed Japan, but it has waged a ruthless terror against all who raised their voices against the Japanese invasion.

But this was still not enough for Japanese imperialism, which unlike the British and American varieties, cannot quite so well afford to share with the Chinese bourgeoisie its booty in the exploitation of the Chinese masses. It requires complete conquest, complete subjugation. That is why it has struck again at Shanghai in hopes of there inflicting a swift and decisive defeat on the Chinese bourgeoisie and bringing it completely to heel.

The Chinese bourgeoisie is by its very nature compelled to serve one imperialist or another. With it the question is: whom shall it serve? Japanese imperialism, based so largely on light industry and a weak financial structure, wants to master China in order to establish a large outlet for its own products and to drain the country of the raw materials it possesses. Under such mastery there is no room for the Chinese bourgeoisie which would become essentially a class of salaried employees. Britain and the United States, with their greater share in the common exorbitance to export capital, offer to the Chinese bourgeoisie a far greater share in the common exploitation of the Chinese masses. Under their domination the Chinese bourgeoisie would remain what it is, a class of wealthy brokers with a direct stake in the exploitation of the masses. Obviously, Britain and America are far more preferable masters. So long as there is any hope of effective American and British backing, the Chinese bourgeoisie will try, in its own way and for its own purposes, to counter the Japanese advance.

## Chiang Propped by Anglo-French

Chiang Kai-shek is fighting at Shanghai today because, with the gold exchange agreement concluded by H. H. Kung recently in Washington, the \$120,000,000 loan concluded by him in London, and the credit extended to him in Paris, the Chinese bourgeoisie has been given reason to hope that Anglo-American imperialism will support it against the Japanese. Furthermore, the Chinese bourgeoisie realizes perfectly well that not to fight now is to abdicate forever its hopes of development under the tutelage of Anglo-American imperialism. Chiang Kai-shek is fighting also because the Japanese, in attacking his own bailiwick, have made it perfectly clear that they do not trust Chiang as their ally and they want to get rid of him.

So today, the Chinese bourgeoisie is basing its hopes on the contradictions between Anglo-American and Japanese imperialism. It does not dare to take the lead in arming the masses for a really revolutionary war of national liberation against impe-

rialist exploitation. It remembers too vividly how the peasants in Hunan ten years ago, primitive arms in hand, translated the slogan: "Down with the unequal treaties between China and the imperialists!" into "Down with the unequal treaties between the landlord and the peasants!" It remembers how the workers were no more satisfied to be exploited by Chinese capitalists than they were to be exploited by British or Japanese. In the great strike waves of 1925-27, Chinese mills closed as well as foreign mills. Then the Chinese bourgeoisie was saved from disaster only by the criminal policies of Stalinism. It is not anxious to take the chance again. For it knows that while its struggle with imperialism is only a struggle for a larger share of the spoils, the struggle between exploited and exploiters is a struggle of life and death.

The Chinese ruling class cannot wage a successful struggle against Japanese imperialism unless it arms the masses of China; and it dares not arm the masses, because the guns will surely be turned against itself.

To the Chinese masses, there is of course no basic difference between being exploited directly by Japanese imperialism, or indirectly, through the Chinese bourgeoisie, by Anglo-American imperialism. For them it is a question of freedom from all exploitation. For the peasant, the primary question remains the question of the land; for the worker it is a question of decent working conditions and a living wage.

## C.P. Calls for Imperialist Intervention

But, in the interests of Soviet foreign diplomacy, the Chinese Communist Party and the Comintern have forgotten all this. They have lined up with the Chinese bourgeoisie in placing their faith exclusively in the contradictions between Anglo-American and Japanese imperialism. In the hope that Nanking will at least hinder Japan's ultimate attack on the Soviet Union, they have again tied themselves to Chiang Kai-shek. They do not merely call for support of the indispensable struggle against the invading Japanese brigands, but proceed to place the gate and the orcs of the Chinese masses entirely in the hands of the treacherous Chinese bourgeoisie and the "good" imperialist. In addition, they take upon themselves the task of teaching the "democratic" imperialists how best to take care of their interests in China. The Daily Worker warns that "Japan will proceed to drive out of China its British, American, and French competitors." The "democratic nations" do not realize the danger. "Why does it (the U. S. State Department) not—NOW—invoke the Nine-Power Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact?" Daily Worker, Aug. 7 1937.) It should suffice to recall that from 1931 to 1933, when the imposture of the "peace machinery" of capitalism was completely exposed, the Nanking government covered up its betrayal and capitulation to Japanese imperialism by just appeals to the League of Nations and to the signatories of the Nine-Power Pact.

The fight against imperialism, like the fight against fascism, cannot be separated from the fight against capitalism. If Chiang Kai-shek is fighting today, it is only to preserve the right of the Chinese bourgeoisie to exploit the Chinese masses.

# Socialist Call Comes Out For Sanctions

The fruits of the right wing-centrists alliance against the left have ripened quickly. It would have been naive to suppose that the alliance could be reduced to an "organizational" maneuver. Not at all. Just as the alliance required a political foundation, so does it yield to necessary political consequences.

The political foundation is discovered, in the last analysis, by the hostility to revolutionary Marxism, shared in common by the right wing, and by the Zams, Tylers, and Delsons of the centrist leadership—a hostility which the centrist leaders try to mask as "anti-Trotskyism". But this basic hostility to revolutionary Marxism, confronted by the Party crisis and the need for finally "taking sides", forces its way more and more decisively through the left phrases of the centrist leaders, and reveals more and more openly the reactionary content of the whole centrist ideology.

## Centrists Adopting Right Wing Line

In the course of this evolution, the centrist leaders are compelled to abandon one by one the "revolutionary" positions which they had in the past been pushed to adopt in words and resolutions by the pressure of the membership. A major step in this process was taken at the Philadelphia meeting of the N. E. C. by the voting of the shameful Spanish resolution, in direct and bureaucratic violation of the will of the membership and the decisions of the Chicago Convention.

This process did not stop there. It has not yet been sufficiently noticed—to take a striking example—that during the past three months the right wing-centrist alliance has been gradually throwing over the revolutionary position on war overwhelmingly supported by the membership, and fought for during so many years.

As always, the right wing called the turn. Wisconsin announced flatly that it did not and would not accept the War Resolution adopted by the Chicago Convention. Naturally, there was no criticism of Wisconsin by the centrist leaders constituting the majority of the N. E. C. But Wisconsin was not content with "States' Rights". At Philadelphia Raskin demanded "editorial changes" in the War Resolution—changes all of which were designed to permit pacifist and reformist interpretations of the resolution as a whole; and the N. E. C. obligingly changed at Raskin's dictation.

But even this is not what is most significant. After all, a resolution on paper is less important than a concrete stand on a concrete issue.

## Thomas demands U. S. Sanctions

Thomas returned from Europe and in his first interviews demanded that the U. S. Government apply its Neutrality Act to Italy and German. What is the meaning of this demand? Its sources, in the vicious propaganda of the Stalinists and reformists through out the world, should indicate the answer.

In political fundamentals, this demand is identical with the demand for the application of League and governmental "sanctions" in the Italo-Ethiopian War.

In opposing the policy of sanctions during the Ethiopian War, the Socialist Party pointed out with absolute correctness that this advocacy of "anti-war" measures to be taken by imperialist governments: (1) sabo-

tagged effective independent working class support of the Ethiopian struggle; (2) disoriented the working class on the whole problem of the fight against war and the role played in that fight by all imperialist governments; and (3) led logically to support of "one's own" imperialism in the coming war, in order to back up the governmental acts (the "sanctions") which had been advocated.

"The application of the Neutrality Act" is simply another phrase for "sanctions". The Neutrality Act would impose an impartial embargo, just as sanctions did. This embargo, if meant seriously, would have to be enforced. For the U. S. government to enforce it, would lead to coercive acts which as between sovereign states constitute "acts of war", and, if conditions so dictated, to war itself.

The central objections to the demand for the application of the Neutrality Act are the same as those to the demand for sanctions. It sabotages the movement for independent working class support of the struggle against Franco. It disorients the working class on the whole problem of the fight against war—and in this case far more fatally than in connection with sanctions; for here it is the U. S. government itself, and the relation of the U. S. working class to "its own" government, that is in question. And it forms a link in the chain which leads to support of the U. S. government in the coming war (in order to enforce "neutrality" against aggressors)—that is, the demand is a preparation for social-patriotic betrayal.

Can anyone doubt this who has followed the manipulation of this demand in the Stalinist press, where it is part and parcel of their social-patriotic program, and so clearly figures in their build-up for support of the approaching war?

## Call joins Thomas Demand

Let no one imagine that the demand for the application of the Neutrality Act rested, in the Socialist Party, in the press statements of Thomas. In the issue of July 3rd, the Socialist Call, the faction organ of the right wing-centrist alliance, made it the official policy of the Call.

Let the membership re-read the lead editorial of that issue—headed "Neutrality". It is indistinguishable from the propaganda of the Stalinists and reformists on sanctions two years ago or on neutrality today. It contains even the same hypocritical "apologies" and attempts at covering up. Its argumentation almost out-does the Stalinists. The editorial declares: "But actually, Hitler and Mussolini have been at war with Spain... Unofficial warfare... came to an end with the bombing of Almeria That was open war". If this statement were true, the editors of the Call are thus advocating that the U. S. government take what are in effect war measures against rival imperialist governments now at war. Whatever may be the intentions of the editors, their position on this question is a form of social-patriotism; its logic leads inescapably to complete abandonment of revolutionary defeatism and to support of the coming war.

Let those who still have faith in the "revolutionary" intention of the centrist leaders ponder the lesson well. The price of an alliance with the right wing against the revolutionary left is, now as always, the abandonment of revolutionary principle.