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Roosevelt Heading Towards New War

Speech in Chicago Heralds U.S. Offensive Against Japan in Far-Eastern Crisis

The address on the international situation, delivered by President Roosevelt in Chicago on October 5th, is the most important single declaration of policy ever made by Roosevelt, and ranks among the three or four most far-reaching political statements made during the entire history of this country. In the Chicago address, the whole world heard the masterful, able, and authentic voice of that gigantic colossus, American imperialism.

Mobilizing Public Opinion for War

There is only one possible focal sense in which to understand the Chicago address: *This declaration is the first grand-scale step in the mobilization of public opinion in the United States for the coming war.* Beside this mighty fact, all debate over details of Roosevelt's remarks, all analysis of particular sentences and paragraphs and doctrines, sink into insignificance. The official mobilization of public opinion, the keystone of war preparations in the modern world, is now formally launched.

This does not mean, of course, that war is necessarily expected, so far as the United States is concerned, within the next weeks or months. The exact moment of the outbreak is not in question. It means that the outstanding spokesman of United States capitalism, concluding from his analysis of the world crisis that the war is inevitable, and recognizing that the United States must necessarily take part in it, has charted his firm and direct course toward entry and participation in the manner and on the terms that will yield the most fruitful results for the American bourgeoisie; that henceforth the governmental policy of the United States will be wholly subordinated to the war preparations.

The further steps will follow quickly, and indeed a number have already been taken during these few days since the delivery of the address. On all sides it is recognized that the infantile "Neutrality Policy", so solemnly enacted by the sovereign Congress, has been quietly buried. The "isolationist" press is being whipped into line—within two days of the address the *New York Evening Post*, which has made "isolation" the foundation of its editorial policy, announced its abandonment, and stated in large type that the problem now is to implement and carry through unwaveringly the President's policy. The poor little "peace organizations", only a month ago issuing statements that pretended to speak for the nation's destiny, are weeping plaintively in a social wilderness. A vast increase in the armaments budget, and the enact-

ment of various industrial and military mobilization plans, are an obvious certainty at the next session of Congress.

Reaching Out for the World

In its political meaning, Roosevelt's address beings where Secretary Hull's declaration to the Buenos Aires Conference concluded, and follows the same general structure established there by the Secretary of State. At Buenos Aires, Hull announced the fact of United States hegemony over the entire South America Continent, and the determination of the United States to defend hegemony against any and all comers. The two Americas, Hull made clear the base of operations from which the United States reaches out toward the rest of the world.

In his Chicago address, Roosevelt announced that the most favorable area for United States imperialist expansion—and expansion already begun on a serious scale—is the Far East; and that the United States is prepared to defend its rights of exploitation in the Far East against the challenge of Japan and of any or all other powers.

This point of view had already been made apparent in the response of the bourgeois spokesmen since the outbreak of the war in China. It is, for example, in the highest degree instructive to compare the editorials in the *New York Times*—the most authentic representative of American finance-capital—in connection with the Chinese events with those written on the Civil War in Spain. The *Times* did, it is true, express from time to time distaste over the actions of Franco, Mussolini, and Hitler in Spain, and a certain indignation over Almeria and Guernica. But the tone was kept within careful and restrained limits; and these comments were balanced by editorial attacks on the Loyalists, and especially by a balance maintained between "pro-Franco" and "pro-Loyalist" correspondents in the news columns.

The Masses Are Duped By Lies

Almost daily since the invasion of China began there have appeared anti-Japanese editorials, not in the least measured or restrained, but, quite on the contrary, of a vigor and even violence unprecedented in the *Times* since the days of the last War. Japan has been denounced as a brigand, outlaw, murderer and pariah. Not by accident, then, does the *Times* greet Roosevelt's Chicago address with open armed approval.

It goes without saying that public opinion

could not be mobilized for the war through a direct and open statement of the imperialist aims and issue. The masses of the people will fight only for what they take to be some great ideal, some moral imperative to which the sacrifice of life itself will seem an act worth while. The naked, ruthless, barbaric demands of imperialist exploitation—the real aims and real issues—are useless and worse than useless for the rallying of the people. They must be dressed up in lies and illusions, illusions that will capture the conscience and rouse the moral fervor of the masses.

To lay out the blueprint of these lies and illusion is the chief purpose of the Chicago Address. With the terrible cynicism and utter moral perversion which the rotted capitalist order impose upon all of its servants, Roosevelt flung out the banners around which the masses will be rallied and summoned.

"Innocent peoples and nations are being cruelly sacrificed to a greed for power and supremacy which is devoid of all sense of justice and humane consideration.... The peace-loving nations must make a concrete effort in opposition to those violations of treaties and those ignorings of humane instincts.... Those who cherish their freedom and recognize and respect the equal rights of their neighbors to be free and live in peace must work together for the triumph of law and moral principles in order that peace, justice and confidence may prevail in the world... It is, therefore, a matter of vital interest and concern to the people of the United States that the sanctity of international treaties and the maintenance of international morality be restored.... Surely the 90 per cent who want to live in peace.... can and must find some way to make their will prevail.... The moral consciousness of the world must recognize the importance.... of putting an end to acts of international aggression.... There must be positive endeavors to preserve peace...."

Behind the "Peace" Cry

How pure and noble! What beautiful words to die for! No word here of American investments and commerce; no slightest mention of the impatient idle capital in the banks unable to find profitable outlet in the home market; no whisper of the imperative necessity to preserve the American competitive position in the Far Eastern markets. We are lifted to far loftier ground. From that vantage point we see the cruel, greedy enemy, slaughtering and murdering, devoid of all moral sense. A fit dog to kill! And we, of course, (Continued on page 7)