

Are You Ready for War?

A Discussion on Imperialist War, Past and Present, on the Presidential "Peace-Lovers" and How They Prepare the Minds of the Masses in Support of a New World-Wide War for Plunder and Exploitation.

You want peace. So do one hundred out of practically any hundred people you might stop on the street. So do we.

You remember the horrors of the last war, if not through personal experience, then through movies, books, pictures, acquaintances. Thousands of well-intentioned people have pledged "Never again," thousands have participated in peace meetings, parades, petitions, etc. Yet the clanking and grinding of the war machine can be heard getting louder and louder.

Governments pile up their armaments, led by our very "own" Roosevelt, who also is a "peace-lover". The Eastern hemisphere is blazing at both ends, in Spain and China. Diplomats maneuver for alliances in preparation for the inevitable war. In Europe the masses seem resigned to a new world slaughter, and know that it is impossible for America to stand aside from a war which will rage over the far-flung empire of American imperialism. The cries of "Peace" seem to be only the dust-clouds raised by this onward march of the war-machine; and they are just as powerless as the dust-clouds.

There Were Peace-Lovers Then Too

This is not the first time this has happened. Before the World War too, there was a tremendous blooming of the peace movement. The year 1917 saw more "peace conferences" than any preceding year. And then too, we had a "peace-loving President" who said he "hated war" and vowed to "keep us out".

But when the war came, all this vanished as if it had never existed. Wilson's peace speeches served only to help the mobilization of the people behind the war, since they had learned to look toward him with confidence. The pacifists of all shades joined in the war drive, utilizing the prestige they had gained by their peace activities to rally confidence in the government's policy. "If these people are for it, it must be a good war!"

And the only organized force that opposed the war were the revolutionary Socialists, like Gene Debs.

Presidential Peace-Lovers Today

Today too there are all kinds of peace-lovers. And leading them again is the President, who shoved his face into the news-reel cameras saying "I hate war!" at the same time that he builds the biggest army and navy in our peace-time history and gets ready to intervene in the Chinese conflict.

With the world tottering on the brink, President Roosevelt choose this moment to announce a reversal in foreign policy. Throwing aside his previous demagogic demands for American neutrality in world conflicts, he calls for American intervention to "quarantine the aggressor", whom his man Hull defines as Japan; that is, he takes the first step toward swinging into action against Japan. Roosevelt throws aside his mask of peace and heads toward imperialist war.

While the memory of the last war is still fresh, a generation is again mobilized for war. How has this come about?

Mobilizing the Consciences

Long ago, it was very easy to mobilize for war. When the Indians went on the war-path, they painted their faces fearsomely, keyed themselves up with war-dances and yells, and were ready. The braves knew why they went to war—to gain neighboring land, hunting rights, etc., for themselves.

Today under capitalism, the war-makers do not tell the masses that war is necessary in order to defend capitalist investments, or gain colonies or markets. John Smith has no investments to defend, and Mrs. Smith would not send her son to the front in order to enslave some colonial people. They are not interested in those things. A new technique is necessary. Today—

The first principle of the war-makers is to mobilize the Smiths and Browns behind war by utilizing their very desire for peace.

It's a political jiu-jitsu trick. In a scrap with a jiu-jitsu expert, the energy which you put into rushing your opponent is turned against you, to knock you off your feet. So today: war propaganda is rigged so as lead the masses to war thru their own search for peace. Wars are not simply imperialist wars; we are told they are "wars to end war".

But the jiu-jitsu trick is possible only when the rash attacker is ignorant of the principles behind it. It is the lack of understanding behind his attack that leads to his self-defeat. So with modern war propaganda; the "peace movement" can only be self-defeating as long as it lacks understanding.

"Wars to End War": Stopping the "Aggressor"

The oldest gag is the cry: "Let us maintain peace—by warring against any nation that breaks the peace. The first nation that dares to attack will be over-awed by the opposition of the rest of the world." And of course, we must support this war to end war!

But what is an aggressor? Is it the nation whose army first crosses the border, which attacks first? Only one who lacks all understanding of the modern world can believe this. The fact is that the aggression that initiates the next war has already taken place.

The war between America and Japan is raging right now, and it started long ago. It is being fought, for example, in Latin America. It is a war between American and Japanese capitalists for foreign trade, for fields of investment, for raw materials. Whenever American and Japanese business collide in pursuit of their imperialist aims, this trade war rages.

This imperialist trade war is fought with weapons. At first, the weapons are purely business ones. But they do not remain so. As the trade war sharpens, the capitalists call upon their governments for support, and the capitalist governments respond. New weapons come into play, governmental weapons.

Trade treaties, "spheres of influence", trade concessions, tariffs, embargoes, subsidies—these are the big guns the governments bring up at this stage of the struggle. Puppet dictators in the Latin-American countries are taken in tow, like Vargas in Brazil who is the stooge for American interests. Puppet dictator is set against puppet dictator, and small-scale local wars result which are really clashes between the rival imperialist governments pulling the strings behind the scenes. (Such was the Gran Chaco war fought between Bolivia, representing American interests, and Paraguay, representing the British.)

AS THE WAR APPROACHES!

We who are the ghosts of last year's arms, the bullets sunk within our living flesh! the shrapnel—through its eerie flight laced within our youthful chests; the noxious gases stealing through the broken land, among the torn colored flowers lying in the sand! to be the rapturous breath that brings our howling death that this was war— and is said to be no more...

The ghosts that were never laid away— walk through the towns on public days, with stumps for legs and medals on their thighs, their gassed heads held high—for patriotism's sigh, their song spangled on their lips—"Their's is but to do and die."

Be Silent, Go Forth, lie among the guns— from public charities and social un-insurance, you've had but poverty and now you'll get the fun— if unemployment has not worn out your endurance! You're married to this very bewitching nation— and cannot treat it like a public whore, whose pleasures you've promiscuously taken— and whose payment you'll now insure! by your bloody body not to be forsaken, but to be made holy in some national ground, when some other commanded workman shoots against you— and you are quiet! death is but a moaning sound...

But should it be that you'll live to see the day— and understand the quarter of your attack; you'll turn the guns and shoot the other way— the generals, the financiers—are always in the back...

HARRY ROSKOLENKO

'New Int'l' To Appear In 2 Weeks

The first issue of the revived publication of the New International, a monthly organ of revolutionary Marxism, is already being prepared for the press. According to the business manager, it will be ready for the mails in less than two weeks.

Among the material of interest that will appear in the first issue the editors announce the following:

A leading article on the twentieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. To commemorate further the great historic event, there will appear an article on the Red Army, written by the German revolutionist, Erich Wollenberg, who served as commanding officer in the Soviet armed forces for several years. Maurice Spector has written an omnibus review of the most important recent works on the Soviet Union, subjecting them to a critical analysis; he includes Eugene Lyons, Fred Beal, Victor Serge, Andre Gide, M. Yvon, Albert Rhys Williams and others. In addition, the issue will contain the record of an informal evening of recollections of the Bolshevik insurrection, participated in by a number of the revolutionary leaders who were directly at the head of the job in 1917.

The War of Japan against China is the subject of a thorough-going examination by Li Fu-jen, and Felix Morrow writes about the role of the anarchist movement in the Spanish Civil War.

The American scene is dealt with in an article on Roosevelt and the American Revolution by James Burnham. Articles on the relations between the CIO and the AFL and the future of the American trade union movement, as well as on the coming emergency convention of the Socialist Party called in Chicago by the left wing, will also appear.

A gratifying interest has been shown through the country in the revival of the New International and orders for bundles and individual subscriptions have been coming into the office of the manager from all parts of the country. Those branches that have not yet sent in their orders are urged to do so immediately, because economy dictates the printing of a number of copies limited to the requirements in sight.

All communications and moneys should be sent to the New International at 116 University Place, New York City. The subscription rate has been set at \$2.00 a year. Bundle orders are offered at reduced rates.

Genesis of A. L. P.

"I did not organize the Labor Party. Mr. Mahoney's party organized it"—LaGuardia A. L. P. candidate for mayor.

STALINISM and BOLSHEVISM

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by Leon TROTSKY

Pioneer Publishers
100 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Upper West Side Branch
PRE-CONVENTION DANCE
Saturday, Nov. 13
916—9th Ave., Corner 58th St.
2nd Floor
REAL SWING BAND
Admission 39c.

Bill's Column

Freedom and Rome

The Roman Catholic Church dominates Montreal. Recently the ban on Communist meetings has been extended to include meetings of the unemployed. Said Cardinal Richelieu, "I congratulate the religious and municipal authorities who have opposed the Montreal meeting and the people who have denounced them.... Paganism has many offers, among them are freedom of speech, freedom to insult our traditions, our beliefs and our religion." So in the eyes of the Holy Cardinal, free speech is paganism. And indeed the Cardinal's stand is in accord with the traditions of his church, Browder to the contrary notwithstanding. Mouthings of the agents of Rome in the United States about democracy must be measured against their acts elsewhere. Events in Spain, Austria, Italy, Canada reveal, again and again, that hidden under the priestly robes are not only opium for the people but the policeman's club and the gangster's black-jack as well.

"The Blood of the Lamb"

Mayor LaGuardia, candidate of the Republican, Fusion, Progressive and Labor Parties, endorsee of the Social Democrats, the S.P. and the C.P., speaker for Fascists and anti-Fascists, friend of the employer and the employees spokesman for Father Divine and Holy Rome, addressed the Salvation Army last week. Said, Hizzoner, "Fellow Salvationists." What a man!

The White Man's Burden

"We did not conquer India for the benefit of Indians. We conquered India by the sword and by the sword we shall hold it. We hold it as the finest outlet of British goods in general and Lancashire cotton in particular."—Lord Brentford—in the days when Britain's imperialist spokesmen occasionally spoke the truth.

A Bargain

"For discriminating people: Black broadtail with blended marten collar, only \$4.400." Advertisement in N. Y. Times. Are there any discriminating people in the audience?

"Success"

That the American Labor Party achieved certain "successes" in the last elections must be admitted. They "succeeded" in defeating Democrats and electing Republicans to Albany, in fact they "succeeded" so well that last year's "success" Governor Lehman and his supporters are now in a hopeless minority in the New York legislature. Other "successes" might be mentioned but the greatest "success" of all was to furnish the badly shattered Republican Party with two possible "white hopes" for 1940—LaGuardia and Dewey. The latter, Thomas E. Dewey with his "movie" bodyguards are almost irresistible.

Free Labor

"Under this [the German Nazi] procedure the worker is virtually bound to his job, a situation probably without precedent in the modern capitalist state"—Raymond Clapper in the World-Telegram. Though similar methods of slavery may not be found general in any other capitalist state certainly Clapper would not have to go outside the boundaries of God's Country to find a precedent. The cotton-pickers of the Democratic South know no other procedure.