

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.

(Continued from last issue)

Capitalism Must Expand

But the trade war cannot be settled by such weapons. When the economic or trade weapons prove inadequate for one of the imperialist rivals, it cannot merely accept defeat and give up. Its capitalist must expand and then expand again. There is a fatal drive behind them which forces them to reach out toward new lands—the necessity for new markets to dispose of the goods which cannot be bought by the impoverished masses at home, the necessity for fresh fields for investing capital when the rate of profit falls lower and lower at home. Capitalism must find new victims to feed upon as the old are sucked out, or else die itself. The fact that the whole world is already divided up, that it must inevitably collide with other imperialist robbers who likewise are prowling about outside or defending their conquered spoils, this cannot stop it.

And so when tariffs and trade treaties and local politics prove useless, a new change of weapons is made. And the last resort is to cannon, gas, tanks, airplanes, the guns that pop and the bayonets that flash. That is when you say war has begun. But this thing you call war is not something that suddenly appears with no connections with the past, like the visitation of a plague. It is a continuation of the imperialist politics of the past. In general, war is a continuation of the politics of a nation—with a change of weapons.

This is the reality. Anything else used to cover up this reality is a lie. Behind the screen of "peace-time", war is raging always.

Who Is the "Aggressor?"

And in all this, who is the aggressor? During "peace-time", the imperialist nations prowl around each other, crouching like wrestlers who are looking for the most favorable opportunity to spring upon their rival. The question of who-attacks-whom-first is a matter of military expediency, preparedness, diplomatic maneuvering, degree of imperialist drive; it does not decide our attitude. The imperialist war began far back in economic rivalries, and both groups of imperialists are equally the aggressors.

Who is the aggressor? Capitalist imperialism itself means a continual aggression. It is a continual attack upon the working masses at home, who are exploited and oppressed so that the money lords may raise themselves on their backs in order to reach farther out. It is a continual attack upon the working masses in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, who are squeezed dry by foreign imperialists, kept in dictatorial slavery by the capitalist "democrats", used as cannon fodder against rival dictators, or shot down unmercifully when they rise against their double yoke of foreign oppressor and native capitalist. The working masses of both America and Japan, plus the colonial peoples, are the attacked; the imperialists of both America and Japan are the attackers. This is the division between aggressors and defenders.

Understanding this, what is to be done? International collaboration—not with one group of imperialists against the other—but international organization and action of the workers of all countries against the imperialists of all countries. And in each country, the workers face their most immediate aggressor, their "own" capitalists, "the enemy at home". This is revolutionary socialism. What a crime it is if, instead, the workers of America join hands with their own exploiters to slaughter the workers of Japan and help the imperialists keep their colonial slaves in chains! This is social-patriotism, this is betrayal.

There is another bait for the peace-lovers. The fascist nations, we are told, want war; the democracies want peace. We must defend our democracy against the fascists, and thereby stop their war-plans. Therefore we must support war—by the line-up of "peace-loving" democratic nations versus fascists.

Well, how peace-loving are the peace-loving democracies? England, whose empire was built on the blood and slaughter of helpless natives; which lives by keeping its colonies under an iron heel of militarism; which did not stop at fomenting war in the Gran Chaco to protect its imperialist interests; which is feverishly building its military establishment. America—the other parti-

cipant in the Chaco war; which is waging war now upon the Cuban people, thru the military dictatorship of its man Batista; which has the biggest peace-time budget in its history. France—whose hands are dripping with the blood of the Moroccan war of 1925; which today under the People's Front, has the biggest military machine on the Continent and is building beyond it; whose "democratic" army is led by avowed fascists, whose positions are not touched by the People's Front. How peace-loving are the capitalist politicians who run these governments, and how peace-loving are the bankers who run these politicians?

The Real Line-Up

The fact is that democratic capitalism is no more "peace-loving" than any other kind of capitalism. The real line-up is not of the democracies versus the fascists. It is the same division that led to the World War: the imperialist robbers that have what they want and are willing to sit back on their bloodily-gained loot, versus the imperialist robbers that are dissatisfied with their share of the world—the Haves versus the Have-Nots.

The fascist nations are for the most part the dissatisfied powers—Germany, defeated in the last world scramble for colonies; Japan, which came late on the world scene, when the world had already been divided up; Italy, which thinks its share in the Versailles peace settlement does not measure up to its power. And it is precisely because these nations have been frozen out of the imperialist spoils upon which capitalism lives that their internal contradictions and weaknesses led to fascism, the last resort of a desperate capitalism seeking to preserve itself.

Should we support the successful robbers against the unsuccessful? Our answer is No—we cannot line up with the victorious imperialists against the defeated variety; we must conduct a determined struggle against both. The tiger with his belly full is less dangerous at the moment than the lean, hungry, tiger, but it would be exceedingly unwise for the lamb to lie down with him.

The lines forming today do not find the democracy arrayed against the dictatorships. The allies of "democratic" France on the Continent include Rumania and Jugoslavia, semi-fascist and militarist dictatorships, and fascist Poland is especially courted by the French democrats. These democracies, which raise the banner "Fight Fascism", are anxious to inveigle into their ranks even fascist Italy. Indeed, some of the chief supporters of this treacherous policy, the Communist Parties, go further. For the sake of including Italy in the anti-German front, the Italian Communist Party, has declared its willingness to give up the fight against fascism. In a recent manifesto, they called upon Mussolini to make a mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union, offering in exchange an Italian People's Front with the fascists, for the "reconciliation of the fascists and anti-fascists" and the "liquidation of the struggle" between them.

And as for the "democratic" countries themselves—will they remain democratic in war-time? How democratic were they in the last war? How much more of democratic rights remained than exist in open military dictatorships?

"Democracy" In War Time

The sad truth is that no capitalist government can afford to be democratic in war-time. Already prepared for us is the Industrial Mobilization Plan of the American government, which provides for the setting up of a virtual military dictatorship over every aspect of our lives, civil as well as military, thru a special board of industrialists with dictatorial powers. Strikes will be treason, free speech will be sedition, the workers in the factories will be subject to court-martial for stepping out of line. France, the "democratic" France of the People's Front, has its M-day plan too, in the shape of the notorious Passive Defense Law, which puts every man, woman, and child under the control of the military administration. The Nye committee of the Senate, which reported on the American plan, concludes: "The price of war may be actual operating dictatorship, under military control in this country. Possibly, under certain circumstances, that price will not be too high for the people to desire to pay it..." As if anyone will ask the people! And will the "peace-lovers" who want a "war to make the world safe for democracy" accept this price?

Glimpses at Latin America

Political tyranny rules supreme in Central America. Trujillo in Santo Domingo, Vincent in Haiti and Somoza in Nicaragua dominate with pitiless brutality the oppressed, hunger-ridden masses of their respective countries, mercilessly quelling all opposition. And, one must not forget, that it is precisely in those countries that American imperialist hegemony is unquestionable, and no government could endure for any length of time in those parts without the support of the United States. And, by the way, we just recall that President Roosevelt called the western hemisphere a "bulwark of democracy".

Democratic government is not the rule but rather an exception throughout Latin-America and, it is precisely where Yankee imperialism dominates that the most naked police dictatorships exist. Vargas in Brazil and Batista in Cuba are just two excellent illustrations proving our contention. And in Peru, the despot, general Benavides remains in power despite the fact that his main political opponent in the presidential elections of October, 1936, received about eighty per cent of the popular vote.

—Bernard Ross

B. J. WIDICK
Former Research Director
United Rubber Workers
(C. I. O.)
Speaks on:
C. I. O.—A. F. of L. Peace?
Upper West Side Branch
919 9th Ave. (Corner 58th St.)
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19th
8:00 P. M. — Admission Free

Chicago Celebrates November 7th

About 500 people attended the spirited celebration of the Russian Revolution on Sunday, November 7th, at the Medical Arts Building. The meeting was organized by the Chicago local of the Left Wing Socialists and was featured by the first Mid-West showing of the great film, "From Tsar to Lenin".

Y.P.S.L. ushers in uniform helped to make an efficient and orderly meeting which was opened by the chairman, Lydia Beidel. Preceding the film, a speech was delivered by Albert Goldman on "20 Years of the Existence of the Soviet Union", in which he traced the development of the October Revolution and its subsequent degeneration under the Stalin leadership. The tremendous contrast of the Soviet Union of today and twenty years ago was made more visible by the film, in bringing home the fact that the entire leadership of the revolution is today non-existent, having been for the most part executed by Stalin.

An excellent part of the meeting was the brisk sale of literature and the general keen interest in our movement displayed by the many newcomers. The meeting ended with cheers for the 4th International and the singing of the International.

STALINISM and BOLSHEVISM

by
10¢ Leon TROTSKY

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

Bill's Column

Stalinized Cosmetics

Amid the mass of reports of purges, arrests and shooting of presidents, vice-presidents and premiers of Soviet republics, of commissars, vice-commissars and assistant commissars of industry, of managers, assistant managers and foremen of factories, it is a relief to read of one enterprise that is not cursed with "Trotskyist-Fascist saboteurs" and one commissar that rates not a firing squad but promotion. That exception was not found in the steel, coal, oil or machine industries. No, the one outstanding "industry" that remained free from "enemies of the people" and true in its entirety to the "Man of Steel" was and is the Cosmetic "industry." And the outstanding commissar that won well deserved promotion was none other than the wife of Stalin's right hand man, Premier Molotoff. Mme. Molotoff is to be congratulated on her choice of "industries" and of husbands.

A "Lunatic"

While George, who is substituting for Wally's boy friend as the puppet king of England, was celebrating Armistice Day along with some of the scoundrels who sent hundreds of thousands of English boys to their death in the World War, a man dashed out shouting: "This is all hypocrisy. You are all preparing for another war." He was sent to a psychopathic hospital, while those who cheered the butchers and their symbol king were allowed to walk around as sane men.

Looking Backward

In a 1923 issue of the Communist Jewish Daily Freiheit are found two pages of pictures of Communist leaders, including the governmental heads of the Soviet Union. They were all there—so many of them today dead, victims of Stalin's firing squads, or in jail awaiting death. Stalin himself was in the Cabinet, Commissar of National Minorities, but so little was he known, that the Freiheit named him "A. Stalin."

An Announcement

The 1938 edition of Earl Browder's annual repudiation of his past year's views will be published early in January, under the title: "People's Front." Persons close to Browder say it is a masterpiece of old fashioned horse feathers. Mr. Browder will demonstrate "the indivisibility of peace" the "infallibility of Stalin" and the gullibility of his followers, the "20th Century Americans."

A Governor's Cure for Depression

"I do not hesitate to say that to avert the threatening storm ahead it is my judgement and the judgement of many of the best friends of the President that he must come forward with an affirmative and positive program carrying the courageous and effective ring he has so often used in the past, but his message should contain the finest courage free from class consciousness and filled with healing comfort and hope for the whole people." — Governor Gardner, of North Carolina. Any day now we expect to see the veterans on the street corners selling pies. "We planned it this way" — President Roosevelt.