

SOCIALIST APPEAL

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FIGHT WITH THE SOCIALIST
WORKERS PARTY FOR:

1. A job and a decent living for every worker.
2. Open the idle factories—operate them under workers' control.
3. A Twenty-Billion dollar Federal public works and housing program.
4. Thirty-thirty—\$30-weekly minimum wage—30-hour weekly maximum for all workers on all jobs.
5. Thirty dollar weekly old-age and disability pension.
6. Expropriate the Sixty Families.
7. All war funds to the unemployed.
8. A people's referendum on any and all wars.
9. No secret diplomacy.
10. An independent Labor Party.
11. Workers' Defense Guards against vigilante and Fascist attacks.
12. Full social, political and economic equality for the Negro people.

Two of a Kind

The Stalinists are among those most directly responsible for the million-job cut in the Roosevelt budget. It is a question whether Roosevelt could have dared do it, without their pro-Roosevelt propaganda in the labor movement during the last four years, their conversion of the Workers Alliance into a company union serving Roosevelt, their deliberate lying to cover up his anti-labor acts. To what lengths they went in the service of Roosevelt can be seen—to mention but one instance—by reading the "reports" in the *Daily Worker* during last summer's nation-wide WPA strike. All of Roosevelt's own acts, they laid at the door of the "Tories." Now they are shedding crocodile tears that Roosevelt has gone over to reaction. It is obvious to the naked eye, however, that if tomorrow Roosevelt beckons a finger to Stalin, the Stalinists will go back to singing his praises and covering up his war against the unemployed.

The Stalinist system of lying is a revolting spectacle. It is not, however, limited to Stalinists. Witness, for example, the behavior of the Social-Democrats, who hold themselves to be at the opposite pole from the Stalinists. They are distinguished from the Stalinists in their devotion to truth—they say. Here is the kind of truth they peddle, in an article dealing with Roosevelt's address last week to Congress:

"It's no secret that the editors of the *New Leader* think Roosevelt one of the greatest leaders this nation has produced, despite his party affiliation. But one man doesn't make a movement; one man's idealism, one man's striving for the 'one third of a nation' doesn't feed, clothe, and house the millions of jobless. Roosevelt has done a good job. He has revolutionized, to a degree, the American philosophy of government. He has set progressive standards of public relief, labor relations, public health and housing, from which even the ebullient G.O.P. hopefuls can't retreat.

"But it isn't enough. He has been sabotaged by his own party, and the men of other parties who were elected to care for the people during the thirties." (*New Leader*, January 6).

Such is the comment, of a paper which calls itself socialist, on a speech in which Roosevelt served notice that he was taking the lead in cutting down relief, a speech supplemented by specific figures the next day wiping out a million jobs on WPA and PWA! Can one put it down to a lack of understanding, to a process of honest mistakes? No! No more than one could find a drop of honesty in the Stalinist whitewash of Roosevelt or their present line.

The war-mongering editors of the *New Leader* and the labor skates they serve, like their brothers in the Second International in Britain, France and Belgium, are part of the war machine. For the sake of a few crumbs from the table of the "democratic" capitalists—crumbs which go to these labor "leaders" and a thin strata of the aristocracy of labor, but of which the vast majority of the slaves in the British, French and American empires are deprived—these scoundrels are doing what they can to put the workers in uniform and keep them quiet and obedient in the trenches. To do that requires systematic lying about the realities of "democracy." From this well of conscious corruption comes this latest lie in the *New Leader*.

We beg to be excused from the impossible task of deciding which is worse, a Stalinist or a Social Democrat, Earl Browder or Louis Waldman. The fact is, they are two of a kind.

Stalin's Friends

The "Friends of the Soviet Union" have silently folded their tents and melted away into the shadows of the past.

They claimed to number millions, only a few months ago. Loudly down the years they paraded, one after another, the swiftly changing slogans of their master in the Kremlin. They proclaimed themselves the stoutest defenders of Stalin's brutal purge and the witchcraft trials. Now of a sudden they are gone. How and when they departed no one knows. Where and by what vote and for what reasons they dissolved themselves, no one knows. Their liquidation came to light just like the many "liquidations" they hailed in Moscow. It was casually announced in a statement about something else to the press by their chairman, Corliss Lamont, gift of the Sixty Families to the Kremlin.

In the course of a statement apropos of the Dies Committee, Lamont said: "The American Friends of the Soviet Union, practically dormant as a national organization since 1936, actually went out of existence some time ago."

That was all. Just like the little paragraphs in Stalin's newspapers announcing that such and such a commissar or vice-commissar was not coming to his office anymore.

What has happened to these "friends" at a time when Stalin needs friends as never before? What has happened to all the hoarse professors, the Park Avenue pinks, the Fifth Avenue Fellow Travelers who filled the vociferous cheering section when the Kremlin Caesar turned his wolves loose on the last remnants of the old Bolshevik Party? Where today are all these writers of resolutions, signers of telegrams, these sitters in soft seats who were to be the bulwark of the Soviet land against those who traduced and attacked it?

They are gone, all gone in a great passing of wind, gone with the "friends" of the Vincent Sheehan stripe. Anybody who troubles to look into the crowded compound of liberals, pacifists, fakers, liars, cowards who have rushed with the war back into the folds of their capitalist masters will find all Stalin's "friends" there. There, after all, is where they always belonged. Having cheered when Stalin dealt blows at the October revolution, they are ready to cheer now as the capitalist world gets ready to strike both at Stalin and what remains of the October revolution.

And these were the people who had the effrontery to call us enemies of the Soviet Union! We answered them: we would defend the real Soviet Union—the economic conquests of October—against Stalin and against the capitalist world, including Stalin's "friends." When the test came, we said, we would be found at our posts while the "friends" would have fled to the enemy. It has happened.

CRUDE, BUT CLEAR ENOUGH

Under the title "A Hint to the Rich", an editorial in the *New York World Telegram*, Dec. 20, appealed for funds for Finland:

"We want in this connection to point out a very practical proposition:

"Those who have been loudest in their hate of communism have been the ones who have the most to lose. Now is the time for them to show their sentiments."

"For the rich this is something in the nature of a bargain. They can get more than a dollar for every dollar subscribed."

"A word to the wise and a hint to the rich are sometimes sufficient. And as an insurance proposition for the rest of the world Finnish Relief, Inc., looks the best in our lifetime."

De Valera-Turncoat

The English haven't had to send new Black and Tan contingents to Ireland so far, because this time they've got de Valera working for them.

Having taken his pieces of silver from his English masters, the present-day head of the Irish government is turning on his former comrades of the Irish Republican Army with nothing less than Black and Tan savagery.

With the aid of a hysterical campaign seeking to tar the I.R.A. fighters with the Nazi brush—(de Valera himself was called an "agent of the Kaiser" the last time)—de Valera has put through the Dail a law authorizing imprisonment without trial for any persons whose liberty is deemed injurious to the safety of the State. What else did the Black and Tans try to enforce?

De Valera's police, cheered on by the Cosgrave "opposition," are hunting down members of the I.R.A. and all known friends and sympathizers of the struggle for Irish freedom. De Valera's challenge has been taken up by his former comrades, and days of struggle in the midst of a European war are ahead once more in Ireland.

De Valera is teaching the bold revolutionists of Ireland—had they need to learn it?—that compromise with England will never make their country free. It is our fervent hope that they will also learn in this struggle that they will never win that freedom in isolated skirmishes, however daring or audacious, or by bomb, grenade, rifle, and machine gun alone. When they rally the workers of all Ireland behind them in open, united, mass struggle, they will find the path to victory.

By Dwight Macdonald

SPARKS IN THE NEWS

What Happened to the
Workers Alliance?

As the Roosevelt-Woodrum-Bricker-LaGuardia drive against the unemployed shifts into high, as federal, state and local relief standards are forced down to ever more subhuman levels, many of the unemployed are no doubt wondering what hit the Workers Alliance. How can it be that a once-militant union like the Alliance has collapsed so miserably?

For an excellent brief description of what has happened to the Workers Alliance we have only to go to Herbert Benjamin, who has been for years the Stalinist power behind the throne of Alliance president David Lasser. Writes Comrade Benjamin, in an article on "The Unemployed Movement in the U.S.A.":

"The great masses are still subject to the illusion that some easy and 'painless' way can be found of solving their urgent problems. Opportunist elements cater to these illusions. . . They encourage the workers to believe that mass action is unnecessary, that the leaders can induce relief authorities to improve relief standards and eliminate abuses. In place of mass action they employ more or less friendly negotiations between unemployed leaders and relief officials, who are quite willing to encourage this kind of relationship because they realize that it will undermine the power of the unemployed organization. . . The membership is deprived of its initiative, its militancy is vitiated, illusions are promoted, and its leadership becomes corrupted."

Comrade Benjamin is not "confessing." He wrote these words in *The Communist* for June, 1935. The history of the Workers Alliance—a history he himself is largely responsible for—bears out word for word the accuracy of his analysis. No, Comrade Benjamin is not "confessing"—but can he put off the day much longer?

Socialism Comes to Finland

For weeks now the *Daily Worker* has been reporting Red Army victories in Finland, victories which have been suppressed by the rest of the press. So, too, with the advance of socialism into Finland behind the tanks of the Red Army. Of the giant strides towards Stalin-socialism reported by the *Daily Worker* day after day, not a word in the *N. Y. Times*. But now at last a stride has been made that is so gigantic that even the lying bourgeois press doesn't dare to suppress it.

It seems that on December 11, 1939—historic date!—the inhabitants of the Finnish village of Karku assembled and elected a "committee of the Working People's Front in Karku." (*The Times* does not specify just where Karku is, but we may assume, considering the progress of the Red Army, that it is fairly close to the border.) This was no paper organization. At once the Working People's Front swung into action. Boldly, it took over the goods of a local trading company and, after making a careful inventory of them, it proclaimed—a reduction in the price

of matches from 2 marks to 1½ marks. Nor did the Working People's Front stop there in its headlong rush towards socialism. It marked salt down from 2½ to 1½ marks, and slashed the price of coffee from 20 to 16 marks a pound.

This revolutionary action—coming dangerously close to outright expropriation—was in line with the equally daring program of Comrade Kuusinen's "Finnish People's Government." It is true the Kuusinen regime felt it prudent to proclaim their respect for private property. (After all, they're respectable bureaucrats, not adventurists and putschists.) But they didn't hesitate to raise such revolutionary demands as the eight hour day and even vacations with pay. Nor can Comrade Kuusinen be blamed if these particular demands happen to have been won, years ago, by the Finnish labor unions. He hasn't been in Finland for a long time.

But it must be admitted that Comrade Kuusinen made a bad mistake when he omitted from his revolutionary program any reference to collective farming. He had excellent reasons for this omission: he thought the Finnish landlords wouldn't like it. But nonetheless it turns out to have been a bad tactical error. For now, according to the *N. Y. Times* of Jan. 5, the Mannerheim-Tanner regime is expected to introduce "the Russian collective farm system" itself in order to prosecute the war more successfully.

Discouraging days for Comrade Kuusinen, whose revolutionary program turns out to be lagging behind not only the Finnish labor fakers but even behind the Finnish bourgeois government itself. But anyway, matches now cost ½ mark less in Karku.

Correction

Towards the end of last week's column this amazing statement occurred: "The handful of families at the top, those with incomes of over \$10,000 a year (more than half the total number of families in the country) actually spend more each year than their incomes. . ." This should read: "The handful of families at the top, those with incomes of over \$10,000 a year, save half their income, while all families with \$1,050 or less income (more than half the total number of families in the country) actually spend more each year than their income", etc., etc.

A Little Anthology of War
Poetry, No. 2

The British Broadcasting Company recently broadcast to the Empire a new war song, which goes as follows:

Run Adolf, run Adolf; run, run, run;
Look what you've been gone and done, done,
done;

We will knock the stuffing out of you,
Field Marshal Goering and Goebbels too.
You'll lose your place in the sun, sun, sun;
Soon you poor dog, you'll get none, none
none.

You will flop with Herr von Ribbentrop,
So run Adolf, run Adolf; run, run, run.

The title of this song, according to the British Broadcasting Company, is "Run, Adolf, Run."

In the World of Labor

By Paul G. Stevens

News Briefs from France

By a decree issued November 15, working hours are increased to 72 per week, with a maximum of 14 hours set per day. For women and children, the limit is set at 60 hours per week and 10 hours per day!

It must be remembered, in addition, that the lengthening of the work week and day doesn't at all make for a larger pay envelope. Through a complicated system of overtime-pay-taxes and wage-taxes, the essential features of which we described in a previous column, the French worker now gets the same pay for 60 hours of work that he received for 40 hours before the outbreak of the war.

Strikes are, of course, outlawed. But, more than that, revisions in wage rates can be made only by government decree.

The shop steward system has been abolished. The men can no longer elect their representatives. They may be represented only by officials of the "loyal" trade unions—that is, unions that have been purged, with police aid, of all "non-conformist" elements.

The difference in working conditions under the French "democracy" and the Nazi dictatorship is practically at the vanishing point.

We mentioned here last week that the agitation of the bourgeois "pacifists" like Flandin, de Monzie and Bonnet is tolerated by the government. The same situation holds true, we learn, also for the Paul Faure wing of the French Socialist Party (S.F.I.O.). It must be remembered that Paul Faure hailed the "Munich" peace. On the other hand, the Leon Blum wing of the party, although completely patriotic, is being harassed by the authorities. Some of its most prominent members are being sent to the front. Blum was, of course, militantly "anti-Munich." All of which would seem to indicate that the Daladier regime, on the fence most of the time, is at the least leaving the door open towards the conclusion of a truce with Germany, in order to direct its guns elsewhere.

Troubles of the British Empire

Latest to stir rebelliously against the Union Jack are the lowly Lascars, those native East Indian seamen who are the backbone of British shipping in the Far East.

The Lascars are simply walking off the ships when they reach ports which seem to them to be approaching the war zone. They are intent not to shed one drop of blood for the Empire.

Thus, in Sydney, Australia, Lascar crews who had quit refused 100 per cent increases in pay and preferred to remain on the beach. The government had to import, by airplane from Calcutta, a certain Khan Bahadur Fazlul Karim—a native "strong" man—to break their resistance. However, he has met only with partial success. Despite his presence, a Lascar crew held a public demonstration in Sydney at the end of November, declaring its firm intention to stay out of the war and demanding relief pending repatriation to India.

"There is no doubt in my mind," Mr. Fazlul explained to the Australian press, "that powerful influences have been at work somewhere to prevent the Lascars from going about their duties in the ordinary way. . . We must not forget that it was they, largely, who kept the sea routes open by serving loyally in the Great War."

Can it be that the experience resulting from "serving loyally"—the continued enslavement of India—has something to do with the "powerful influences" at work?

Under pressure from the labor ranks, who have en masse defeated the government's voluntary recruiting drive, the Australian Labor Party has officially gone on record against conscription and "against the despatch of forces overseas." The leaders of the party are having difficulties, steering a course of social patriotism in which they cannot go the whole hog.

"Wheatgrowers in Victoria and Western Australia say they are determined not to deliver their wheat unless the Commonwealth government agrees to increase the guaranteed price."—item in the *Sydney Herald*.

The farmers are falling in line with what appears to be a pretty definite movement to give the British rulers a pack of headaches.

Labor Looks Through
The Press

By Arthur Hopkins

William S. Knudsen of General Motors says: "The place of America today, the American Standard of Living, depends more on the skill of our mechanics than any other class." That's why, no doubt, the mechanics—Knudsen's auto workers, for instance—don't get the American Standard of Living.

Said the late Edward A. Filene, multi-millionaire Boston merchant: "Why shouldn't the American people take half my income away from me? I took it all away from them!"

A bedbug doesn't reach maturity until it has taken five bites out of a human being. And a boss doesn't start getting rich until he has at least five persons working for him.

King George VI is delaying his visit to Durbar, India, to be crowned emperor because the way the Indians are acting up, he doesn't quite know how they'll do it. Some of his Indian subjects not only have invited him to come, but have dared him. They want to crown him, all right.

PEACE LOVER

The United States government has landed its troops on foreign soil on more than 100 occasions during the past 115 years.

Their Government
Roosevelt's War Budget
For Whose Defense?

Politicians ordinarily use key words not so much to describe clearly what they mean as for the sake of the feelings the words arouse. Imagine, for example, what a difference it would make in the public attitude if armament expenditures in the budget were listed under the title, "Imperialist Aggression," instead of "National Defense."

Now the funds for armaments which Roosevelt has proposed for the fiscal year 1940-41 are worth thinking about. \$1,800,000,000 are included for the "regular" expenses of the army and navy. \$272,000,000 are asked as an emergency deficiency appropriation for this year; and \$302,000,000 for "emergency" items during the coming fiscal year. These, totalling the colossal sum of \$2,374,000,000, only begin to indicate the true burden of war on the community.

Interest on the public debt will come to \$1,100,000,000. War and armament expenditures during the past twenty-five years have amounted to far more than the entire federal debt; and, since these expenditures serve no conceivably useful social function, it is entirely legitimate to charge the whole interest payment against war. Pensions will come to \$1,200,000,000; at least three-fourths resulting from war. Out of the \$1,100,000,000 listed for public works, a minimum of several hundred millions will go to war projects. Similarly with the \$1,300,000,000 allotted for work relief. The \$1,000,000,000 for "regular operating expenditures" includes at least a couple of hundred millions for activities of State, War, Navy, Justice departments that would have no place except for war.

Figured very conservatively, this will give us around \$5,300,000,000 which last week Roosevelt proposed for war—nearly two-thirds of the budget of the federal government. We can say without exaggeration that governments in the modern imperialist world have become, first and foremost, war-making machines.

What is to be Defended?

When the phrase "national defense" is used about armaments, it is designed to suggest certain pictures to the minds of the ordinary honest people of the country. We imagine bombers swarming over the cities, troops landing in California and Florida, tanks storming down from Canada or up from Mexico. And it seems most natural to think: should we not have the means to defend ourselves—our homes and children—from the invaders?

Even if we approached the problem from a purely military point of view, and thought carefully about what the money is being spent for, these pictures would rapidly disappear.

On the new program, for instance, are ten huge battleships either already begun or soon to be started. Two of them are at present designed to be of 45,000 tons displacement—the largest in the world, costing \$90,000,000 each. Still larger sizes are being debated.

But battleships are not suited to defend the shores of a country in a literal sense. They operate at a long distance from their bases. Shore defenses feature submarines, mines, coastal artillery, mosquito boats, etc. No imaginable attack against the shores of the United States would require these battleships (though, for that matter, no attack of any kind against the shores of the United States is imaginable).

The truth is that the military expert's idea of "defensive" and "offensive" is completely different from that of the layman. For the expert, the job is simply that of winning the given war; and he adopts a defensive or offensive strategy, or shifts them, in line with this single objective. He cannot permit himself the sentimental luxury of preferring defense merely because it gives him a better conscience.

And, in the case of a war against another nation or nations, the fighting machine of this country is designed to carry on war thousands of miles away from the shores. It is defensive only with respect to an internal war: that is, to suppress a workers' revolution.

Those who honestly support Roosevelt's "national defense" program because they believe its object is to safeguard home and children are, whether they like it or not, upholding a policy of aggressive external war. This can be clearly seen from a military analysis alone.

And Whose Nation?

As always, the military objective is subordinate to the social and political objectives. The government is building an aggressive military machine, designed for external combat far from the shores of this country, because the government has an aggressive social and political policy.

From this more fundamental point of view, it is correct to speak of "national defense," just as the armies and navies of France and Germany and England are all part of their national "defenses." The purpose of the armed forces is to defend the interests of the nation; and "nation" here means the imperialist government, representative of the big bankers and industrialists, of the Sixty Families.

But defense of these interests requires offense against the interests of the peoples of South America, China, and against rival powers and, above all, offense against the interests of the people of the United States. The new budget shows this last point in the most brazen fashion: in order to achieve funds for "national defense," the budget takes funds away from the people, from the starving and homeless unemployed. Roosevelt's first line of "national defense" is his attack on the living standards and rights of the people of the United States.

It is in every way legitimate for the people to wish to defend themselves and their homes and their freedom from any and all enemies. But the chief enemy attacking the people is neither Hitler nor Stalin nor the Mikado, but Roosevelt himself and his government: it is his G-men who are smashing labor and democratic rights, his whip that is slashing relief funds, his party that refuses to establish humanly decent wages and hours standards, his general staff that is completing its plans to hurl the youth of the country into death far away, for the sake of his program of imperialist expansion.