

I agree with La Monte that "political liberty and representative institutions" are not "empty worthless baubles not worth fighting to retain." The preservation *and extension* of democracy are cardinal features of the revolutionary program of Socialism: the larger contains the lesser. On this head I shall again quote *The Class Struggle*, in its Declaration of Principles:

"We are not indifferent to the fate of democracy. On the contrary we believe that the Socialist movement is particularly charged with the duty of preserving and extending all democratic institutions. Furthermore, we believe that the revolutionary working class is the only social power capable of doing it. But far from this being a reason for our supporting any of the governments now at war, we believe that the interests of true democracy require that we refuse to join hands with any of these governments and the interests which support them and that we work for a speedy termination of this war by the action and pressure of the working class and Socialist movement of the belligerent nations. . . . The only hope of democracy lies in those revolutionary elements of each country which are ready to fight Imperialism in all its manifestations and wherever found."

The defense of democracy is the task of revolutionary Socialism. The circumstance that Socialism failed does not alter the situation. The only considerable group in any of the belligerents that fights for democracy and against reaction is precisely the revolutionary Socialist minority. Eventually, ultimately, Socialism must carry out its task, because historic conditions and its own necessity decree it. Socialism having failed, La Monte despairingly turns to war as the only alternative. The Russian revolution should have offered him another alternative. Democracy has gained from this war only in Russia, and that through revolutionary action. And only similar revolutionary action in all the belligerents can make the world safe for democracy.

La Monte apparently accepts the President's statement that the war arose out of "the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force, which is controlled wholly by their

will and not by the will of their people." The term "autocratic government" used against Germany refers to the remnants of Junkerthum, the feudal caste, still powerful in Germany. No sane man denies that this caste is powerful. It is a contributing menace to peace and freedom in Germany. But it is not the decisive factor in the causation of war. It is powerful only in the measure that it identifies itself with and represents the interests of aggressive Imperialism; in fact, it has been absorbed by Imperialism. The most ruthless plans for war and conquest in Germany come, not from the Junkerthum, but from the National Liberals, the representatives of finance-capital and Imperialism. A similar form of "autocratic government" prevails in Japan. The interests of Japan and this country clash Imperialistically. They clash not because Japan has an "autocratic government," but because the purposes of its aggressive Imperialism antagonize the Imperialism of America. A war between Japan and this country is not at all inconceivable; and when it comes, the then President of the United States may indulge in sentiments against "autocratic governments" and "making the world safe for democracy." The survival of an autocratic government such as Germany's is a "sport" in social evolution. It survives and is powerful not because of its feudal remnants, but because of the Capitalism that uses it for purposes of its own—imperialistic conquest and the suppression of the revolutionary movement.

Can autocracy be overthrown by this war? The "war for democracy" has brought with it the suspension of democracy, brutal reaction and dictatorship. Now, it is conceivable that dictatorship might serve the ends of democracy and progress, as during the wars of the French Revolution; *but it must be a dictatorship of the progressive and revolutionary forces.* A dictatorship of the revolutionary working class in Russia to-day would serve the ends of democracy. And it would be a *temporary* dictatorship. But the dictatorship created by this war is a dictatorship of all the reactionary forces as expressed in the ruling class, and that strikes directly at democracy; not alone for purposes of this war, but as a precedent and a weapon for the