

# I. THE PEOPLE'S ROAD TO PEACE

## I. Introduction

THE imperialist war for the redivision of the world is engulfing country after country. The more each imperialist gang of bandits needs a military decision to forestall its own inner collapse, the more desperately does each side call up its reserves, strike out on new adventures, cast the lives and treasures of new millions of men, women and children into the balance. Complete disaster is being inflicted upon nation after nation. And already the American bourgeoisie assumes, as a closed question, that this country is committed to one side of the imperialist rivalry, to the Allied camp, for good or evil, and to question the decision is already a form of treason. In the face of a popular will to keep out of the war, estimated at 96 per cent, the Roosevelt Administration, backed by the united economic royalists and their agents, is taking the country step by step into the war with a speed unexampled in all history, and with a boldness and cynicism that are quite breath-taking, worthy of Hitler himself.

War policy determines everything else. The American bourgeoisie cannot move toward entering the unpopular and imperialist war without, at the same time, making war against the living standards and civil rights of the masses at home, making war against the labor movement, wiping out progressive social legislation, and establishing a more brutal dictatorship of monopoly-capital over the daily life of the country. This domestic side of the war policy of the American bourgeoisie is unfolding itself with equal speed.

The United States and Italy are the only remaining capitalist great powers that have not entered the war as belligerents. Mus-

solini openly repudiated the concept of "neutrality" from the beginning, and proclaimed Italy as "non-belligerent," which means merely awaiting the most favorable moment to enter as a belligerent. Roosevelt solemnly pledged the United States to a firm neutrality, but used this declaration only the more easily to undermine the anti-war stand of the people. The United States is "sliding" into the war; its position already so closely approximates Mussolini's that the Foreign Minister of Argentina has proposed that the Americas, recognizing reality, shall adopt the Mussolinian formula.

Only one really neutral great power remains in the world, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Firmly repulsing all efforts to drag her into the war on one or the other side, defeating all efforts to switch the war into a general capitalist assault against her rising and victorious socialist system, damming back the war-tide from her most immediate small neighbors, helping the weak nations in their fight for peace and national independence, encouraging the peace forces of all the world—the Soviet Union stands forth as the great stronghold and beacon light of the interests of the working class and the common people of all lands, their hope, their inspiration, and their protection.

The masses of all countries are identifying those who share responsibility for this bloody shambles into which the world has been thrown. They find the responsible ones at the head of all imperialist governments without exception. They are preparing the people's justice for all the guilty ones.

These are the main and decisive features of the national and international situation, which the workers and toiling people of the United States face, as we enter the period of the 1940 Presidential elections.

## 2. The Imperialist War as the Deepest Crisis of the Capitalist World System

THE present imperialist war is not a *repetition* of the imperialist World War of 1914-18, but is its *continuation*. It is the same in

principle, in that it is the expression of the most profound contradictions of the capitalist system of society (in its imperialist stage of the dominance of monopoly capital); it is different, inasmuch as it occurs *after* the last World War with all its consequences, in a period of more profound crisis, with the forces of world capitalism much weaker, with the revolutionary anti-capitalist forces much stronger and more mature, and above all with the existence of the powerful Soviet Union, a decisive and irrevocable break in the world system of capitalism. The present war is thus a deeper crisis, the deepest crisis of the capitalist world.

Tracing back the causes of the present imperialist holocaust, one is led directly and inevitably, even without the aid of the Marxist-Leninist theoretical analysis of capitalism, to the worldwide economic crisis that began in 1929, as the starting point of the immediate chain of events that culminated in the war. Even the most vulgar bourgeois theoreticians are forced to recognize this obvious fact, although they try to forget it, and above all to obscure its significance. But its meaning is inescapable, and already penetrates the consciousness of millions of workers in the capitalist countries; namely, that the seeds of this war are inherent in the very nature of the capitalist mode of production, and therefore in the social and political superstructure erected upon that foundation. Capitalism is itself the general underlying cause of the war.

This conclusion is further driven home when we note that the war originates as a "family quarrel" between the ruling groups of the *most powerful* capitalist nations. It is not the "backward" countries which are forcing war upon the most "advanced," but, on the contrary, precisely those highest developed in the capitalist sense which are dragging the less developed one by one into the war. These ruling groups are closely related to each other. That the United States, the strongest capitalist country, was not a belligerent from the first days is due to special historical circumstances, and does not change the general picture in this respect; and the speed with which the American bourgeoisie is moving into the very heart of the war serves to emphasize the inherent drive toward war

that comes from the fundamental nature of the capitalist system. The imperialist war is the violent culmination of the rivalries within the "family" of the international bourgeoisie; in no way does it arise from any inherent contradiction between the peoples involved. The war proves that the common interests of the peoples cannot find organized expression through the capitalist mode of production and the state forms erected upon that basis.

The imperialist character of the present war is even more complete and emphatic than that of 1914-18. Monopoly capital, finance capital, whose dominance in the most powerful countries determines the whole character of modern imperialism, has risen to new heights of power within the various countries, since the last war. The concentration and centralization of capital have proceeded apace, and the great trusts, combines, cartels, and banking syndicates have a much broader and deeper grip upon the economy of each capitalist country. Therefore this war begins as a "total" war on both sides, to a degree even higher than that of the last war after four years of its development.

The uneven development of capitalism, that decisive law of the imperialist stage, discovered by Lenin, is revealed most sharply in this current imperialist war. The disproportion between the real relation of force among the imperialist powers, on the one hand, and the distribution of territories among them, on the other hand, is something which the capitalist nations have no means of adjusting except by the arbitrament of war. The more extreme this disproportion, the more violent is the adjustment. This is the reality hidden behind the distinction between "the have and the have-not nations," which refers not to oppressor and oppressed nations, but to the relationship between military power and possessions. Those governments which complain of being "have-nots" merely mean they have not as much territory as they think they could seize by their military power.

Only the U.S.S.R. stands entirely outside the crisis of capitalism which is the basis of the war. Far from suffering an economic crisis which since 1929 has racked the capitalist world, the Soviet Union,

on the contrary, has won through to the greatest prosperity. It has multiplied its national production by more than ten times, over one thousand per cent; and while its position in a hostile capitalist world has forced it to divert an ever-larger amount to defense purposes, its growth in production is so great that, even so, and with an unprecedented proportion going to investment in new means of production, the Soviet Union has still been able to raise the standard of living of all its citizens manyfold. That is the solid material foundation for the peace policy of the Soviet Union, as well as for its ability to maintain its peaceful position against all hostile forces.

#### HOW THE CAPITALIST POWERS ALL HELPED PREPARE THE WAR

Great Britain, France and the United States proclaimed themselves the most completely devoted friends of peace. Together with the smaller countries under their leadership, these powers were possessed, until the last two years, of ample positions and resources to guarantee against any disturbance of world peace. They had the League of Nations, dedicated to that purpose; and if the United States stood aloof from the League, this was more than compensated by the fact that the Soviet Union joined the League, and was most insistent that its proclaimed peace functions be realized. How could it come to pass, therefore, that in a few short years the overwhelming preponderance of power in the hands of these "friends of peace" could be dissipated so much that the rising militarism of Hitler could challenge them in this war with any hopes of success? Why could not the possessors of overwhelming power so use it as to organize peace? How could German imperialism, defeated, prostrate and helpless after the last war, stage such a spectacular comeback in such a short time?

The answer is to be found in two main factors: First, the contradictions and antagonisms among the victors in the last war flared up with new intensity when Germany was defeated, and among the leading powers themselves effectively prevented any common world policy; peace was not the first, but the last, consideration among them. Secondly, the fear of the working class,



of the socialist revolution, and especially hatred of the Soviet Union which emerged from the last World War, was so deep and overwhelming within the bourgeoisie, the ruling classes of the whole world, that it led them into fatal miscalculations, into policies which went bankrupt under the test of reality. Bourgeois society, as we look back at it since the World War, presents a most dismal picture of decay, not only economic decay, not only moral decay, but even more completely, if that is possible, intellectual decay. In the whole bourgeois world since the World War, there is not one example of an outstanding statesman, not to speak of a country, which pursued a consistent and long-sighted policy even for the preservation of the bourgeois world, which in their eyes is "the preservation of civilization."

France built her system of hegemony over Europe only to find Great Britain facing her full of jealousy and suspicion, determined to rebuild as quickly as possible a new "balance of power" to replace that destroyed by the World War. The post-war world was a chaos of rivalries, antagonisms, and contradictions.

The phase of "creeping war," which opened the new period of wars and revolutions, began when Japan struck at China in 1931 with the seizure of Manchuria. This was also a heavy blow against the United States, which confidently moved for international support in bringing Japan to heel. But the conference of the signatories of the Nine-Power Pact came to nothing, because Great Britain could not be committed to any action. The United States suspected Great Britain of wanting her to go to war with Japan then, with Britain standing on the sidelines to pick up the pieces, and was certain that the British had double-crossed her.

Hitler, who had come to power with the aid of British and German capital, marched into the demilitarized Rhineland, and announced its forthcoming fortification, but Britain, France, and the League of Nations merely scolded for a moment and were silent. In fact, relations between Britain and France were quite strained, for the French with justice accused the British of encouraging the Rhineland coup, and of playing off both Hitler and Mussolini

against them, in order to restore the old game of balance of power on the Continent, which French hegemony had abolished for a time to the discomfiture of Britain. Then Mussolini struck in Ethiopia, and the British Tories, after winning an election on the issue of "collective security," promptly proceeded, in partnership with the French, to sell the Ethiopians down the river. Mussolini and Hitler launched the fascist rebellion of the Spanish Army, and sent their forces in to help strangle the Spanish Republic; Britain and France, supported by the United States, responded by the elaborate farce of the "non-intervention committee" which blockaded the Republic, and these "democracies" publicly rejoiced when Butcher Franco was finally enthroned in power.

Hitler marched into Austria and turned it into a German province, but Britain and France remained silent. Japan invaded China in a bloody, furious war of destruction and made a ferocious assault upon British interests (incidentally machine-gunning the British Ambassador to China), but the U.S.A., Britain and France only mumbled a few words of formal protest, and the U.S.A. continued to furnish Japan with the largest part of the raw materials and machinery required for her war.

Finally, in September, 1938, Chamberlain and Daladier flew to Munich, in order to lay at Hitler's feet the bound and helpless body of Czechoslovakia. *By the Munich Pact, however, the British and French ruling classes had built up Hitler's regime in Germany so far, had surrendered so many strategic points, had so thoroughly destroyed their own moral standing by open complicity with Hitler's crimes, that it was already an open question as to which side was the strongest and, therefore, according to the rules of imperialism, entitled to rule the world. The Frankenstein built up over several years had escaped from the control of its makers.*

It is interesting and instructive at this moment when German arms, having conquered Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg, are penetrating France so quickly that both London and Paris are threatened, to recall again the long line of events in which the British and French, usually with the acquiescence or

assistance of the United States, themselves deliberately and of their own choice broke down and dismantled their whole post-war system of defenses against such a development.

How can such a course be explained, except as inconceivable stupidity or deliberate suicide? Yet we know the men responsible for it are very clever men—indeed; perhaps their trouble was that they were too clever by far. These hard-bitten leaders of the bourgeoisie have no suicidal manias—they may plan death for tens of millions of the people, but never for themselves. How then is it possible to understand their course?

There is but one explanation. The British ruling class had collaborated with their German class brothers in bringing Hitler to power in Germany in order to crush the threatening German socialist revolution, to smash the German Bolsheviks. They were delighted with his performance, and encouraged German rearmament for the purpose of smashing the Soviet Union, which Hitler had long boasted was his chief aim. For this the British and French bourgeoisie were actually happy to see Hitler building an army and piling up armaments. For this they were ready to make most serious concessions to Hitler's axis partners, Japan and Italy, sacrificing China and Ethiopia. For this they gave Mussolini and Hitler a free hand in Spain, to test out those engines of destruction which should later be thrown against the Soviet Union. For this they agreed to allow Hitler to guarantee his "rear" through the fortification of the Rhineland. For this they sacrificed Austria and Czechoslovakia, with untold armaments and treasure. For this they dishonored and emasculated the League of Nations. For this they betrayed their own most solemn obligations and turned them into a mockery before all men. For this they delivered their own fate into the hands of Hitler.

The British and French bourgeoisie had adopted Hitler as their savior with a faith as blind and unquestioning as that of his most ignorant German dupe. Systematically they thereby taught Hitler to despise them, to consider them as fit only for browbeating, blackmail, and if need be, for subjugation. For a chemically-pure ex-

ample of this fawning British attitude toward Hitler, one need only turn to the pages of the naïve and self-revealing book of Sir Neville Henderson, British Ambassador to Berlin from 1937 up to September, 1939, in which he explains the "Failure of a Mission." Or to Lord Lloyd's booklet, *The British Case*, which is blessed with a preface by Lord Halifax, British Foreign Minister. There is only one "crime" which they are not prepared to forgive Hitler, and that one is his renunciation of the anti-Soviet war. Yes, they were entirely too clever, these great statesmen of British and French monopoly capital, and overreached themselves. In the doing of which they incidentally brought disaster to the peoples of the world, and now to their own lands.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was talking quite a different language. Soviet defenses more than matched Hitler's armaments. Hitler's agents were ferreted out of their hiding places, and the country was cleansed of them, along with Japanese and British agents. The Spanish Republic was aided on a scale which, despite its desertion by all the so-called democracies, would have insured its victory had not Blum and Daladier sealed the French border, at crucial moments, to stop the transit of Soviet arms and munitions, and permitted German planes to pass over France into Spain. The Chinese Republic was enabled, by Soviet aid, to resist over years the Japanese *blitzkrieg* conducted with American materials. The Soviet Union never lost an opportunity to urge the implementation of international pledges of collective security. Communists all over the world helped build the anti-fascist People's Front, despite all the betrayals and sabotage from the Second International. Above all, the tremendous achievements of the socialist Soviet economy, multiplying its national income tenfold, and the new Stalinist Constitution of the Soviet Union, made the socialist one-sixth of the world an impregnable fortress. *Facing the vigilant great Soviet Power to the East, and the rotten imperialisms to the West, Hitler disclosed after Munich that he was more inclined to finish up with his imperialist rivals, to revise his original schedule of world con-*



*quest, following his well-established tactic of hitting first at the softest and weakest points.*

The British bourgeoisie was thoroughly shaken and frightened by Hitler's defiant attitude toward it after Munich, especially when in March, 1939, Hitler marched into Prague, and with the collaboration of fascist Poland wiped out the remnants of Czechoslovakia. But these British rulers, with the agreement of the French (and it now appears also of Roosevelt), committed the unbelievable stupidity of sticking tight to their original grand strategy. They changed nothing but some details of carrying it through. They still gambled everything, everything, upon bringing about a war between Germany and the Soviet Union. Hitler was raising his price; very well, he should get it and more. Not only was Poland to remain completely defenseless, as a pledge of British "good intentions" toward Hitler, but a "loan" of a billion dollars and a German-British alliance was dangled before Berlin, on the sole condition that all moves should be worked out jointly and not by Hitler's sole decision. To enhance the attractiveness of these offers, Hitler was to be threatened with the alternative of war. But the threat of war would have little weight, especially after Munich, unless it was a threat of war from both East and West. But war from the East was impossible without the Soviet Union and its Red Army to conduct it. No one, least of all Hitler, would take such a threat seriously, unless the weight of the Soviet Union was also behind it. Therefore, in May the British and French opened conversations with Moscow for that purpose. Those conversations dragged on into August.

The British-French negotiators convinced the Soviet Union that their proposals were not seriously directed to the establishment of a peace front, but, on the contrary, were designed only to foment a German-Soviet war under the worst possible conditions for the Soviet Union. The following incontestable facts were sufficient to establish this:

(1) In contrast to Chamberlain's airplane flights to Berchtesgaden, Godesberg, and Munich, to negotiate directly with Hitler, for

the Moscow negotiations were sent only subordinate officials, practically clerks, and these without any defined powers at all, and even without any formal credentials.

(2) Their proposals, in essence, were to the effect that in case Britain could not come to terms with Hitler, then the Soviet Union should consider itself at war with Germany, but should have no voice in negotiating those terms, and no rights of action in the Baltic territories or Poland, even when at war with Germany.

(3) Poland, Britain's vassal, meanwhile stood pat on the position described recently by General Haller, on the occasion of visiting Roosevelt, as one of confidence in Hitler and hostility toward the Soviet Union, an undefended frontier with Germany and no mobilization, but huge fortifications fully manned on the Soviet frontier.

(4) The Baltic States, with British approval, absolutely refused to discuss any measures for their own and the Soviet Union's defenses in such a war with Germany, while Finland was receiving, in the very months of the negotiations, forty million dollars' worth of planes and munitions to supplement the Mannerheim line less than twenty miles from Leningrad, a line built under British direction.

These basic factors proved beyond all doubt that the British and French rulers were merely engaging in a maneuver to bring pressure upon Hitler to return to his original line of march against the Soviet Union, and that they had not the slightest intention of negotiating a serious peace front that included the Soviet Union upon a basis of equality.

At the same time the Germans came to Moscow with the offer of a far-reaching Pact of Non-Aggression, on the lines which the Soviet Union had always held out to all nations. Since the Soviet Union, if not itself attacked, had not the slightest reason to attack Germany, and since there was no prospect whatever for a real peace front, this offer was entirely acceptable. It withdrew Eastern Europe from the immediate threat of becoming the main battleground of the impending imperialist world conflict. It helped dispel the cloud of illusion and falsification that enveloped the world,

reveal the true relation of forces and issues, and give another opportunity to the peace forces of the world to halt the war-makers. It enabled the Soviet Union to perfect its Western defense lines, the weaknesses of which the capitalist world had been boastfully discussing for years. The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, signed on August 23, 1939, knocked into a pile of ruins the whole grand strategy of the camp of Chamberlain-Daladier-Second International built on the fixed idea of using Hitler Germany to destroy the Soviet Union.

With the desperation of gamblers playing a "sure thing system" at roulette, the British-French rulers with their Social-Democratic accomplices (and as we now know, the complicity of the Roosevelt Administration) had doubled and redoubled their stakes. They gambled away the independence of nations and their own honor. They staked the most precious interests of their own peoples. They played with the peace of the world, with the lives of tens of millions of helpless and unknowing people. They gambled—and they lost.

A storm of hysterical rage swept over the bourgeoisie and their hangers-on of the Second International (with its Trotskyite and Lovestoneite appendages), against the Soviet Union, for daring to sign a Pact of Non-Aggression with Germany without their permission. This storm was by no means least violent in the United States, significantly enough, showing how deep in the conspiracy had been our American ruling class. The very men and parties which had most loudly praised the Munich Pact less than a year before—remember, *only* the Communists fought and voted against Munich—now led a most ferocious denunciation of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact as—of all things—"another Munich"! The very men and parties who had been publicly praying for the success of Chamberlain's efforts to secure an agreement with Hitler on how to divide up the world—these were the ones to denounce the Soviet-German agreement merely not to go to war with one another. The depth of this hysteria among the bourgeoisie and their "Socialist" lackeys is a measure of the completeness of the

bankruptcy of imperialist policy thereby revealed. The gamblers could not accept the fact that they had lost.

TRYING TO SWAP THE "WRONG WAR" FOR THE "RIGHT WAR"—  
FIRST STAGE OF THE SECOND IMPERIALIST SLAUGHTER

In the first days of September the British Government, and after it the French, declared war against the Frankenstein of their own creation, because it had escaped from their control and renounced its original mission. But it was with the outspoken cry that came sincerely from their imperialist hearts that this was the "wrong war," which should be exchanged as quickly as possible for the "right war," for the war they had been conspiring so many years to bring about. Their slogan, "Swap the wrong war for the right war," is the key to an understanding of the whole course of war from September to March of this year, the period of the "phony war." It meant that the British-French rulers were still, incredible as it seems that such stupidity could be possible, bullheadedly persisting on the path of the bankrupt and shattered grand strategy of the anti-Soviet war. Having failed to bribe and persuade Hitler to go through with it, they now undertook to force him to do so. That goal determined the whole form and spirit of the first stage of the war. Its disastrous consequences for the Allies are only now becoming apparent, in the second stage of the war. Instead of correcting the fundamental error which had brought them to catastrophe, they intensified it, and thereby redoubled its terrible consequences. And in this stage, the Roosevelt Administration from secret complicity emerged into open and active partnership.

Ostensibly the war began over Poland. That was only a convenient pretext, however, as uncontested facts amply prove. Britain had no more intention of defending Poland than she had previously had of defending Austria, Spain, or Czechoslovakia. The British Government did not even sign its *paper guarantee* of Poland until the last days of August, when the war had already been decided upon; it had negotiated an insignificant loan to Poland, but even that fell through, because they could not agree how it should be



spent. The Polish army was never fully mobilized, and not even a trench was dug on its German borders, although its Soviet frontier bristled with modern fortifications. The Polish Government was itself fresh from the feast, together with Hitler, on the body of Czechoslovakia. It had not conceived of the idea, nor had its British mentors, of resisting Hitler in any serious way. Chamberlain had sent a note to Hitler, on August 28, offering him the same kind of settlement of the Polish issues that he had already provided in the case of Czechoslovakia. The sole issue was narrowed down to whether Hitler should take what he wanted by force or whether he should receive it from the hands of Chamberlain as a gift. In this issue was concealed the true matter of dispute, which was not Poland, but whether Hitler accepted Chamberlain as an equal partner in the redivision of the world.

The Polish Government, with most of the generals of its army, broke and fled the country in the first weeks of the German onslaught; their only efficient preparations had been to pack their treasures, money, jewelry, and so on, for a hasty flight to London and Paris.

With the collapse and flight of the Polish Government, the Soviet Red Army occupied Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, rescuing some thirteen million inhabitants, including more than two million Jews, immediately incorporating them with full equality in the autonomous Soviet Republics, giving them land and reorganizing their economic life. The western bourgeoisie (including the American and especially the Jewish-American) was more indignant against this rescue by the Red Army than they were against Hitler; rescue missions, they thought, were only permissible when undertaken by commission of His Majesty the King and Emperor of the British Empire, through his faithful servant, Neville Chamberlain.

The little Baltic states of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which with Poland had been Britain's pawns in the so-called "peace front" negotiations with the Soviet Union, and provided Britain with its desired "insuperable obstacles" to meeting Soviet views, now that

they were released from the threat of British interference, underwent a sudden and profound change of heart. They quickly signed mutual defense pacts with the Soviet Union, providing for Soviet naval and military outposts on the Baltic, and for the rescue of their economies from collapse by close trade relations with the Soviet Union. Lithuania received her ancient capital, Vilna, seized by Poland in 1920, as a free gift from the Soviet Union. All three countries have been profuse in their praise of how the Soviet Union has carried out these agreements. But Britain, France and the United States had exerted every effort to prevent these agreements from being signed.

Then negotiations opened between Finland and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union asked that the Finnish frontier close to Leningrad be moved back, for a lease on Hangoe Peninsula for a naval base to protect the Gulf of Finland, for some small readjustments in the north to protect Murmansk; and offered Finland compensating territorial adjustments of tenfold area and economic value, together with favorable economic relations and a mutual defense pact. There cannot be the slightest doubt that a quick and peaceful settlement would have been made, but for the intervention of Allied and American influence. President Roosevelt made a public intervention based upon the assumption that the Soviet proposals must be rejected, and placing his influence in support of such a decision, presumably assuming responsibility for the consequences. Mannerheim, Ryti and Tanner felt cocky, indeed; did they not have the most powerful forces of the world in their support? They went so far as to permit themselves the luxury of provocative incidents violating the Soviet frontier. Again, the imperialist forces had over-reached themselves. The Red Army marched into Finland.

That was the moment when the bourgeoisie, and particularly the American bourgeoisie, together with all their "Socialist" and "labor" lickspittles, opened up their hearts and minds for the whole world to see what was really there. With one voice they all shouted that no sacrifice was too great if only it would preserve the Mannerheim Line at the throat of Leningrad. "The war in Finland" took prece-



dence over the war with Germany, which, especially in America, found itself relegated to the back pages of the newspapers. *The great empires of the world were supposedly locked in a life-and-death struggle, but the one single spot where the Allies, plus the United States, plus Italy, were willing to assume the military offensive was on the Mannerheim Line against the Soviet Union!* The Roosevelt Administration rushed huge loans to Mannerheim; Herbert Hoover opened up public subscriptions for arms and supplies; the newspapers presented Mannerheim with miraculous military victories gratis every day; the public test of true Americanism became a pledge of allegiance to the Mannerheim-Ryti-Tanner Finnish government, to refuse which was considered substantially treasonable! What a revelation that was of the true desires and thoughts of the bourgeoisie! Here at last was the "right war" which they were ready to move heaven and earth to substitute for the "wrong war" with Hitler! Let us never forget this revelation of the true mind and heart of the bourgeoisie, of the ruling classes, which has not changed one iota, although with the ebb and flow of military fortunes it is often covered with sweet words and gestures, and a pretense of a new "friendliness" toward the Soviet Union.

During the period of hostilities in Finland, Allied-American grand strategy was reconstructed in terms of holding tight on the Western front, while active military measures were assigned to the "Northern front" and the "Southeastern front," both of them capable of being directed against Germany or the Soviet Union, or both, with equal facility. The plan was to move simultaneously on both fronts in May, in a pincers movement, which, backed by the blockade and a solid Western front, would "bring Hitler to his senses" and a quick peace, followed by a concerted drive against the Soviet Union, the "right war" at last. The world-shaking achievements of the Red Army in smashing the Mannerheim Line, and the Soviet-Finnish peace on March 12, without precedent in the generosity of its terms, again shattered the reconstructed Allied strategy.

While these events were taking place, President Roosevelt made

his first ambitious attempt at direct diplomatic intervention to change the course of the war. He sent Sumner Welles on his dramatic tour through Rome, Berlin, Paris and London. According to the best available information Welles carried proposals, already agreed upon with the Vatican, with London and Paris "agreed in principle" (that is, prepared to discuss as a basis of settlement), whereby Italy was to receive Tunis, Corsica, Jibouti, and an equal voice in control of Suez, in return for pressing Hitler to accept a "token" reconstitution of Poland and the status quo in the West, return of German African colonies, and a free hand and practical assistance in the East against the Soviet Union—the whole settlement to be guaranteed by the United States, which would assume the role of "honest broker" between the rivals and policeman of the new "community of nations." Unfortunately for Roosevelt's ambitions, the market price for Mussolini's services had taken a big jump just at the moment Welles started on his trip, and when he arrived in Rome, he found his currency so highly depreciated that it would buy nothing. Mussolini had adopted Lloyd George's famous phrase as his answer—"Too late and too little." Welles returned to Washington a sadder if not a wiser man.

The first phase of the imperialist war came to a close with a situation which, according to former standards, was a military stalemate, and a diplomatic deadlock; with the United States out in the open as the "non-belligerent" ally of Britain and France, corresponding to Italy's position as "non-belligerent" ally of Germany; with feverish preparations on both sides to extend the war to the small countries; and with the Soviet Union, the only truly neutral great power, greatly strengthened and at peace, more than ever the center of attraction of all the peace forces of the world.

Marking the close of the first phase of the war, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, speaking to Britain and the world, uttered those historic words: "Hitler has missed the bus!" The next day, the second phase of the war opened with the British mining of Norwegian territorial waters. Within six weeks German troops were within artillery range of British shores.

## THE "WRONG WAR" BECOMES THE REAL WAR

Less than two months' engagement of the main imperialist forces in military combat (hardly three weeks if we disregard the Norwegian preliminaries), already promise to exceed all estimates of the deadly and destructive nature of modern warfare between great powers. Despite seven months of "phony" war, that is, war largely confined to economic and diplomatic moves, it now appears that casualty lists, civilian and military, will quickly overtake and surpass those of the last war. It is not possible as yet to make any decisive estimate of the course and consequences of this second phase of the war. A few conclusions are, however, clearly in order:

First, the speed of events clearly is transforming the war into a *world war* on the largest scale with the possibility of the greatest catastrophes. The very concepts of "neutrality" and "national independence" have become meaningless for most of the world, killed by the actions and policies of both belligerent camps. Britain first violated Norwegian neutrality, thus sharing the moral responsibility of Germany; the only difference was that Britain did it first while Germany did it most successfully, thoroughly and effectively. The Allies boldly announced that "neutral rights" would no longer be any barrier to what they considered necessary military measures, just before the Germans acted upon their words by striking through Holland and Belgium. The United States has been poised for entrance into the war by Roosevelt's actions, and especially by his latest declarations, which may any moment receive a powerful push from the Far East, in the dispute over the rubber, tin and oil resources of the Dutch East Indies, with Japan preparing to realize her imperialist "manifest destiny." Rumors of a possible transfer of the seat of the British Empire to Canada serve to emphasize the seriousness of involvement of all the Americas, through the pro-war policies in Washington, and the unbridled grasping for profits of American capital.

Second, the initiative in the war has been definitely seized by the Germans, with all the advantages that accrue therefrom, largely as

the result of Allied-American obsession with the aim of "switching the war" against the Soviet Union. The advantage of this initiative has been further emphasized by the revelation that air power has gained over sea power since the last war, as shown not only in the Skagerrak but also on the Norwegian Atlantic Coast, with deadly intimations following for the Mediterranean area. This, however, is not the main reason for the present campaign of panic and pessimism over Allied military prospects, spread among their partisans in America, any more than the situation at the beginning of April justified the Pollyanna optimism of Chamberlain's cheerful chuckles at that time, less than two months ago. The jitters and gloom, spreading from London and Paris, arise more from fear of their own population, disillusioned and disgusted with their ruling classes and rebelling against the indescribable horrors imposed upon them, and against admitted incompetence, if not treason, in high places. Then, also, pessimism at this moment is a form of pressure upon the American bourgeoisie openly to enter the war as a belligerent, in order to offset the moral effect of their setbacks, to offset Mussolini's probable entrance on the other side, and—not least important—to forestall some possible demands the American bourgeoisie might make at the expense of Britain if they have more time to think the matter over. Pessimism over the present situation is thus a not too delicate form of blackmail against Washington and Wall Street, threatening a possible "quick peace" at the expense of American imperial ambitions, since it is no longer feasible to do it at the expense of the Soviet Union.

Third, the perspective of a long war of blockade and attrition, upon which Great Britain was orientated last September as the final guarantee of success, failing all efforts to "switch the war," no longer holds any promise of achieving the larger aims of British imperialism. This is because (a) the blockade is not as effective as it had been supposed; (b) the Empire ties with the Dominions, India and Ireland already reveal dangerous strains which may become very acute under a prolonged war; (c) Japanese and American demands and aspirations, directed to the field of British



imperialist interests, become ever more embarrassing, costly and threatening for the future; (d) economic strain and threatening crisis is becoming almost, if not fully, as potent a factor for Britain and France as for Germany and Italy; and finally (e) the working class and toiling masses generally are, from the beginning, almost entirely without enthusiasm for this war, even where they are not yet vocally and actively against it, and the bourgeoisie is becoming acutely conscious of the threat of popular upheavals, leading toward socialist revolutions. The Allied Powers are therefore tending to abandon the perspective of a long war, and want above everything now to bring in the United States as the necessary reserve for a military decision in their favor.

It is on this background that we must evaluate the call to war issued by President Roosevelt at the Pan-American Scientific Congress, and his hysterical juggling with flying-time schedules and "fifty thousand planes" when appealing for expansion of the Army and Navy appropriations to three and a half billion dollars. All these things are understandable, they have a definite logic, *only* as preparation for quickly and fully throwing the United States as a belligerent into the imperialist war between Britain and France, and Germany, into military adventures overseas.

*The "wrong war" has become the real war. The real war is becoming a world war. The world war is getting set to engulf the United States also—if the American workers and lovers of peace allow this to happen.*

#### THE WAR-GUILT OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

Long ago the working class and democratic masses generally would have halted the war-makers, and made it impossible for them to throw the world into war, but for the fact that they were held back, demoralized, split up, and delivered over to the control of the bourgeoisie by their treacherous misleaders of the parties of the Second International, the so-called "Socialist" and "labor" parties, and the reactionary trade union leadership that follows them.

The parties of the Second International share fully and completely

the war-guilt of the imperialist profiteers, in an even more degraded and disgusting form, because they cover themselves with the hypocritical cloak of phrases about "socialism in the future" and "the interests of labor," with the most brazen demagogy. The Attlees and Citrines in England, the Blums and Jouhaux in France, the Norman Thomases, Sidney Hillmans and William Greens in the United States, one and all performed the most indispensable services to the imperialist war-makers, without which they would never have been able or have dared to plunge the world into war.

The case of the Spanish Republic is a key example of this traitorous role of the Second International. If the German armies have swept over the small Western European countries and now hammer at the gates of Paris and London, this is possible *only* because in the spring of 1939 the Mussolini-Hitler-Franco armies were able to take Barcelona and Madrid and finally strangle the Spanish Republic. *If the Spanish Republic had emerged victorious there is not the slightest doubt that this alone would have prevented the outbreak of the Second Imperialist War in 1939.* For over two years, throughout the heroic struggle of Republican Spain, our Party never tired of pointing this out. One thousand American boys—Communists—died in Spain for democracy—to save the peace of the world. The imperialists and all their agents attacked us then. They put every obstacle in the way of the Spanish Republic. To this day, the U. S. Government has failed to recognize and aid the heroic fighters for Spanish democracy and the Spanish refugees in France, who need our support.

Mussolini and Hitler could never have strangled the Spanish Republic without the co-operation of Chamberlain, Daladier and Roosevelt. But Chamberlain & Co. could never have dared to give that co-operation without the support of the whole Second International. Indeed, it was Leon Blum himself, leader of the French Socialist Party and then Premier of France, who took the initiative in formulating and applying the infamous "non-intervention" scheme. It was the leadership of the British Labor Party which restrained and broke up the mass movement in England that de-

manded help to Spain. It was the Scandinavian Socialist leaders, holding decisive positions in their governments, who, together with the Dutch and Belgian Socialist leaders, and those of Poland and Czechoslovakia, made up the overwhelming majority of the Second International leadership that unhesitatingly upheld this traitorous policy. It was Norman Thomas in the United States who justified his European colleagues, while covering himself with hypocritical lip-service to Spain, and gave to Roosevelt his cynical reply to all protests against the American embargo: "Do you really expect me to go farther than Leon Blum and the Second International?" It was the Second International leadership which conspired with London, Rome and Berlin to deliver the final blow against the Spanish Republic, by opening up the gates of Madrid, through their miserable agents Casado and Besteiro. *Now it is clear that history will record the delivery of Madrid to the fascists as the opening of the flood-gates of the war that today sweeps over all Europe and extends more and more to the rest of the world.*

It was the Second International which prevented the successful building of the People's Front against reaction and war. When the French Socialist masses forced their leaders to enter the Front Populaire, it was Leon Blum who conspired night and day to dissolve it, who never rested until he had shattered this powerful alliance of the people from within. In England it was Attlee and Citrine who forcibly suppressed the People's Front movement, which could long ago have brought down the Chamberlain Government and opened the way to peace. In the United States it was Norman Thomas and the reactionary trade union leaders who took the lead in denunciation of the People's Front and the democratic front for peace, in the most extreme and slanderous terms.

Since the Second Imperialist War is on, it is the Second International in each country which has most shamelessly and unconditionally led the shouting for the most extreme war party. Their only complaint against the war is that it is not yet also a war against the Soviet Union.

The fight for peace, and for defending the economic and political

needs of the workers and toiling masses, can be successful only to the degree that it meets, exposes, isolates, and defeats all these war-mongering agents of imperialism among the people.

#### ONLY ONE ROAD OF SUCCESSFUL STRUGGLE AGAINST THE WAR

The overwhelming majority of people of every country hate this war, and want to stop it immediately. The ruling classes of each warring camp reply: yes, we all want peace, but peace can come only through victory for our side; therefore the only road to peace is to sacrifice everything for the war. In the United States, where 96 per cent of the people are against entering the war, the answer is given that the only way to peace is to enter this war to guarantee victory to the Allied cause. Thus the agents of the high financiers and war-profiteers try to turn the very aspirations for peace into the mightiest engine for war.

Along this road lie only catastrophe, misery, starvation and death for the peoples of the world. The choice of supporting the "lesser evil" against the worst evil leads not to peace, but to the sure infliction of every possible evil upon the masses. Not the victory of one or another imperialist camp is the road to peace, but the victory of the people over their war-making rulers in each country is the only way.

What reason is there to believe that an Allied victory will bring anything better to the world than a German victory? Britain and France emerged the victors in 1918, with such tremendous powers in their hands as had never existed before in the world, not only the power to dictate the terms of peace to the vanquished, but even to dictate to their own allies, the United States, Italy and Japan, not to mention the smaller powers. What did they do with their power? What kind of Europe and what kind of world did they produce? If the world is in a bloody mess today, that is the direct result of victory for the Allied Powers in 1918. Have the British and French ruling classes showed any intelligence or morality since 1918 greater than before? On the contrary, they have shown even less. Have they shown any more ability? On the contrary, they



display nothing but an abyss of incapacity, ineptitude and corruption. Are they any more "democratic"? On the contrary, they have leveled off the so-called democracies with the fascist regimes, so that there is no essential difference between them in their relationship to the masses. There is nothing to choose between the imperialist camps, for any support given to either means the surrender of the whole struggle for peace and a better world.

Only the peoples of the world, led by the working class, can bring peace and a better world, and that only by struggle and victory over *their own* imperialists and reactionaries.

The people of the United States can protect themselves and help the rest of the world only by resisting and defeating all those who want to help one side against the other, which leads finally and inevitably to entering the war; only by fighting against every tendency to spread the war anywhere in the world; only by fighting and defeating the tremendous efforts being made to establish a war regime within the United States even before the entry into the war; only by fighting against and defeating the armaments program which is only a greased chute to catapult this country overnight and against its will into the war.

The only road of successful struggle against the imperialist war is that so sharply and clearly defined in the words of George Dimitroff in *The Struggle Against the Imperialist War*:

First, union of the fighting forces of the working class within each country;

Second, a genuine popular front of the working people, led by the working class;

Third, united action of the proletariat internationally, and its own independent, single international policy of struggle against imperialist war;

Fourth, combination of the struggle of the working people of the capitalist countries with the anti-imperialist movement in the colonial and dependent countries;

Fifth, rallying the working people around the great Land of Socialism, the only state which champions the cause of peace among nations and

which defends the vital interests of the working people of the whole world.

This is the only path which can rescue the world from the chaos and destruction of imperialist war. This is the path which we must help the American working class, at the head of the whole people, to find in the most concrete fashion, for our own country.

### 3. Domestic Reactionary Development Is but the Other Side of the War Policy of the Bourgeoisie

UNDER the slogan of "national unity" the economic royalists and their agents are rallying the entire bourgeoisie against the working class and toiling masses, they are splitting the nation into two camps with a decisiveness that has never before been witnessed. They are making united war against the labor movement, against the living and working standards of the masses, and against popular civil rights. This is the domestic policy which inevitably accompanies an imperialist war policy. President Roosevelt, assuming the leadership of the war party, has thereby also assumed the leadership of domestic reaction. The New Deal chapter of progressive social legislation, always fragmentary and lacking consistency, has now definitely closed.

The Roosevelt regime was inaugurated almost simultaneously with that of Hitler in Germany. Both arose from the same deep and catastrophic economic crisis of the capitalist world system, and the impossibility of finding any way out by "normal" means. *They took different paths*, because the German bourgeoisie had united, with British support, upon the course of open brutal dictatorship to suppress the home population, and intense preparation for foreign wars; whereas the American bourgeoisie split after a short period when it was in doubt which way Roosevelt was moving; the most reactionary section went in the Hitler direction while a "liberal" section rallied the masses to its support for a "liberal experiment" in progressive domestic and foreign policy to meet the crisis. This came

to be identified as the "New Deal" and the "Good Neighbor" policies. Both of these are now dead. The Rooseveltism of the New Deal has capitulated to the reactionaries. A new Roosevelt is again bosom friends with that evil old man Garner and his friends. The new Roosevelt course is for America essentially the same direction which Hitler gave for Germany in 1933. Unless it is halted, and a different course charted for our country, it can only have a similarly catastrophic end. In the name of the fight against Hitlerism, the American bourgeoisie boldly strikes out on the path of imitation. Its period of appeasement of the people has ended. Monopoly capital, dominating our society, has in the end no other answer to the questions raised by the crisis and breakdown of its economic system than that given in the past years by its European class brothers. It is the answer of black reaction and war.

But from 1935 up to the outbreak of the imperialist war, a section of the bourgeoisie in a loose sort of coalition with labor, the poorer farmers, the Negroes, the youth, the unemployed, had tried to lead the United States on a different path, the path of social reform and concessions to the masses, with peaceful and conciliatory relations with Latin America and the rest of the world. That was the period of the New Deal, in which the obsolete and disintegrating old party structure had largely dissolved into two new camps—the New Deal and the anti-New Deal—in which American newspapers and the economic royalists were almost as fierce in their hatred of Roosevelt as they are now of the Communists.

How long ago that period seems now! Yet, when we check with the calendar, it was less than a year ago that Roosevelt was accused of being a Red, or at least a "Communist stooge" and an agent of Moscow. It is only somewhat more than a year ago that a solemn Senate Committee gravely demanded to know of Mr. Felix Frankfurter, prominent New Dealer, if he were a member of the Communist Party, and, only upon his equally grave reply that he was not, unanimously confirmed him to life membership in the Supreme Court. Less than a year ago Martin Dies was a deadly enemy of the Administration of which he is today the ideological

and political vanguard. Less than a year ago Elliott Roosevelt was publicly panning papa on the radio and boosting papa's most virulent enemy in the Democratic Party; but now papa has won son's endorsement for a third term by uniting with son's employers. It is less than ten months ago in fact; but so much water has run under the bridge in that time that it seems like ten years!

Today, Dorothy Thompson, the unique and inimitable, no longer her usual jump ahead of her political camp, plumps for a third term for Roosevelt on Republican and Democratic tickets with Wendell Willkie as his running-mate! Yes, it is unquestionably the same Dorothy. Only the times have changed, and the alignment of classes, and the bourgeoisie is at war—war among their different governments and war against the working class and toiling masses everywhere!

Today there are eighty-five trade unions of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations indicted under the Sherman Anti-Trust Law, for conspiracy to organize the workers of their industries. Ben Gold, Irving Potash, and a dozen associates of the Fur Workers Union have been sentenced to long prison terms. Twenty-five Teamsters of Local 807, A. F. of L., were convicted and some of them face as high as forty-one years' imprisonment for striving for union conditions and standards. It is the first time in history that any one has ever been sentenced to prison under this law adopted generations ago! And the proceedings are brought by the Roosevelt Administration, heading a united bourgeoisie, with the economic royalists a solidly cheering group in the foreground!

#### THE WAR POLICY OF REACTION

The great transformation began to develop systematically and swiftly, at the opening of the imperialist war. A simple little reservation to the declaration of American neutrality toward this war—that "we" could not all agree to be "neutral in thought"—started an endless chain of cause and effect that has culminated in a complete regroupment in American politics and brought the U.S.A. to



the brink of plunging headlong into the most senseless and destructive war in the history of the world.

"Fifty thousand airplanes" is the slogan which opened up the 1940 Presidential campaign. For what? The answer is a solemn recital of the flying time of various air-schedules into the United States, culminating in the information that from Tampico, Mexico, to Omaha and Kansas City it is only two-and-a-half hours. But Lindbergh was only stating a matter of common knowledge and common sense, whatever his political motive, which is open to question, when he said that no possible enemy could invade the U.S.A. by air, and that the U.S.A. cannot possibly be involved in war except by its own seeking. For what, then, the fifty thousand airplanes and the multiplied billions for the Army and Navy? What, then, is the significance of time schedules of air flights?

Peoples of the twenty Latin American countries will stir uneasily as they reflect that the air time-tables work both ways! The whole world knows of "Wrong-way" Corrigan, and that he is an American national hero! There is no power which could conceivably invade the United States by air, but fifty thousand military airplanes in the U.S. with as many young Corrigans at the controls would be as heavy a sword over the head of Latin America as twelve thousand planes in Germany were for the last years over the head of Europe. The Mexican people must be pondering deeply over the meaning of the mention of Tampico, principal point of distribution of the Mexican oil industry, regarding which the U. S. Government is making demands which the Mexican Government has rejected as infringing upon Mexican integrity and independence. Fifty thousand airplanes become full of meaning for the Latin American peoples, who can now see the three-hundred-mile neutrality zone around the continents as a claim staked out by Yankee imperialism.

What do the fifty thousand airplanes mean to the people of the Pacific, of the Far East? Will the news bring comfort to the four hundred million population of China, who during eight years have suffered much more than Europe all the horrors of modern military invasion, the loss of all their seacoast and large cities, the death of

ten millions, with famine for hundreds of millions? No, it will not comfort the Chinese, for they will remember that over the eight years, *the Japanese invaders have carried on only with the supplies furnished by the United States*; that the American conscience has stirred but faintly under the vast profits gained from this trade; that Washington became excited and raised the slogan of fifty thousand planes, in relation to the Far East, only when the future of the rubber, oil, and tin of the Dutch East Indies became an open question. Fifty thousand planes registers an American imperialist claim on the Dutch East Indies.

Greenland, Iceland, the Caribbean islands, these are but the small change in the great gamble of world redivision and world empire into which Roosevelt is leading the American people.

But this bald program of imperialist territorial aggrandizement overseas cannot secure the support of the American people. It is therefore not directly propagandized; it is even indignantly denied. Once the United States is "at war," however, the tail would go with the hide without any possibility of mass criticism. The problem of American imperialism is therefore one of getting the country into war, on any or every pretext, and then their program will have no effective opposition, so they think. How to get into the war, that is the question for our ruling circles.

The United States is already in the war, morally and economically, as a non-belligerent ally of England and France. But the profits from war-trade prove painfully disappointing in volume, and do not keep pace with the losses from the deepening economic crisis. Further, as a non-belligerent it is still impossible to abolish at one stroke all social legislation and trade union safeguards, still impossible to conscript labor, still impossible to implement those beautiful M-day plans, which are the imperialist ideal of heaven on earth. All the irksome problems of "disciplining" unruly labor, of dissolving all "democratic nonsense" in the country, could be so easily cut through with the sword of belligerency, of official entrance into the war!

This, not sympathy with the "democracies" which have turned dictatorships overnight, is the main driving force impelling the

American bourgeoisie into the war. But that sympathy, which exists among the masses together with a hatred of Hitlerism, is counted upon to undermine and overcome the even more clear and emphatic determination among the masses to keep out of this war. This is being strengthened by studied incitations to hysterical fear of the safety of America in the war-torn world. Truly America is in danger, but the bourgeoisie is determined to hide the real danger, which is the danger of being dragged into the war on the Allied side, and the danger of indigenous fascism which springs directly from the economic royalists, from Wall Street. The masses are to be frightened by the specter of invasion from abroad, to accept the yoke of military dictatorship wielded by the economic royalists at home.

This course is all the more acceptable to our American ruling classes, since they also have interests in the European war which they can better advance through a belligerent position. They want Britain to win—not too quickly and not too cheaply, of course! They foresee the British Empire coming out of this war in such a position of dependency upon the American Empire, as formerly the Dutch bore toward Britain, or that to which the French had been reduced in the last few years. The British Empire is an “inheritance” which the American imperialists would therefore not like to see dispersed, although they are not displeased to see Uncle John Bull in poor health. But above all the American ruling class interest in Europe is to do everything possible to check and prevent the outbreak of popular upheavals, which bear the danger of leading directly to the socialist revolution in one or more European countries. Fear of revolutionary upheaval in Europe, and the determination to hold it down by all means is the most powerful general motive driving the American ruling circles toward entrance into the war as a belligerent. Capitalism must be preserved at all costs in Europe if Wall Street is to feel safe in America. That is what the American newspapers and statesmen mean when they say, “In Europe they are fighting our battles for us, and we must help them.”

This is the world outlook and program upon which the economic royalists and their political henchmen are united. This is the basis for unity of the bourgeoisie, which takes place so rapidly before our eyes after years of split and the most bitter struggles. It is a unity against labor and the masses at home, against the weaker and dependent countries and for the Allied imperialists as against the German in the war. But it is only a relative unity within which their own quarrels grow more bitter. It is not yet a unity of leadership and method in the struggle for these goals. Our ruling classes have not thoroughly modernized their instruments of rule, and fall into some confusion in driving toward what they want.

*From the report to the Eleventh National Convention of the Communist Party of the United States, New York, May 30 to June 2, 1940.*