

# The War Danger in the Present World Situation

By William Z. Foster

THE GUNS OF World War II were not yet silent when the Communist Party of the U.S.A. raised the warning of a danger of a new world war. At the Emergency Convention of July, 1945, held while the war against Japan was still going on, the main resolution, after pointing out the sinister moves of American imperialism at home and abroad, declared that "the most aggressive circles of American imperialism are endeavoring to secure for themselves political and economic domination of the world," and that, "if the reactionary policies and forces of monopoly capital are not checked and defeated, America and the world will be confronted with new aggressions and war and the growth of reaction and fascism in the United States."

This resolution was a fundamentally correct Marxist analysis, and its forecasts have been completely sustained by the subsequent course of events. Many comrades, at the time, here and abroad, felt that this was something of a leftist analysis, an over-correction against the opportunist pest of Browderism, which we were then cleaning out of the Party. But it was not long until

the whole socialist and democratic world was speaking out actively against the growing war danger, signalized by the super-aggressive imperialist policies of the United States.

During the post-war years, the United States continued increasingly to give the most dramatic proofs that it was indeed out to master the world and that, in so doing, it contemplated the fighting of another great world war—against the USSR and the People's Democracies. No other interpretation than this could sanely be placed upon the intense military action of this country; the get-tough-with-Russia policies, the NATO, the atom-bomb diplomacy, the Truman doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the crude domination of the United Nations, and the growing boasts of American imperialists that it was the fate and duty of the United States to lead (*i.e.*, to rule) the world. That this was a grave war danger was obvious.

On the other hand, a number of most important developments have been simultaneously taking place in the world, which have tended definitely to knock on the head the conception of an early and easy conquest

of the world as held by Wall Street. Let me cite three of the most important of these:

a) There took place an enormous strengthening in the post-war period of the world forces of Socialism and democracy—that is, the vast growth in power of the U.S.S.R., the establishment of the European People's Democracies, the winning of the great Chinese Revolution, and the wide growth of Communist Parties, trade unions, and youth, women and peace organizations throughout the world. The active peace policies of all these bodies enormously increased the people's restraints upon the Wall Street imperialists and warmongers.

b) Then there was the growth of a tremendous anti-war spirit among the masses throughout the entire world, both socialist and capitalist. This elemental peace will of the bulk of humanity has become all the more powerful with the breaking of the American A-bomb "monopoly" by the U.S.S.R. (Truman announcement, September, 1949), and with recent developments which have made the H-bomb an even more dreadful weapon than the A-bomb. These world-wide masses, who more and more hate and fear the United States, are coming to understand that the fight for peace is the fight for existence. This anti-war spirit has been vastly increased by the horrible implications of the recent H-bomb tests at Bikini.

c) Finally, there was the growing

unwillingness of most of the capitalist countries themselves to follow the lead of the United States into a catastrophic atomic war. This resistance to American domination, dictation, and war policies (represented by the hesitant attitude of Great Britain, India, France, Italy, Canada, etc.) is partly a result of the mass pressure for peace and partly a result of the inherent capitalist antagonisms and conflicts of interests among the imperialist powers. This capitalist opposition to the insane war program of American imperialism is becoming more marked with Eisenhower's desperate efforts to extend the Indo-China war.

#### PEACE VICTORIES OF THE PEOPLES

These elementary and very powerful peace forces of the world have put many stumbling blocks in the path of aggressive American imperialism. They have done this in the face of the most flagrant betrayal by Social-Democratic trade-union and political leaders both here and abroad, who are almost everywhere playing the imperialist game of Wall Street.

The most spectacular demonstration of the power of the international peace forces was the compelling of the Korean armistice by the peoples of the world in the face of the most determined, almost frantic, efforts, of the American government to keep the war going. But

the peace forces have many other major victories to report, a number of them subtle and undramatic. Among them were the stubborn refusal of the U.S.S.R., which fights tirelessly for peace, to be intimidated by the A-bomb threat; the history-making resistance of the North Korean and Chinese Volunteer armies to the combined armies of the American war alliance; the blocking of the attempt of the United States militarists to use the A-bomb in North Korea and China; the mass opposition to the sending of American boys to die in Indo-China; the stubborn protest against the re-arming of West Germany and Japan; the mounting world pressure for the admission of People's China to the United Nations, etc., etc.

So great, in fact, has the mass peace resistance been to American imperialism, that the original world-conquest plan of Wall Street has long since been made bankrupt. This plan obviously was to establish American domination by means of atomic-bomb intimidation, or if this did not succeed, by a "preventive" shower of A-bombs on Russian cities and industrial centers. This nightmarish scheme was openly advocated at the time. The A-bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki more as a warning to the Soviet Union than as a military means to crush already-defeated Japan. But this whole atom-bomb strategy was knocked into a cocked hat when the Soviet Government let

it be known that it was also making A-bombs.

This unexpected development caused a swift re-orientation and improvisation in American war policy. The early complete reliance upon the A-bomb, to the practical exclusion of "conventional" arms, was dropped; the N.A.T.O. was established and furious efforts were initiated to form a great all-capitalist alliance, the heart of which, together with the United States, would be a re-armed West Germany and Japan. But this new plan also suffered shipwreck. Originally the idea was to create a militant anti-Soviet alliance, which would march into war aggressively against that country, much as the Anti-Comintern Axis did in World War II. As remarked above, however, the resistance of the peoples and the governments of the capitalist world to becoming cannon fodder for Wall Street, has paralyzed the whole N.A.T.O. project.

In view of this growing failure of the N.A.T.O. strategy and the invention of the H-bomb, within the last couple of years, there has been another shift of American war plans. This has produced the so-called "new look" policy, with its central stress upon the H-bomb and its threat of a preventive war—the so-called "massive instant retaliation" strategy. The capitalist owners and bosses of the United States have accepted the dreadful perspective of an all-out atomic war. Hence, the big emphasis upon the air force and the

feverish building of monster air-fleets, erection of numberless air bases throughout the world, and the creation of ever more horrible types of H-bombs. There is a tremendous and rising mass opposition throughout the world to the murderous H-bomb and the war strategy connected with it, but the task still remains for the international peace forces to knock out the deadly H-bomb menace.

### IS THERE A CONTINUING WAR DANGER?

Beyond question, during the past few years, the peace forces of the world have won very important victories, and, for a time, succeeded in considerably easing world tension. This fact led many to believe, not only in the ranks of shallow-pate liberals, but even in the Communist Party itself, that the war danger was a thing of the past. Such comrades did not come out with clear-cut theses to the effect that there was no further war danger, but they expressed themselves this way privately, and with their line they definitely influenced sections of our press in this general direction. Not only did these comrades cast aside the fact that there was a continuing serious war danger, but they therewith also jettisoned the Party analysis that American imperialism is seeking to establish world domination on the basis of another world war. All concepts of an active fight

against the warmongers also went out of their writings. This was the grossest Right opportunism, and, if continued, it could do grave damage to our Party and the working class.

At the recent National Conference of our Party, Comrade Stevens, in recognizing the continuing war danger in the world, despite the manifest easing of international tension that had taken place after the Korean armistice, and in stressing the need for persistent struggle for peace, said:

We must emphasize the fact that this possibility [for peace] implies a *whole period of struggle* for its realization. If previously the main danger we had to contend with was the influence of the theory of the inevitability of a new world war, then as we enter into the period marked by these new possibilities, the danger increasingly becomes a tendency to feel that 'peace is in the bag,' that the war danger has disappeared altogether—a failure to understand that possibilities can be transformed into living reality only in the process of the sharpest struggle against the war policies and war orientation of the Eisenhower Administration.

This warning of Comrade Stevens, based upon a realistic analysis of the American and world situation, was a most timely one. Obviously, however, the comrades, advocates of the "peace-is-in-the-bag" illusion, failed completely to profit from it. They also ignored the Draft Program now before the Party, which gives a clear line on the war danger and how to fight for peace.

It seems absurd, at this late date, that Party comrades have to be told that there is a continuing war danger in the world, but this appears, nevertheless, to be necessary. Lenin and Stalin repeatedly pointed out that so long as imperialism lasts there will be the danger of war, and their general warning is especially applicable in this period of the rapid deepening of the general crisis of the world capitalist system. It is not, however, simply with such a general war danger that we are dealing, but with the concrete danger of a Wall Street-organized war against the Soviet Union, People's China, and the European People's Democracies.

The war danger in the world stems from the aggressiveness of American imperialism (which is Wall Street finance capital). The most malignant manifestations of this danger now are the monstrous H-bomb threats to the peace of the world and the deliberate effort to spread the Indo-Chinese war. But there are a host of others, among them: the \$50 billion yearly budget for war preparations; the stimulated growth of McCarthyism, which is definitely an outgrowth of war hysteria; the construction of air bases all over the world, their planes all directed against the U.S.S.R.; the persistence in the N.A.T.O. war alliance, and especially the re-arming of West Germany and Japan; the so-called "liberation policy," which is the fomenting of civil wars in countries that refuse to do the bid-

ding of Wall Street; the sabotage of the Korean peace treaty; the barring of People's China from the United Nations; the so-called "massive retaliation" policy which would give to the President the authority, upon his own initiative, to plunge the world into a great war, without even consulting Congress; the sabotage of East-West trade as a pro-war measure; the ultra-arrogant character of United States diplomacy, with repeated A- and H-bomb ultimatums and threats from Eisenhower and Dulles to the U.S.S.R. and People's China; the blatant insistence from bourgeois spokesmen that the United States is the rightful leader (ruler) of the world, the flagrant war preparations now going on upon all sides, the violent persecution of Communists and other peace advocates, etc., etc.

The malignancy and danger of these militaristic and warlike policies is emphasized by the fact that they are the policies of by far the most powerful capitalist government in the world, controlling a country with over 65 percent of the capitalist world's industrial production, and that the government of the United States is in the hands of semi-McCarthyite pro-fascists. The atomaniacs controlling this monster military machine might well throw our country into war. It is idle, every time there is an easing of world tensions, to hop to the conclusion that the war danger has vanished.

In view of the aggressive, warlike policies of the United States, it is politically silly, not to say grossly opportunistic, to assert that there is no war danger in existence. The leading statesmen of the world, not dominated by Wall Street, continue to point out the reality of the danger. Premier Nehru of India has signalized the danger upon many recent occasions, especially with regard to the setting up of American war bases in Pakistan. Premiers Ho Chi Minh of Indo-China and Chou En-lai of China have given many similar warnings. At the recent Berlin conference of Foreign Ministers, Molotov, despite the diplomatic need to speak softly, declared that U'n'ited States imperialists have taken the course of preparing a new war against the U.S.S.R. and the people's democracies." And a short while afterward, Premier Malenkov warned the world that the policy of cold war (American) was preparing a new world slaughter which would mean the destruction of civilization. These are the voices of reality.

Wall Street monopoly capital is definitely orienting towards war. This course it is impelled to because it represents the greatest imperialist power in the world, because it thinks it sees in this direction world domination, fabulous profits, and the destruction of world Socialism. It can be driven from this suicidal course only by being overwhelmingly defeated by the peace forces of the world. Not even the realization that

a great war would result in the H-bombing of the United States is terrible enough to deter them from their war orientation. Only the aroused peoples of the United States and other countries can halt them. Such is the madness of monopoly capital in this period of the decline of world capitalism and the rise of world Socialism.

### HOW TO FIGHT THE WAR DANGER

It is not the purpose of this article to review the work that the Party has done in the field of anti-war struggle, to detail concrete organizational steps to be taken, nor to list precise slogans for the peace forces; but simply to stress the reality of the war danger and to indicate a few general principles of how to fight it.

The first thing to be grasped firmly is the Party's method of establishing its policy regarding the war danger. Our Party does not, on the basis of some super-clever analysis, decide definitely (under present conditions) that there is or is not going to be a war. It does not say that war is inevitable, nor does it say that there is going to be no war. Its policy is determined by the great growth of militarism and imperialist aggression, which implies clearly that there is a danger of war. It is this war danger, which is now under our very noses, that the Party fights.

It may possibly be that the break-

ing of the A- and H-bomb monopolies by the U.S.S.R., or the relative failure of N.A.T.O., or the enormous growth of peace sentiment all over the world, or all of these factors together, have already defeated the attempt of American imperialism to launch a third world war; or it may be that they have not succeeded in so doing. Only the next years can answer this basic question. In the meantime, it would be extreme folly to conclude that there is no war danger, as some did after the Korean truce was signed. Our task is to fight the concrete war danger as it looms up, as of now.

This fight against the war danger must be a continuous, resolute and energetic one. Of course, it cannot be carried out in any mechanical spirit; its slogans must be attuned to the degree of urgency of the international situation at the given time. For the past few weeks, with the acute situation in Indo-China and the advent of the monstrous H-bomb "tests," the war danger has been a rising one and must be fought aggressively.

A most important thing for us to grasp is, as Comrade Stevens indicated so cogently and emphatically in his report, that any easing of the international situation, such as after Korea, is not a signal for us to abandon or slacken our peace fight, as some comrades tried to have us do. On the contrary, our task is to intensify this fight. The great victory of the peoples in forcing through the

Korean truce must not be followed by laying down our oars, but by working more energetically than ever to defeat the would-be launchers of an atomic war. When one has the enemy on the retreat, he must drive to destroy him. Any tendency to slacken the peace fight at this time, on the grounds that the war danger has lessened, or even disappeared, tends to liquidate the peace movement, to give the warmongers a free hand, and thus, in the final analysis, to increase the war danger.

The question of the war danger cannot be departmentalized and dealt with as though it were some kind of a separate question. On the contrary, it is the basic problem of this period, it permeates and saturates all other questions. On this basis it must be combatted. The war danger must be fought in both a general and a specific sense. That is, while pointing out the broad menace of the war danger, we must also show concretely how it affects every other question. This means to demonstrate its key relationship to the developing economic crisis, to McCarthyism, and to the various other economic and political questions and problems now confronting the American people.

Especially the Party must present the war danger as an urgent, present-day question for the people—not only in the sense of the possibility of an eventual dreadful atomic war, but as a reactionary force in many ways harmfully affecting their

everyday lives. Thus, the workers must be made to understand that the war preparations are directly responsible for the present high taxes and high cost of living, and for the growth of anti-union sentiment in reactionary circles. They must be taught the utter folly of depending upon munitions-making to furnish jobs. The Negro people must be warned, by concrete examples, that they, of all the sections of our general population, have the most to lose by the growth of fascism and the war spirit. The farmers must be shown, too, that if their incomes are dropping while surplus farm products pile sky high, a major reason for this is because "cold-war" conditions have largely resulted in closing world markets to American farm commodities.

It is necessary, too, to center the main fire upon those aspects of Wall Street's program that are currently the most dangerous or which are the most hated, by the people. Thus, we should militantly fight against every step being taken by the war hawks to expand the Indo-China war and involve us in it. We should demand the immediate outlawing of the use of the H-bomb, the halting of its production, and the prohibition of any further test explosions. The prohibition should also include all forms of chemical and bacteriological warfare. We should battle against the so-called "massive retaliation" policy of Dulles and Eisenhower, which is a covert

way of getting power to the President to launch us into a world war any time he sees fit, without congressional or popular consideration. Also we should concentrate against the so-called "liberation policy," which is the present-day version of the Truman doctrine for the instigation of civil wars in countries refusing to bow to Wall Street. We should fight relentlessly the Federal budget, now before Congress, calling for a one-year war appropriation of \$50 billion, we should vigorously combat every attempt to rearm West Germany and Japan; and, as a great peace measure, we should demand the admission of People's China to the United Nations. In fighting McCarthyism we should show its basic relationship to the pest of militarism and warmongery now affecting our country. We should alarm the people to the grave danger of such semi-McCarthyites as Eisenhower and Dulles arbitrarily controlling, as they virtually do now, the horrible H-bomb.

As the Draft Program points out, the peace movement offers the broadest opportunity for united front activities. All ranks of the people, especially those who work in the industries and on the farms, are deeply aroused against the war danger, and daily they are becoming more opposed to it. The mobilization and leading of these masses in struggle for peace is one of the very greatest tests our Party has ever experienced in all its history.



A fundamental consideration for us also is to base our activities upon the working class. We must not be deceived by the pro-war activities of the Meanys, Reuthers, Becks and other Social-Democratic labor imperialists. The great masses of the American working class are opposed to war, and they are in dread of the malignant H-bomb activities of the Eisenhower-Dulles government. They are increasingly ready for a strong pro-peace movement. It is the task of our Party to give such leadership.

The coming November election will be among the most important in our country's history. It is necessary that in this election the Communist Party raise the war danger question sharply and in all its ramifications as outlined above. Although the masses are ready for a strong anti-war movement, only the Communist Party can be depended upon to raise the question in its full significance. Our Party must link up this whole matter with its fight against the menace of McCarthyism and the growing economic crisis. The Draft Program gives a clear and comprehensive line on this peace struggle in all its ramifications.

All of our anti-war work, our struggle for peace, must culminate in the most powerful effort we are capable of to demonstrate to the American people that the only pos-

sible sane perspective for the world's peoples is one of peaceful co-existence of the capitalist countries with the U.S.S.R. This especially must be tied in with the fight against the H-bomb. Anything else is sheer political madness. We must especially shatter the "big lie" that the U.S.S.R. in any sense constitutes a war menace.

Wall Street's aggressive policy, based upon its determination to rule the world and its motivating conception that war is inevitable, could only lead the world's people to their worst disaster in all history. The greatest ideological trend in the world today is the rapid swing of the world's peoples, under the terroristic pressure of America's H-bombs, to the basic conviction that there is no other alternative for mankind than to achieve a working arrangement between the Soviet Union and the capitalist powers—an arrangement upon which the U.S.S.R. is basing its whole policy.

Finally, in its handling of the elementary questions of peace and war, our Party must realize that as the proletarian party located in the heart of the basic source of the present war danger, the United States, it is our solemn international duty not only to combat every phase of the warlike policies of American imperialism, but also to expose them before the workers of the world.