

# INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN

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## THE CONFERENCE OF OUR BRITISH SECTION

With great joy we have learned that the Revolutionary Socialist League, British Section of the Fourth International, has been able to conclude successfully its annual Conference. Although the war has brought with it extreme legal difficulties and tremendously increased the dangers attending the existence of a revolutionary party, our British comrades have managed to continue their activity and even to find means of giving expression to internal democracy!

The Easter Conference of the R.S.L. was held under the shadow of the Labour Party's ban against the Militant Labor League, the Left-wing organization in which our comrades have played leading roles. Naturally, the greatest part of the debate revolved around this question. In a resolution (reproduced below) the conference reaffirmed the main tactic of working inside the Labour Party and laid plans to continue this work under new forms in spite of the ban. It rejected the use of Conscientious Objectors' Tribunals by members as futile pacifism and declared for continuing the anti-war struggle along the lines of mass work. The National Committee elected by the Conference by motion decided for "upholding the majority point of view" in the dispute that took place within the Socialist Workers Party of the United States and took steps to tighten up the R.S.L. organizationally.

In the organizational report, progress was reported as follows: New groups have been formed or are in the process of formation in South Yorkshire, South Wales and Midlands. A full-time organizer has been assigned to the field. In the London suburbs of Norwood and Brixton, the groups control the local Labour Party as well as the Trades Council. Two comrades were delegates to the annual Conference of the Railway Clerks Association; at the Shop Assistants Conference, the militant anti-war resolution adopted was moved by a comrade who was a delegate. Two comrades were delegates to the National Labour Party Conference, one of them moving the main resolution against the War and against Labour participation in the Coalition Government. One comrade was a delegate to the Cooperative Union Conference.

Our comrades have had to take rapid measures to reorganize themselves for work under the probable illegal conditions which will be imposed upon them in view of the threatening Nazi invasion. Their ability to strike root in the mass movement, which has already been evidenced, indicates that they will know how to function even under these new circumstances.

The Fourth International sends its warmest greetings of solidarity to the valiant comrades of the British Section in this hour of trial! More power to them!

July, 1940

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RESOLUTION ON TACTICS

(Adopted by the Easter Conference of the R.S.L.)

1. This conference reaffirms the basic strategical line of the organization in the building of the new revolutionary party. This consists of work in the mass organisations, the LP and TU, in preparation for the radicalisation of the masses arising out of the political and economic crisis of capitalism accentuated by imperialist war.

2. Towards this end the organisation had endeavoured to build up an open organisation on a partial programme in the LP, the MLL, with the object of providing a nucleus for leftward moving workers.

3. This tactic was based on a Marxist analysis of the current situation and of probable development in the future. This analysis is in no way altered by the LP ban. What is necessary therefore is not a new strategical line but a tactic suitable for existing circumstances.

4. The MLL was not formed in a vacuum but arose after the dissolution of the Socialist League and the consequent necessity for an organisation capable of combatting the growth of stalinist influence among left-wing workers in the LP.

5. In deciding our policy for the future the organisation must take the following issues into consideration:

a. The formation of a new national left-wing organisation cannot be profitable at this stage. This must be recognized in view of the prevailing stagnation in the working-class movement and the absence of any large-scale opposition to the LP bureaucracy.

b. In such circumstances any new organisation would almost immediately meet the same fate as the MLL and would not be able to arouse any effective support among the LP membership.

c. The prevailing stagnation implies that an open propaganda and agitational organisation without large resources and membership would be unable to conduct effective mass work. The main work for the immediate future must consist in the winning of individuals and the consequent broadening of our base for more open mass work when the circumstances are more propitious.

6. In view of these circumstances the conference resolves:

a. To campaign in the LP until the Whitsun conference if possible under the name of the MLL. The MLL will protest against the crushing of militant opposition in the party. Nevertheless, in order to safeguard our position in the LP, members must if

necessary publicly resign from the MLL.

b. To prepare for the dissolution of the MLL realising that the weakness of the organisation precludes a victory against the bureaucracy.

c. Not to form at this stage any alternative left-wing organisation but to take steps to organise local contacts and non-RSL members into left-wing groups and study classes.

d. This does not mean the recommencement of so-called "open work" but the continuation of our work in the LP according to the perspectives laid down at the 1939 conference. At this stage the RSL will work as a secret fraction within the LP.

7. This line apart from its political necessity in relation to the internal situation in the LP is also advantageous to us in connection with the threat of bourgeois state repression, of which the LP ban is the forerunner, enabling us to achieve the transition from open to illegal and semi-illegal status without undue disturbance.

8. In order to assist the work in the reformist organisation the "Militant" will continue to be produced after the dissolution of the MLL as a paper dealing specifically with the problems of the working-class movement.

9. This position will be put to the MLL conference and our local groups instructed to draw in the best elements of the MLL into the RSL and to make full arrangements to carry on the struggle in the localities.

May, 1940

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DOCUMENTS OF THE EMERGENCY CONFERENCE (Continued)

REPORT ON THE MOVEMENT OF THE FOURTH

INTERNATIONAL IN LATIN AMERICA

(Report to the Emergency Conference of the F.I.  
by the Latin-American Department)

We are obliged to limit our report to general observations upon the different sections and groups in Latin America for the following considerations:

1. The information at our disposal is of a limited, general character; we have no detailed information on the organizational

strength of the various groups and sections.

2. The movement is in process of political and organizational formation, reflecting the general character of the Latin-American labor movement in most of the countries which is also in process of political and organizational formation. Due to this fact, we consider it advisable to pass over at least for the present, a political evaluation of the groups and sections for it would be premature to express a definite opinion on such an important question.

3. The representation of our Latin American movement at this Conference is of such a nature that it is not feasible to discuss the political and organizational problems of these countries.

4. In a number of countries, which we will cite below, two or more groups adhere to the Fourth International with political and organizational differences which have not yet assumed clear form. The policy of the L.A.D. has been directed toward their unification in a single organization. Therefore, any definite observation on the political character of the groups in those countries under the given circumstances might turn out not in the best interests of the Fourth International. Consequently, with this brief explanation, we begin our report.

#### BRAZIL

The movement for the Fourth International in Brazil is one of the oldest on the Continent; it was organized around 1930-31. Since its formation it has passed through a number of political and organizational crises. Politically it has been one of the most active groups; but, due to its lack of a firm and stable political leadership, its political life assumes a disorganized form and translates itself, very often, into an organizational crisis. The "French Turn" brought about its complete disorganization and it took a long time to reorganize itself. At present, from the information at our disposal, the Brazilian group supports the position of the deserters from the S.W.P. It is constituted under the name of the Revolutionary Socialist Party. Basing ourselves on a report from Comrade Smith, it has about 50 members. We have no direct relationship with them, due to the fact that Leburn, its representative, who deserted from the Fourth International, continually refused to give us their address.

#### ARGENTINA

In Argentina the movement for the Fourth International began about 1930. At present we have three groups, all belonging to the Fourth International: the Revolutionary Workers Group (G.O.R.); the Revolutionary Socialist League (both of them in Buenos Aires) and the Marxist League (in Cordoba).

The Revolutionary Workers Group was formed not very long ago, by Comrades Fossa and Quebracho. It publishes a paper called "La Nueva Internacional." Comrade Quebracho published a number of pamphlets, such as: "Que Quiere la Cuarta Internacional;" "La Revolucion Mundial

y la Traicion Stalinista;" "Centrismo, Oportunismo y Bolchevismo"; "Nuestras Perspectivas Politicas", etc. This group has passed recently through an organizational crisis, the nature of which is as yet unknown to us.

The Revolutionary Socialist League was likewise formed very recently, as the result of a fusion between the "Nueva Etapa" group and the "Inicial" group. The political basis of this fusion is not known to us. These two groups have been in existence for the last 8-9 years. About 1933 they united their forces into a single organization; but that unification didn't last very long at the time. The name of their paper now is "Inicial".

The Marxist League of Cordoba is composed of about ten comrades. We have not heard from them for a long time. They have no official organ.

The Latin American Department tried to unite all the groups in a single organization; but it has failed so far in its efforts. In the beginning, the differences between them were of rather secondary character and mainly personal. But, at present there is indication that the divergencies are assuming a political character. In Number 7 of "Inicial" a programmatic article appeared on the nature of the revolution in Argentina, which attempted to show that its character will have to be exclusively socialist. Recently, the G.O.R. wrote a letter to the L.A.D. asking to be recognized as the Argentinian Section of the F.I. The Department decided to postpone any definite decision on this question for further study and observation of the political development of the various groups. The "Inicial" group put as a condition for unification with the G.O.R. the elimination of Comrade Quebracho. The L.A.D. sent them a special communication expressing its disapproval of this ultimatum. The programmatic article in "Inicial" changes the situation to some extent, in our opinion. We are faced now with a situation where the differences are taking a political form and, consequently, it will be much easier for us to decide which one of them represents the ideas of the F.I.

## CHILE

In this country we have had two groups who adhere to the F.I.: Partido Obrero Revolucionario (P.O.R.) and Grupo Internacionalista Obrero (G.I.O.). There has also appeared a new movement, under the name of Partido Socialista Revolucionario (P.S.R.), which split recently from the Socialist Party and declared itself in favor of the F.I.

The Partido Obrero Revolucionario is composed mainly of comrades who belonged to the ex-Izquierda Comunista. They publish "Alianza Obrera" periodically. Recently, on the war question, they held successful meetings in Santiago. Their position on the character of the S.U. is not yet known to us. Their public organ does not indicate that they have adopted a position contrary to the official position of the F.I. We have not heard from them for a few months.

The Grupo Internacionalista Obrero is also an off-spring from the ex-Izquierda Comunista. They have no official or regular public organ, although they have published a number of bulletins and other material. It appears that they obtained good results in their work in the Socialist Party and the youth. Basing ourselves on the report of Comrade Fermin Olea, who is a member of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, the GIO constitutes part of a Committee which is trying to unify all the forces for the F.I. into a single organization.

With the P.R.S. we haven't yet established formal and official relations. The L.A.D., after hearing Comrade Fermin Olea's report, decided to write them an official communication in order to establish relations with P.S.R. and decided, also, to invite them to send a fraternal delegate to the Conference.

In Chile, as in Argentina, the policy of the L.A.D. has been directed toward unification of the groups into a single organization. It should be noted that in Chile, from the beginning, the differences had a political basis. The G.I.O. manifested an opportunist tendency on some political questions, while the P.O.R. manifested inclinations of the opposite extreme: not enough flexibility in dealing with problems of a practical organizational character. It is still difficult to determine whether these political and organizational manifestations have a general theoretical background or whether they are just isolated expressions, due to the political and organizational process of formation. The G.I.O. is for unification, but the P.O.R. is against it. Their argument is that they don't want to have anything to do with contrists. Not very long ago the POR wrote a letter to the L.A.D. asking to be recognized as the Chilean Section of the F.I. and to break off relations with the G.I.O. We rejected their proposal, on the ground that it would be wrong to exclude a group of revolutionists from the ranks of the F.I. on not very clear and not very definite political manifestations. We advised them that instead of their present antagonistic attitude toward the G.I.O. they should adopt a fraternal one. We do not yet know their reaction to this communication.

## URUGUAY

Our movement in Uruguay is extremely weak. At present there are two groups, both adhering to the Fourth International. These groups were united until recently in a single organization. According to the information we have received, the split did not occur on political grounds. The names of the groups are: Liga Bolchevique Leninista and Grupo Obrero Revolucionario. The G.O.R. publishes a magazine that does not appear regularly, called "Contra la Corriente". In its first issue it had a very confused editorial on the Russian-Finnish question. In general, the magazine is of poor political character. The Liga Bolchevique Leninista does not have an official organ, but it has issued a number of manifestos dealing with the war problem. Basing ourselves on the information we have received, the comrades who compose the Grupo Obrero Revolucionario were the ones responsible for the split. This information came to us from the secretary of the

L.B.L., We have not heard yet the side of the G.O.R. The L.A.D. has written to the G.O.R. asking for information.

### BOLIVIA

The movement for the Fourth International in Bolivia originated around 1934, under the name of Partido Obrero Revolucionario. From the beginning it was politically a confused organization. As a result of this the organization went through a series of organizational crises. One of its leading elements, Tristan Marof, a typical petty bourgeois radical, who uses socialistic phraseology, betrayed and deserted the movement, although he still calls himself a partisan of the Fourth International. He is constantly attempting to form a new socialist party. He collaborated with the semi-fascist dictatorship of Busch, thereby discrediting our movement in Bolivia. In order to form a better understanding of the real significance of the nature of the crisis that our Bolivian section went through, it is necessary to bear in mind that Tristan Marof is a person with a revolutionary past, and consequently is popular among certain sections of the anti-imperialist forces. The revolutionary militants who remained loyal to revolutionary socialism are trying to reorganize their forces under the banner of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario and the Fourth International. Not very long ago they addressed an official communication asking for admittance to the ranks of the Fourth International. From the documents elaborated in the form of a thesis, which we have received, we find that in general they are of a revolutionary character, although incomplete in many respects. Quite naturally we must take into consideration that our movement not only in Bolivia, but also in most of the other Latin-American countries, is in process not only of organizational but of political formation. Our Bolivian section does not yet have an official organ.

### CUBA

The Partido Bolchevique Leninista of Cuba is one of the oldest sections on the Latin American Continent; it was formed about 1932. Its basic nucleus came to our movement from the Communist Party of Cuba, as a result of a split. Many of the leaders of the early period deserted our movement and joined the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie. In the beginning they had some influence and even leadership in some of the trade unions, but in the last few years, as a result of the general conditions in the country and the desertion of some of their leaders the connections with the mass movement lessened; bringing about, as a result, certain internal difficulties. According to the latest information, our Cuban section has taken exceptional measures to solve these internal difficulties. They have established a Provisional National Executive Committee, composed of the original members of the N.E.C. and the most active militants of Havana, its task being to prepare the ground for a national conference. In this task, the L.A.D. helped our Cuban Section by advising the comrades from Santiago de Cuba, who wrote a letter to the Department asking intervention, that they take no steps that might endanger the unity of the Party. According to the latest information they are making special efforts to penetrate into the trade union movement and



break out of their isolation. Since their formation they have published a number of organs and pamphlets. Due to the extremely difficult financial conditions they are unable at present to publish a regular organ. They have issued a long Manifesto on the war question and several others dealing with problems of the revolutionary movement.

### MEXICO

Our Mexican section is also one of the oldest on the American Continent; it was formed around 1930. Due to the lack of a leading political cadre, it went through a number of crises. Not very long ago it went through an internal crisis, resulting in the desertion of the Galicia-Carvajal groups from our section and later the desertion of the painter, Diego Rivera, who left the revolutionary movement to go into bourgeois politics. Our Mexican section with the cooperation of the L.A.D. reorganized its forces under the name of Partido Obrero Internacionalista. They have about thirty comrades in Mexico City and connections in some provincial cities. They publish a theoretical magazine called "Olave" and occasionally "Lucha Obrera" an agitational organ. Their connection with the trade union movement is weak. It is one of the most active sections of the Latin American countries.

### PUERTO RICO

Our Puerto Rican section was formed around 1933 under the name of Partido Comunista Independiente. Its principal leader, Vergne Ortiz, was the organizer of the Communist Party of that country. It is a weak group numerically, due to the extreme financial difficulties under which our comrades labor, and due to the general condition of the present day development of the labor movement. It issues irregularly "Chispa", a mimeographed publication and some pamphlets. In view of the extreme financial difficulties which hamper the work of our comrades on the Island, and in view of the fact that Puerto Rico is a colonial possession of the imperialist United States, we consider that our North American Section should pay more attention than it has up to now, to the needs and problems of these comrades.

### SMALL GROUPS AND CONTACTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES

In Cali, Colombia, we have had for a number of years a small group of comrades without any leading elements in its ranks. It is very weak politically. In Panama we also had a small group but it disappeared as an organized force and at present we have contact with only one comrade. In Peru, according to a report that appeared in an Argentine magazine called "Claridad" there is a group which supports the Fourth International, but we have not been able, so far, to establish relations with them. There are also some comrades in the ranks of the Fourth International in some of the countries of Central America.

We have tried to summarize in a single formula the general political and organizational character of the present day forces of the Fourth International in these countries, with the deliberate object also of drawing the necessary political and organizational conclusions. A movement of this kind needs, more than a nature one, close advice and attention; it needs leadership in the daily problems which it faces. In this connection, we must state that up to now we have not been able to fulfill this urgent need in the life of the Fourth International.

The various centers which were created under different names and forms by the F.I. directly, and by our North American Section, were of such a nature that they could not meet the requirements and necessities. All of them, as a general rule, were unable to act as administrative and coordinating bodies, and only in a very few isolated cases did they act as political centers.

Up to now we have not been able to normalize and stabilize the life of the L.A.D., mainly due to the fact that we lacked the necessary forces capable of participating in this particular work. Since the World Congress of the F.I. the life and work of the L.A.D. has gone through a great number of difficulties which inevitably affected the work of the F.I. in the Latin American countries. Previous to this Congress, after a reorganization of the forces of the L.A.D. we succeeded in establishing relations with all the forces of the F.I. in Latin America and took some steps to coordinate its work; but due to a decision of the Congress to bring Lebrun to the United States and put him in charge of the work in the Latin American countries, the work already accomplished was disrupted and disorganized. In the period of six to seven months during which he was the secretary of the L.A.D. he displayed the most lamentable inefficiency. His administrative inability went so far as to abandon practically all relations with the Latin American groups and sections and to paralyze the life of the L.A.D. Letters went unanswered; meetings of the department were not called as problems arose but only according to his personal convenience. Since his removal as secretary we have been able to reestablish relations and normalize to a certain extent the life and work of the L.A.D. In this connection, it is necessary to state that the controversy on the question of the U.S.S.R. found its repercussions in the department. Out of the five members who composed it, two, Lebrun and Montanez, deserted the banner and ranks of the Fourth International. It should also be stated here that in relation to our work of coordinating the relations and activities of the F.I. in the Latin American countries, the Latin American Department did not receive the necessary cooperation from our groups and sections on the Continent, due mainly to the above-mentioned reasons, that is, that fact that our movement is in process of political and organizational formation and that the Latin American Department itself has been weak, not being able to now to play the role of a genuine leading center. This situation is best reflected in the "Boletin de Informacion," official organ of the L.A.D. The "Boletin" not only was not able to appear regularly; but, also, was not able to develop to the point of expressing the politi-

cal and organizational problems which face the revolutionary movement in Latin America. Over a period of more than a year only seven numbers appeared.

Summing up, we propose the following steps:

1) A reorganized, provisional L.A.D. should be created, having as its task the preparation of the political and organizational ground for a Latin American Conference with the object of elaborating the necessary programmatic documents of the Fourth International on the nature of the specific problems of the revolutionary movement in Latin America and to create the necessary leading bodies.

2) In view of the fact that we lack here the necessary forces to carry out the tasks of the Provisional Latin American Department, we consider it necessary that an effort should be made to bring from the Latin American countries a comrade in order to strengthen this Center and thereby also develop continental leadership.

3) In this task we consider that our North American Section, which is the strongest not only politically but also organizationally should in the future assume more responsibility and pay more attention to the work and problems of the Fourth International in the Latin American countries.

4) The life of the "Boletin" should be normalized. Now more than ever, in view of the war crisis and in view of the general character of development of our forces on the Continent there is an absolute and indispensable need for such an organ.

May, 1940

Colay-Gonzalez

P.S. After this report had been drawn up, we received word from Chile that the Grupo Internacionalista Obrero, the Partido Socialista Revolucionario and the Izquierda Revolucionario Socialista, the latter two, organizations which recently split from the Socialist Party, have fused their forces into a single organization under the name of Partido Obrero Internacionalista, and are asking for admission into the Fourth International. They inform us, also, that the Partido Obrero Revolucionario is conducting negotiations to join the party.

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### THE CANADIAN SECTION AND THE WAR

(An Organizational Report)

In the name of the Socialist Workers League, Canadian Section of the Fourth International, we warmly greet the Emergency Conference of the F.I., and in the spirit of revolutionary working class

solidarity, salute the gathered representatives of our other sections.

Eight months of the war in Canada - only country in the Americas actively involved in the second imperialist war - has yet failed to stir up the Canadian people to patriotic fervour. While it would be too optimistic to say that there is widespread antipathy to the war as yet, a conservative estimate would be to say that there is an extreme apathy to the war. In this respect the present war begins where the last one left off, a factor of tremendous significance to us.

The fact of the war has had one immediate effect on our League. Suddenly we found ourselves as the only political grouping opposed to the war. The various degrees of opposition expressed by other groups does not change this fact.

The Socialist Workers League has held its cadres together, has functioned effectively even under conditions of illegality and increasing repressions, and has remained true to the Bolshevik-Leninist program of the Fourth International, unimpressed by the petty-bourgeois clamor for a revision of Marxism. Despite our limited forces we are fully conscious of the mandatory task of breaking out of isolation, growing beyond our present role of propagandists. We strive to reach into the nethermost layers of workers and farmers so as to be in a position to assume leadership in the inevitable storm tomorrow, when the sullen passivity of the masses makes a 180 degree turn in the direction of mass opposition to the war and to the regime responsible for it. It is not excluded, indeed it is more than likely that the present intensification of the fighting overseas, marking the real beginning of the war and its prosecution in earnest, will be accompanied by an intensification of patriotism, and sharper repressions. This, however, will be a phase only. To facilitate tomorrow's developments in our direction, we seek to make our anti-war position and activity felt throughout the country.

#### Factors in the Situation

The present situation is influenced by the following factors: 1) the sharp rise in the cost of living; 2) the heavy war taxes placed on the people; 3) the ruthless order-in-council government by decree which has robbed the people of their democratic rights; 4) the certain knowledge that this war can do nothing for them.

The war began just as Canada was emerging from the 1938-39 recession. Increased industrial activity was just being felt by the trade unions. This trend was improved by domestic war orders in the ensuing months. The result has been to prod the trade unions into activity with some measure of success. Better organized labor experienced 5% to 8% increases, which still is considerably behind the 15% rise in living costs.

The farmer, too, was disappointed in his expectations of prosperity. The Allied policy of purchasing grain from those markets ac-

cessible to Germany, together with a measure of price-increase control kept the Canadian wheat prices down to very moderate increases.

The farmer was perhaps able to pay off some debts, but on the whole remains in his pre-war state of poverty as the slightly improved price level of wheat was more than offset by the price increase of other commodities which he must purchase. The beginning of the war found the farmer in severe economic straits. He was loaded down with huge debts which consumed the fruit of his produce and kept him in a state of semi-starvation. Since then, price increases of the goods he must purchase have far outstripped the modest rise in agricultural prices. Instead of the war improving his situation as was expected initially, his position will steadily worsen. The west will remain a seething cauldron of discontent and tremendous revolutionary energy is being stored up on the prairies. As in the last war, so in the present, the west will prove itself a courageous fighter against finance capital, and possibly the opening spark in the impending explosion.

In the period ahead, therefore, the trouble zones will be in the economic spheres, viz., continuing rising costs and further crushing taxation on the backs of the poor. The government has already indicated its intention of saddling the costs of the war on the masses. 61% of the first war budget is to be raised by indirect taxation, that is, on household commodities, etc.

#### Changes in Economy

In this respect it is necessary to take into consideration the major changes that Canadian economy has experienced since the last war. In 1914, mining and manufacturing played an insignificant role in relation to agriculture. In the quarter of a century that has elapsed, wheat has been challenged as the major staple production in Canada. Most important of all has been the rapid advance of mining. Today there are some 190 mines in comparison with 50 a quarter of a century ago. Total mineral production for 1939 reached 470.2 millions, an all-time high for this country. Of this, 339.5 millions was in the metals and 130.7 millions in the non-metallics such as coal, petroleum, etc. The proletariat in this industry number some 100,000, a substantial portion of the population with the inclusion of families. If the C.I.O. is to challenge the union movement successfully, it must penetrate this vast field, perhaps the most difficult fortress for labour to penetrate. While the west will remain a most important base for operation, the east will play an infinitely greater role in the mass upsurges that will come. The concentration of the proletariat since 1914 in a comparatively few areas dictates the arena of our activity.

The Canadian Commonwealth Federation finds itself nationally torn in two between the existing Coldwell leadership which supports the war "economically" and the overwhelming sections of the membership which support Woodsworth's pacifist position. This struggle was reflected in the elections, and the social patriotism of the parliamentary fraction of the Canadian social democracy undoubtedly con-

fused and checked the trend of the masses towards labour politics, the CCF vote remaining stationary. The struggle itself however, was an inevitable development, and has tremendous significance for us. The situation is in sharp contrast to the 1914 socialist betrayals, when the masses themselves were swept into the war on the waves of patriotism inundating the world of that time.

### Relation to the C.C.F.

The SWL must recognize the CCF as a factor of major importance in its road to the masses. It must recognise the tremendous possibilities of anti-war sentiment within it. It must make every effort to criticise bitterly the social-patriotism of Coldwell and to expose the hopeless pacifism of Woodsworth. At the present stage of the war it will be advisable to cooperate with the Woodsworth tendency in an effort to deepen the rift against social-patriotism, at the same time clearly indicating the limitations of its pacifist program. In this respect, valuable work has already been done with the youth (CCYM-Cooperative Commonwealth Youth Movement) who are bitterly opposed to the war and seek support against the Coldwell leadership. Fractions should be reinforced in every locality to keep pace with the growing developments. We can find no better legal front with fruitful opportunities for genuine anti-war work than inside the CCF. It bears repeating; we must penetrate it everywhere and as deeply as possible.

### The Stalinist Party

The Communist Party continues to disintegrate. The mass petty-bourgeois following attracted to its ranks during the popular front days, was sloughed off with the Hitler-Stalin pact, and the subsequent correlated change in Comintern politics, in line with the Kremlin's foreign policy. These remained the democratic patriots they were and left the CP. The largest section of the CP membership is composed of European immigrants. The language sections built the CP and remain its backbone today. In the preceding years, considerable portions were lost, in particular, its Finnish section. The Polish campaign has further disintegrated this following. Further adventures by the Kremlin in the present European holocaust can only continue this process.

The growing police repressions, and illegalization in Ontario may check this tendency somewhat by lending fictitious prestige to bankrupt Stalinism as the champion of the oppressed. Certainly its ranks have been tightened in preparation for illegal existence. But its chances of becoming a serious factor in Canadian politics have been considerably harmed by the new turn. This is a second field of operations which the SWL must enter in a serious way. The war has, unfortunately, checked the possibility of reaching the Stalinists by way of our public platform. It is therefore necessary to direct our propaganda more vigorously with the printed word and in personal contact.

Possibilities have never appeared brighter for the Canadian sec-

tion of the Fourth International. We have faced the first test with complete success; our ranks have held firm. Defections were few and of no great importance. Our work has not only continued but has actually intensified since the war began. The mandatory work of penetrating the mass organizations is being conducted vigorously. Some "legal" educational work has been begun with success. Our national contacts have been maintained and strengthened. SOCIALIST ACTION has been published regularly. Leaflets have been distributed on every important occasion. A full-time organizer has been maintained at the centre and a part-time organizer in the field. The Grant Defense Committee has conducted an admirable campaign and is now negotiating with the Civil Liberties Union for affiliation. The Grant case has been of great importance in putting us in the forefront of defense work and anti-war work. An entire avenue of contacts has been opened to us through this work. Our international ties are as strong as ever and have been reinforced by special channels. We have experienced no casualties since Comrade Grant's arrest, despite these manifold activities and a rigorous police dictatorship.

There has been a steady improvement in the composition of the League (80% proletarian on the outbreak of war and since then we have shed off a few weak-kneed petty-bourgeois elements) as our unemployed comrades are finding places again in industry. This may be only a seasonal economic upturn, usual in the spring, or may be more protracted, but it places our members in better relation to the trade union movement, as they will be able to enter steel, railway shipping, etc. for fruitful work.

Our transitional program retains its former validity and the slogans:- "For a Workers' and Farmers' Government; Expropriate the 50 Big Shots; Workers' Control of Production; Food and Plenty, not Guns and Bombers; Bread, not Aeroplanes;" were used in connection with our election propaganda. Though unable to participate in the elections directly, several leaflet distributions were effected locally and nationally, advancing a program built around the above slogans. We intend to press forward even more vigorously this program, and in conjunction with our anti-war activity as a whole.

The economic struggle of the masses will be the first and most important step in the overthrow of capitalism. This is the most essential aspect of revolutionary defeatism. If we are alert to every developing mood of the workers and farmers, we shall be able to exert a maximum of influence in a correct revolutionary direction.

May, 1940

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THE COLONIAL WORLD  
AND THE SECOND IMPERIALIST WORLD WAR

(A Resolution)

1. Half the world lives in colonial slavery. Colonies and subject lands cover more than half the earth's surface. More than one billion people, yellow, brown, and black, are subject to the insignificant minority of super-capitalists who rule the Western world. The striving of this great mass of dispossessed to be free represents one of the two great progressive forces in modern society. The other is the struggle of the proletariat in the advanced countries for its emancipation. In their successful inter-action lies the key to the entire strategy of the world socialist revolution. Nationalism in the West is a tool of capitalist power, a weapon used to pit exploited peoples against each other in wars fought by military and economic means for exclusively capitalist interests. But in the backward, subject countries of the East, the nationalist movements form an integral part of the struggle against world imperialism. As such they must be supported to the fullest possible extent by the working class of the entire Western world. When together the toilers of East and West conquer power, abolish capitalism, and build a socialist world economy, the great national groups in the world will for the first time be able to live side by side amid a flowering world culture proudly bearing its many racial and ethnic petals. Such will be the meaning of democracy and equality under world socialism.

2. Under the banner of bourgeois "democracy" and bourgeois "equality", the great capitalist empires were built upon the exploitation of the proletariat at home and the enslavement of weaker peoples overseas. In the three centuries of their growth, the capitalist nations warred constantly to acquire and expand their colonial domains, to defend them against the raids of rivals, or to suppress revolts of the colonial peoples. In 1914-18 the great imperialist powers fought to re-divide an already divided world. They succeeded only in hastening the catastrophic decline of the capitalist system. The revolutions the war engendered, however, failed to establish in the advanced West and the backward East the proletarian power which could and can alone re-organize the world on a socialist basis. The workers won and held power only in backward Russia. Capitalism survived, but only to subject the world to the further agonies of its passing. Twenty-two years after the armistice of 1918, contorted by a crisis they were powerless to surmount, the imperialists plunged the world once more into bloody conflict - Germany, Italy, and Japan to "expand or die" - England, France, and the United States to defend and extend their world hegemony.

3. The present imperialist war continues the struggle that began in 1914 over the mastery not only of Europe, but of the wealth, the labor, and the markets of both hemispheres, of Asia and Africa, of



Latin America and Oceania. Great Britain is fighting again to preserve its gigantic empire of 450,000,000 people spread across one-quarter of the globe - ten black, brown, or yellow slaves to every Briton, 135 square miles of subject territory to every square mile at home. France fights not only to dominate continental Europe but for its mastery of 75,000,000 slaves in its Asiatic and African colonies. The smaller slaveholders - Holland, Belgium, Portugal, Spain - face dismemberment, fully aware that the lands they have plundered until now without external hindrance are now forfeit as part of the stakes of the war. Germany fights openly to win these spoils for itself. Italy seeks the jackal's share of the leavings. Japan has already been waging a war of expansion in China for the past seven years and stands poised on the edge of conflict with the United States for mastery of the Pacific, for the wealth of China and of the Indies. American imperialism, which emerged the world's creditor from the last war, expects to emerge from this one its undisputed master. But the ultimate decision does not lie with the imperialist plunderers alone. They have renewed their armed struggle for the domination of the world. But the war fronts they have created shall be sundered by revolutions of the workers in every country. In the empires they defend or seek to acquire, national and colonial wars and revolutions never wholly defeated in the decades following the last war, shall likewise be renewed and upon a scale incomparably greater than before.

4. In 1914-18, Britain and France successfully defended their possessions against the first German challenge. They divided the German colonies between them and tore like wolves at the fallen empire of Turkey. But the war had strained the imperialist world until it had broken at its weakest link. The October revolution in Russia caused the whole structure to totter. All of Central Europe was in convulsion. In the colonies nationalist movements, long limited and abortive, surged into the new revolutionary stream. When Versailles revealed the utter perfidy that lay behind Allied promises of "self-determination of nations," the revolt became virtually general through all the vast domains of the imperialist victors. The accumulated charges laid deep in the subject lands during centuries of oppression went off in a series of tremendous explosions. For more than a decade wars of national liberation were fought, slave against master, in almost every subject land on the face of the earth.

5. The World War of the Allies against Germany continued after 1918 in the form of a world war of the Allies against the peoples they sought to keep in subjection. To answer the Irish demand for freedom, England sent the Black and Tans. Promises of independence freely given during the war to the Arab peoples of the near and Middle East were redeemed in the form of iron imperialist rule, asserted and maintained by bomb and bayonet and gibbet. Nationalist insurrections swept Egypt and the rest of the Moslem world. The Turks alone successfully won their independence. The rest of the Levant was brought forcibly under imperialist control. To the nationalist revolts that had begun in India during the war, the British gave answer in 1919 with the Amritsar massacre and British guns in that richest of all colonies have never since been wholly silent. General strikes and insurrections occurred in Kenya, the Congo and other parts of Africa. The Druse revolt in Syria in 1925 almost broke the power of the French. In Morocco

in 1925-26, the French joined the Spaniards to crush the Riff revolt led by Abd-el-Krim. From 1926 to 1930 the French used the weapon of unrestricted slaughter to check repeated uprisings in Indochina. In 1926-27 the workers and peasants of the East Indies rose in insurrection against the rule of the "democratic" Dutch, wielded by knout and machine gun and bombing plane. In 1925-27 China, prey for a century to all the powers, was swept by the greatest of the post-war national revolutions.

6. But imperialism succeeded in surviving the war and overcoming the colonial uprisings. In Europe, except in Russia, the revolutions of the workers were crushed with the treacherous aid of the Social Democratic parties of the Second International. The Russian workers succeeded in repelling the interventionist armies of the Powers but remained tragically isolated. This isolation, coupled with the backwardness of Russia, nourished the growth of the bureaucracy symbolized by Stalin. The Soviet Union entered upon the long and agonizing period of its degeneration. Western capitalism simultaneously entered upon a period of relative stabilization. This combination of elements enabled the imperialists to emerge victorious from the national and colonial wars that followed the war in Europe.

7. Imperialism maintained its rule in the colonies and semi-colonies by open terror first of all. Thousands were massacred and thousands died in prison and in transportation between 1919 and 1929. But sheer force no longer sufficed. With the participation of great masses of workers and peasants, the colonial movements acquired a magnitude previously unknown. The imperialists, therefore, reached out in every important instance to draw to their side the native exploiters - landlords and aspiring capitalists - as a shield against the totally dispossessed masses. The privileges proffered were limited enough but were sufficient to bring into the imperialist camp the dominant sections of the various native ruling classes. Ireland was given "Free State" status. India was presented with a "constitution" and Gandhi rendered yeoman service to the British by repeatedly diverting the Indian nationalist struggle into channels of compromise. In Egypt, after crushing the nationalist revolt of 1919 with an expeditionary force of 60,000 troops under Allenby, the British eventually came to terms with the national bourgeoisie and Egypt was granted the shadow of a specious independence. Iraq, and later Syria, became "independent" dependencies. In China in 1925-27 the workers and peasants rose in the greatest mass revolt of the decade. But the Communist International led by Stalin yoked the workers and peasants to the national bourgeoisie which in its own time came to terms with the imperialists. By unitedly backing Chiang Kai-shek against the mass movement, the imperialists succeeded in stemming the revolutionary wave that threatened for a time to drive them forever from their entrenched positions in Asia.

8. While this process offered a temporary "solution" for the imperialist rulers, it brought no solution to the pressing problems of the colonial peoples, produced no advances out of their backwardness, provided no significant outlet for even a relative growth of their productive forces. Instead it accelerated the expropriation of

the colonial petty bourgeoisie, perpetuated the helotry of the colonial peasantry, and increased the burdens of the colonial proletariat. The concessions made by the imperialists to the native exploiters were niggardly enough, but with the onset of the world economic crisis beginning 1929, not even these could be maintained. The crisis instead enormously sharpened the antagonisms in the imperialist camp and led to new blows at the colonial peoples. Japan began its drive into China in 1931. Italy subjugated Ethiopia in 1935. The fresh cleavages among the powers led swiftly thence to the outbreak of the new world war in 1939. For the colonies the new imperialist war offers the prospect only of deepening exploitation no matter whether the old masters remain or new masters take their place.

9. Capitalism has already fully demonstrated on a world scale that it no longer corresponds as a system of organization and operation to the development of the productive forces. It can no longer assure to the workers in the advanced countries even a subsistence standard of living. Should it succeed in surviving the present war, the totalitarian form it assumed in the poorer countries (Italy, Germany, Balkans) even before the conflict would soon become generalized. With the war only in its opening phases this process is already clearly visible in France and Britain. In the colonies in the past imperialist rule has meant the stifling of economic development and the perpetuation of backward economic and social relations in their most oppressive forms. If an imperialist "solution" of the present world conflict is imposed, a still greater rate of exploitation will be forced upon the colonies and the thralldom of the past deepened multi-fold. The Western Allies once more offer promises of "freedom" and "cooperation" after they win the present war but acceptance of such promises only paves the way to the crueler deceptions of the Versailles of tomorrow. Germany, for its part, does not bother with deceptive illusions but fights openly to rule the peoples it can conquer by blood and iron alone.

10. The hopes of liberation of the colonial peoples are therefore bound up even more decisively than ever before with the emancipation of the workers of the whole world. The colonies shall be freed, politically, economically, and culturally, only when the workers of the advanced countries put an end to capitalist rule and set out together with the backward peoples to reorganize world economy on a new level, gearing it to social needs and not to monopolist profits. Only in this way will the colonial and semi-colonial countries be enabled to emerge from their varying stages of backwardness and take their places as integral sections of an advancing world socialist commonwealth. Drawn belatedly into the orbit of world economy, the backward countries have to take a gigantic leap forward, economically and politically, to come abreast of the advanced nations. Their backwardness is expressed most cruelly in the preservation of feudal and semi-feudal agrarian relations holding fettered fast the vast peasant millions. The imperialists super-imposed upon these the fetters of monopoly capital, acting either directly or through native agencies (like the compradores and later the bankers of China). Thus the effort to realize the most elementary reorganization of society along national, democratic lines, brings the colonial masses into collision

with world imperialism.

11. The national bourgeoisie in the backward countries is incapable of effecting this transformation, even in a partial manner, because it means uprooting the structure of exploitation upon which their own position in society rests. The Russian revolution of 1917 produced proof positive that a backward country can take this great leap forward only if the working class is capable of assuming the leadership of the agrarian revolution and guiding the democratic struggle to a socialist solution under proletarian power. The abortive national struggles in the colonial and semi-colonial countries from 1919 to 1931 were led, as in India and China, by the national bourgeoisie. They confirmed again, in negative form, that the national and democratic revolutions in the colonies can be successfully carried out only by the proletariat in collaboration with the workers of the advanced countries. The national and democratic transformation of the backward countries shall be possible only in a socialist world.

12. Democratic and transitional slogans retain their full validity, however, especially in the relatively more advanced subject countries like China and India. The slogan of a National or Constituent Assembly remains the most powerful lever for marshalling the masses in struggle. But into this slogan the revolutionary party of the workers must pour the full content of the agrarian revolution and the fight for national liberation, otherwise it becomes an easy means of deception in the hands of the national bourgeoisie, as it did in China with Comintern help in 1927 and again at the present time. The democratic struggle must not be left in the hands of the national bourgeoisie but must, under conditions of a rising mass movement, find expression in the creation of workers, peasants, and soldiers' councils on a local, provincial, and national scale, as organs of mass struggle and sooner or later as organs of workers' power. Such a power, counterposed to that of the national bourgeoisie, will alone be capable of carrying the democratic revolution through to the end, liberating the peasants on the land and the land itself from the grip of both native and foreign exploiters.

13. In this struggle, the guiding policy of the workers' party must be to preserve its own independence and the independence of the working class as a separate and distinct political force. In China in 1927 the Comintern subordinated the Chinese Communist Party to the national bourgeois Kuomintang, the Chinese working class to the national bourgeoisie, with the result that the latter successfully crushed the mass movement in return for a few crumbs from the imperialist table. Although conditions of struggle vary widely from colony to colony, depending largely on the degree of backwardness, the Chinese experience of 1925-27 remains the classic experience, the classic and salutary lesson to all who fight for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the East. The proletariat of India and China shall lead the whole colonial world and they shall in their turn draw strength, leadership and support from the workers of the West. For in this way alone shall the world be conquered, rebuilt, and freed forever from war and oppression, from hunger and ignorance.

May 13, 1940