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Boss War

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War and Revolution

Introduction

Every one lives under the spectre of an approaching war. Many who have not personally experienced the material disintegration of the last war, are nevertheless speaking about it. Women's clubs talk about the horrors of war in more lurid language than most revolutionists. But here, as elsewhere, their verbiage has no real weight in the struggle against war.

We aim to give a practical understanding of the war question. We do not intend to appeal to emotion. We hope to present a few facts about the war question that every worker in the United States should know. We appeal to workers to use their reason, to draw conclusions on this life and death question.

We are living in a period in the history of mankind which will be recorded by future historians as the period of wars and revolutions, the period of the decline and disintegration of the system known as capitalism. History is full of examples of the decline of previous systems. All of us have read about them. But we can do nothing about the past. That is history. The period in which we live is different. We *can* do something about *it*. Human beings can actively intervene and change the course of history. We need not become fatalists and assume that barbarism will follow the present period. That can happen only if the workers do not understand the system they live in and do not organize to do something about it. The starting point toward understanding the present system is the war question.

War Preparations

Long before the world war of 1914-18 many surface indications in world economy pointed to war. The countries involved were armed to the teeth and preparing for war night and day. Those countries that lagged behind their neighbors

in war preparations paid for this laxity later. Today the leading capitalist nations have far greater quantities and varieties of death-dealing war machines than they had on the eve of the last world war.

Statesmen and the kept press tell the workers that because other nations are arming it is necessary for "their" country to arm. The exploiting class in each country wants its workers to believe that they live in a *good* capitalist nation and that only their bad capitalist neighbors are responsible for the present state of affairs. The United States government is a master at this game. Every war move it makes is cleverly disguised as a move for peace, neutrality and disarmament. For the American government war preparations are not fool-hardy measures. It knows, as will be shown below, that a world war is inevitable and that it is impossible for the U. S. to escape the struggle. Therefore, American capitalists are sensible capitalists and prepare for war. Practical experience has taught the ruling class many lessons. Practical experience should teach our class, the working class, those lessons necessary to achieve freedom from exploitation.

After the world war, the capitalist system passed through the most violent period of wars and revolutions in history. These upheavals are but a prelude to the next world war. In this "peaceful" period, gigantic class conflicts are taking place.

Let us mention a few of the more outstanding wars and revolutions in the post-war period: first came the successful October Revolution in Russia following the February Revolution, which proclaimed the bankruptcy of the capitalists and their war game. Then came a whole series of revolutionary upheavals that spread into western Europe and later to the colonies. Germany was seized by revolutionary struggles in 1918, 1921, 1923, 1933. Hungary, Finland, Esthonia, Bulgaria, and other countries were drawn into the revolutionary wake of the war. The British General Strike of 1926 laid bare the position of the British Empire. Revolutions in China, India, Cuba and other colonial countries revealed the disintegration and ruthlessness of the exploiters in shifting the major burdens of life on to the doubly oppressed colonial peoples. The more recent convulsions are the Gran-Chaco war, the bloody suppression of the Austrian workers in the spring of 1934, and now the Spanish revolution, to say nothing of a whole series of

military struggles and "revolutions" fomented by imperialist powers. The Japanese invasion of China and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia are open sores of a dying capitalist system and preludes to the second world war.

The Redivision of the Earth

The victorious imperialists in the coming war will divide the world among themselves. When the last world war broke out the capitalist powers had already divided the earth. The victors in that war re-divided it at the end of the war. The imperialists today are preparing the third division of the earth.

The coming war will inevitably bring in its train a whole series of revolutions just as the last one did. It is the task of the workers to see that they are victorious.

Shall we wait until a new world war initiates the revolution? Of course not. War is not necessary for revolution. Between the first world war and the coming world war, a whole series of revolutionary situations have developed in the imperialist countries and in their colonies. In each case the revolutionary situation developed, but, with the exception of Russia, there was **NO PARTY, NO LEADERSHIP, and NO PROGRAM** capable of transforming the revolutionary situation into a **SUCCESSFUL REVOLUTION**. We must plan and be prepared for these events, but this planning and preparation can take place only on the basis of a **Marxian program**.

Cause of War

As long as capitalism exists there will be wars. Wars, like other social ailments, can be eliminated only when the capitalist system is overthrown and in its place the workers have set up a socialist system of production. As Clausewitz said, "War is the continuation of politics by other means."

But the wiseacres will answer: "We had wars long before we had capitalism" by which they mean that capitalism is not the cause of wars. When you understand capitalism you will see that although wars took place before capitalism there is no contradiction. Capitalism is the highest form of exploitation of man by man. Chattel slavery, feudalism, and capitalism were three successive stages and forms of exploitation of man by man. These three economic systems differed from each other in that they had different modes of production, but they

all, nevertheless, had the same basic traits in common. In each the monopoly of the means of production became the means of subjection and exploitation of mankind, as well as the source of all wars.

The special features which distinguish capitalism from the two previous systems of exploitation are commodity production, wage labor, and surplus value. The capitalist system is concluding its cycle of existence. It is now in the decay stage. Free competition has long ago been replaced by monopoly capitalism, by imperialism. The leading imperialists, who have divided and redivided the earth among themselves, can survive only by taking away from their rivals markets, colonies, etc. This means war.

The productive forces of the capitalist system come into violent conflict with the national boundaries. This is an expression of the contradiction between socialized production and capitalist private appropriation. This intensifies economic war on an international scale and leads to military war.

Overproduction of capital is a basic trait of the capitalist system. The first effect of this disease is the agony of the small capitalists, the middle class, not to mention the workers and peasants, who bear the burden of the crisis created by overproduction (sometimes called anarchy of production) passed on to them by the dominating capitalist group. In the growth stage, the capitalists were able to start up production, revival and prosperity by passing the burden of the crisis to the other classes. In the present decay stage, however, they can do no more than reorganize the home market in order more effectively to carry on war for redivision of the world markets and a "way out of the crisis."

For example, when Japan and Italy reduce the cost of production so as to undersell Germany, England, France and the United States on the world markets, these countries are forced to reduce their cost of production (further lower the standard of living) to undersell Japan and Italy. This vicious circle continues until the workers and farmers of these countries, pressed to the wall, prepare for revolution, for the overthrow of their exploiters.

But how do the exploiters and their paid agents prepare to meet this situation? They will not give up their right to exploit and its golden power. Why should they, when they can use workers to fight and shed blood for them? They try to

stave off the revolution in two ways: either by the establishment of an open fascist dictatorship, as for example in Germany with Hitler, or by colonial conquest (the Japanese invasion of China or the Italian invasion of Ethiopia).

Within each country "free" competition gives way to competition between syndicates and trusts, in other words to finance capitalism. Monopolies extend competition within the nation to competition between nations. In the language of economics, the productive forces have long ago outstripped the national boundaries. Capitalism has created the world market to which all countries are subordinated. And no matter how hard the different nations try to pull their productive forces back within national boundaries, it can't be done. "Organized" capitalism is a contradiction and a fake. The way out of this contradiction is not to retrace our steps, not to go backwards, but rather to eliminate the causes of this contradiction, to eliminate capitalism itself; to overthrow it, to establish a socialist mode of production which once and for all abolishes exploitation of man by man.

Imperialist Antagonisms

Students of geology can predict eruptions of volcanoes by their knowledge of the forces and counter-forces at work. So too, the study of the economics of world capitalism lays bare the pressure and forces generating the coming war and revolutions.

Two main antagonisms keep this world system of society in constant agitation and are developing gigantic explosions. The fundamental antagonism is that between imperialism and world revolution; between imperialism on the one hand, and the Soviet Union and the extension of the Bolshevik revolution to other countries, on the other. One or the other must triumph. Either the workers will overthrow capitalism and establish a world Soviet or capitalism will overthrow the Soviet Union, and speed the world toward barbarism.

The second main antagonism exists in the camp of the imperialists. The leading imperialist nations today, between whom the struggle for the redivision of the earth rages, are the United States, England, Germany, Japan, France and Italy. Each of these six powers attempts to get the upper hand in alliances with one or another leading power, drawing in smaller

nations, manouvering for points of advantage in the coming conflict against its rivals.

But the greatest antagonism in this camp exists between the two giants: the United States and Great Britain. The economic conflict between them covers the entire earth: oil, shipping, communication system, aviation, movies; struggle for control of raw material such as rubber, tin, nitrates; struggle for markets such as China, the Soviet Union, the British Dominions, and South America.

Underneath all important events, no matter where, is the conflict between these imperialist powers. Thus for example, the war in the Gran-Chaco between Bolivia and Paraguay was in reality a war between American and British imperialism.

It would be wrong to conclude from the above that conflicts between other nations are not important. Antagonisms between lesser powers than the U. S. and Great Britain, or between one of the latter and one of the remaining five, or between any of these powers and the Soviet Union, can generate the spark that kindles the conflagration of another world war. A very small incident can start a world war. It makes no difference at what point or where the volcano of world capitalism first erupts; what is important to remember is that the explosive pressure generated by the U. S.-British antagonism and the struggle between world capitalism and the world revolution are the decisive underlying forces.

Position of the United States

The position of the United States in the chain of capitalist nations is unique and of decisive importance. It is the most powerful link. It is the richest country. It has the most highly developed productive forces. It leads in agriculture, industry and finance. Its economic and financial structure is worldwide, with foundations on every continent. It obtained this key position as a result of the first world war.

A powerful country like the United States needs enormous quantities of raw materials, outlets for its exports and fields for the investment of capital. To secure them against its rivals the United States needs, above all, colonies. And it must have them on a scale to supply its gigantic needs.

But the existing colonies belong mostly to England and its allies and satellites: France, Holland, Portugal. This is the great contradiction in the position of American imperial-

ism: it is the dominant economic power; it needs world political domination. The United States must attempt to reorganize the world.

War Is the Only Road for the United States

The United States is therefore preparing for war, a greater war than the last one. The United States leads the world in productive capacity (ability to produce arms and supplies) which makes it the leading imperialist power in a military sense also. As the dominating imperialist power the United States spreads the inflammable causes of war throughout the world, although some other nation may strike the spark setting off the explosion. American capitalism exerts the pressure of its economic might upon the whole world—both worker and capitalist—in an attempt to break out of its contradictions. The weak internal structure of the lesser nations can not stand up in the face of this pressure, and explosions occur in remote parts of the world.

At the same time the United States has suffered some powerful blows and a series of defeats in the last period: such as the non-payment of war debts and other loans, the collapse of the Dawes and Young Plans in 1933; defeat in the Gran-Chaco War; the Japanese invasion of China; and the failure of the dollar to dominate world currency. Its great internal strength has enabled it to withstand these blows. Such nations as Japan and Italy could not have withstood the punishment the United States has taken. They would have been engulfed by proletarian revolutions. The internal weakness of such nations as Italy and Japan, to say nothing of Germany, has forced them to attempt an escape from the extension of the October revolution by colonial invasion on the one hand and a fascist dictatorship on the other.

The great economic strength of American imperialism which has enabled it to withstand these setbacks has also enabled it to conceal its war moves under a mask of peace. A large layer of class-conscious workers of this country are of the opinion that the United States does not want war, that it can stay out of war in the first period of the conflict (though it will be drawn in finally), that disarmament and the neutrality law are sound and that only the militarists are opposed. This is hardly the truth. It is a superficial view, which obscures the real role of the United States government. The disarmament propa-

ganda of the U. S. government is a fake. If all countries disarmed this would not eliminate war. And the U. S. could *rearm* faster than any other country. As soon as the U. S. finds it necessary to fight it will forget all about "neutrality."

In spite of its colossal strength, the war program of American imperialism involves its own downfall. The United States is heading toward proletarian revolution. Capitalist Russia was the first to crack during the last world war because it was the weakest link in the capitalist chain. There is no law, however, which says that the United States, powerful as it is, will be the last country to crack in the crisis of the coming war.

The same factors driving American imperialism to war are driving toward revolution. The United States has invested billions all over the world and depends on foreign markets for vital raw materials and export outlets. Economic, political and social crises in Europe, Asia, Africa, South and Central America and Australia close these markets and make capital investment unsafe. The result in the United States is greater unemployment, higher prices, lower wages and so on through the catalogue of misery which is the lot of the overwhelming bulk of the population of the United States.

The present upswing can result only in a new crisis. The crisis of 1929 was the beginning of the decline of American capitalism. Millions of unemployed will be a permanent phenomenon. Speed-up and the continuous introduction of labor-saving machinery are laying the basis for even greater unemployment. And every year five hundred thousand young workers swell the ranks of the unemployed.

In agriculture the crisis is deepening steadily. American imperialism is deliberately sacrificing agriculture to promote industry. It can increase its exports only by increasing its imports, which for the most part, are agricultural products competing with American agricultural products. The reciprocal trade treaties are trying to do just this. The AAA program and farm tenancy plans are all designed to bribe sections of the farm population into putting up with this program just as the NIRA and other measures are designed to get the workers to accept unemployment and starvation.

The result is an inevitable sharpening of the class struggle: strikes, demonstrations, farm holidays—growing in scope, involving more and more workers; attacks and counter-attacks.

The United States is moving toward revolution. The final battle between the working class and its masters will take place sooner than many think.

Reformism and Centrism

Pacifism

Pacifism is opposed to all wars. It is a Utopian illusion. As long as capitalism exists war is inevitable. Only the overthrow of capitalism can end imperialist war and only civil war can overthrow capitalism.

The workers' interests are opposed to imperialist war, and are for class war. Capitalism gives rise to wars of colonial peoples for liberation from imperialist oppression. The interests of the workers call for support of colonial wars.

Contrary to common opinion, pacifism plays into the hands of the imperialist war mongers. Calling for opposition to *all* wars, for peace at any price within the framework of the capitalist mode of production, disarms the workers. Pacifism is a cloak under cover of which imperialist robbers speed their war preparations. It is no wonder leading capitalists and munition makers are for PEACE and award medals and prizes for essays on peace, etc.

Neutrality and Disarmament

Neutrality and disarmament are smoke-screens used by all capitalist nations, primarily by the most powerful capitalist nations and especially by the United States, as a means to cover up their own war preparations. Any disarmament agreement between these bands of robbers tends to favor the more highly developed capitalist nations. "Equality" on the basis of disarmament gives these advanced industrial nations the advantage in war situations. Disarmament reinforces the superiority of the powerful industrial countries. Economically powerful countries like the United States, able to hold aloof in the first period of the struggle, and thus use smaller nations for cannon fodder, can afford to advocate a policy of "neutrality" as a cloak. In that way, they bide their time. What is

more, they win the confidence of the masses for the time when they call for an open declaration of war.

The economic needs and interests of the United States cannot actually be served by neutrality in the struggle for the re-division of the world's markets any more than can those of England, Germany or Japan. America's economic reserves enable it to prepare and participate in the approaching war under what appears to be pacific forms (disarmament, neutrality, "stay out of the European mess," isolation, etc.). Advocates of *real* peace must expose these *war moves* made under cover of "peaceful" measures.

The League of Nations

The League of Nations is an instrument of the victorious nations in the last world war. It imposed the Versailles Treaty on the defeated nations. Its interest in "peace" flows from the desires of the victors to maintain what they have, as against the claims of those imperialist nations which demand more colonies, markets, sources of raw materials, etc. Its "peace" program also means opposition to the struggle of the workers for a better life and of the oppressed nationalities and colonial peoples for freedom. It is therefore an instrument mainly of British imperialism against the workers, including the Soviet Union, and against the United States. The contradictions among the imperialist powers have prevented England from using the League as it would like.

To support the League of Nations means to support one group of imperialist nations against another. It means moreover to support one group of imperialists against their oppressed colonial masses. The United States refuses to support the League. Why? Because England—and to a lesser degree France—in addition to building a bloc against Germany and against the October Revolution, has attempted to use the League against the United States. So far this bloc has failed. Today, therefore England is endeavoring to create a bloc with France, Italy and Germany against the October Revolution and its extension, *and*—against the United States.

Revolutionary opposition to the League springs from the need to defend and extend the October Revolution not only against the League of Nations, but also against the United States, Germany and Japan, which are not members of the League.

Seventeen years after the October Revolution, Stalinism steered the Soviet Union into the League of Nations, thereby helping imperialism to cover up the real character of the League of Nations and bolstering its declining prestige among the oppressed masses.

Peace

There is no peace under capitalism. Peace can be achieved only in a classless communist society. The working class can struggle for peace, can prevent war, only as part of the struggle to overthrow capitalism, by exposing all war moves disguised as PEACE moves. After war is declared, peace slogans if used correctly can be used to disintegrate the capitalist forces in the struggle to turn the war into a civil war.

Not only are the pacifists word-mongers who turn into war-mongers, but the socialists and Stalinists, with their peace policies, are opium to the masses. The socialists, in the name of peace, support the League of Nations, and betray the interests of the working class. The Stalinists stand for the status quo, for example in France, where fascism is arming and preparing for the seizure of power. Through Blum and Cachin, as spokesmen for the Peoples' Front, and together with the Chamber of Deputies, they disarm the workers of France in the name of peace. They vote war appropriations to French Imperialism. This betrayal of the workers helps pave the way for the victory of fascism.

"Good and Bad Capitalists"

The theory of good and bad capitalists and good and bad capitalism, to support the former and to struggle against the latter, is the highroad to social-patriotism. This social patriotic theory of the "lesser evil" takes various concrete forms, such as: Wars against aggressors; wars of defense; wars against despotic nations; democracy versus fascism; support of democratic France versus fascist Germany; allies of the Soviet Union versus the enemies of the Soviet Union; support of the United States as an "ally" of the Soviet Union against Japan, etc. It is true that the victory of fascism, as in Germany, is a step toward war and brings war that much closer, but it is false to conclude that the workers must support the "good" exploiters against the "bad" exploiters. We must oppose all exploiters whether in bourgeois democratic states or in fascist states.

Sanctions

Sanctions are a device invented by the dominant powers in the League of Nations to force opponents of their policy into line. To support League sanctions against Italy in the Italo-Ethiopian war was to support British imperialism against Italian imperialism. On the part of the Second and Third Internationals it was a betrayal of the working class.

In such a case as the Italo-Ethiopian war, the international working class must organize its own independent struggle against both Italian and British imperialism.

The League Against War and Fascism

The League Against War and Fascism, organized in the United States by the Stalinists along the lines of the Amsterdam Anti-War Conference, plays the same role today that the Peoples' Council, organized by the American socialists, did in the world war. Both programs are non-Marxian, social-patriotic and pacifist.

Only a revolutionary Marxian party can lead the struggle against war and fascism. The Party rallies masses around its program through united front action of the class, winning the support of other oppressed classes.

In creating a permanent organization with individual membership to fight war and fascism, the Stalinists have proceeded on the reformist basis that the struggle against two of the worst aspects of capitalism can be separated from the struggle against capitalism as a whole. In the second place, the League has a pacifist program and is led by pacifists, liberals and preachers of the worst "reformer" type. These muddleheads use the League as window-dressing to gain the confidence of the masses. At the outbreak of the war, 999 out of 1000 of the advocates and camp-followers of the League Against War and Fascism will either lead the workers into war or else run for cover and do nothing.

Revolutionary Marxism

Fascism and War

Struggle against war presupposes struggle against fascism. A working class unable to conduct a day-to-day struggle against fascism cannot seriously approach the struggle against war. Imperialism cannot afford to go to war when the revolutionary proletariat at home is strong, when the proletariat is preparing the struggle for power. Capitalism must have class peace (civil peace), above all, in time of war. Capitalism achieves this end by the establishment of fascism, after other means of suppression have failed.

It is futile for the working class to call on the capitalist state to disarm the fascists. Yet this is precisely what the social-democrats and Stalinists demand from French capitalism. The working class must disarm the fascists and arm itself. The working class must never agree to disarm its own armed forces even if the fascists agree to disarm. This should be plain to every worker.

How to Defend the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union is still the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, although in an extremely warped form, and must be defended by the world working class. But how should the workers defend the Soviet Union?

Stalinism cannot defend the Soviet Union. Stalinist policies internationally and nationally undermined the Soviet Union. They have brought the first Workers' State to the brink of ruin and made it easier for counter-revolution to raise its head. In order properly to defend the Soviet Union, the working class must at the same time overthrow the Stalinist regime and restore Lenin's constitution and policies.

The Stalinist policy of world peace at any price to build "socialism in one country" has transformed the parties of Lenin's Communist International into agencies of capitalism

against the world working class as in Spain, France, etc. Real defense of the October Revolution depends upon its extension to other countries. This calls for new Communist parties throughout the world including the Soviet Union: a Communist Fourth International. In the capitalist countries these parties will organize the workers to make a social revolution to overthrow capitalist property relations and the capitalist state. In the Soviet Union, a new Communist Party must organize the workers to make a political revolution to overthrow Stalinism, to preserve the property relations and the proletarian dictatorship set up by the October Revolution.

Allies of the Soviet Union

The only real allies of the Workers' Republic today are the workers and toiling masses of the world. The establishment of another Soviet State will constitute the only State power that can be depended upon as an ally. All imperialist "allies" of the Soviet Union are treacherous "friends" making use of the Stalinist policies to their own advantage and are waiting for an opportunity to overthrow the Workers' State. In Lenin's day, the Soviet Union was able to make use of the contradictions among the imperialists. But today, because of the false policies of Stalinism, the "allies" use the prestige and power of the first Workers' State to win the support of the workers and peasants of their own countries for their imperialist policies and thereby undermine the Soviet Union.

If the Soviet Union is at war with Japan, and American imperialism joins this war by fighting Japan, should the American workers support the war? No. The overthrow of American Imperialism and the establishment of a Workers' Government would create a real ally. The overthrow of Japanese imperialism and the establishment of a Workers' Government in that country would also create a real ally.

As a part of the struggle to overthrow "our" own imperialist power we must fight for material aid to the Soviet Union under independent working class control. Since the Stalinists conduct an opportunist policy it will be necessary to fight for independent working class control of material aid in the Soviet Union as well.

Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries

One of the most important tasks of workers in the advanced capitalist countries is to secure the support of the

masses in the colonies and semi-colonies. Unless the vanguard carries on a systematic and concrete struggle in support of the colonial peoples it will fail miserably in the attempt to overthrow imperialism.

The revolutionary Marxists consider wars for freedom by the oppressed colonies as progressive, and, unlike pacifists, support them to the fullest extent. These struggles can be successful only if they are led by the workers and result in the establishment of a workers' state. For this a politically and organizationally independent Marxian party is necessary.

The General Strike As a Weapon Against War

Syndicalists and others propose the general strike as a means to prevent war. This is a treacherous illusion. A general strike of the working class **cannot** prevent war. To demonstrate and protest against war and war preparations, to call general strikes of industries in order to stop shipments, etc., is correct as a *tactic* in the general struggle against war. But to pose this tactic as the entire program for preventing or stopping war is false to the core.

War can be stopped only by the overthrow of the capitalist system. The overthrow of capitalism can be accomplished only by insurrection and civil war. A general strike is *a step toward the insurrection*. To take this step and not go on or refuse to go on to the seizure of state power is the height of folly.

The United Front

The working class must do everything possible to organize united front action against war and war preparations. But united fronts must be genuine. They must be united fronts of working class ORGANIZATIONS, for concrete demands and specific actions such as a strike, boycott, demonstration, etc. In the long run such united front action can be successful only if the revolutionary Marxian party succeeded by action and education in persuading the workers to follow its policies.

Youth and War

The greatest burden of war falls on the youth of the nation who are used for cannon fodder by the exploiting minority. The struggle against Fascism, which is bound up with the

struggle against war and militarism, depends to a large extent upon the success the youth have in attaining a revolutionary position against war. Unless youth can be won to such a position, the struggle against war will not be effective. The struggle for the youth is therefore a part of the struggle against fascism and imperialist war.

Militarism

Militarism in the United States since the World War has assumed menacing proportions. It now constitutes an integral part of the structure of American capitalism. Compulsory military training has already penetrated the educational system. In the Philippines a conscript colonial army has been created as an outpost against other imperialist powers. The struggle against war in the United States must include a systematic struggle against the new forms of American militarism.

Revolutionary Defeatism

In time of "peace," as well as in time of war, we must relate the strategy and tactics of the day-to-day struggle to our goal—the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Anything else is a compromise or a betrayal. In war time the aim of the revolutionists is to turn the imperialist war into civil war. They work for the defeat of their "own" imperialist government. This is the only road to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Without this defeatist position, to talk of overthrowing capitalism is just so many empty words.

Concrete actions and slogans against war must be carried on within the framework of the policy of defeatism. Otherwise, the revolutionary position cannot be distinguished from pacifist, reformist and centrist positions against war. For example, the peace slogan is used by pacifists, socialists, Stalinists and revolutionary Marxists. The pacifist "struggle" for peace is carried on in direct opposition to the defeatist position. Stalinism conducts a "struggle" for peace on a pacifist and even pro-imperialist basis. So do the Socialists. The Marxists subordinate the peace slogan to the policy of defeatism.

Let us consider for a moment those who claim to be defeatist on the war question but make the following exception: They are for the defeat of "our" imperialists, and agree to

work to that end, *provided* the revolutionists are strong enough. However, they say, if the defeat of "our" imperialists should result in the victory of enemy troops instead of the immediate overthrow of capitalism, they would favor "other means" for the time and would relegate the defeatist position to the background "until we are stronger."

The Trotskyists have a centrist position on the question of defeatism. In the pamphlet *War and the Fourth International*, Trotsky presents only *one* part of Lenin's position on defeatism. Lenin recognized that defeats accelerate revolutionary developments and are therefore preferable to victories which strengthen the "victorious" bourgeoisie against its workers. He concluded that revolutionists must work for defeats.

Trotsky omits this idea. He is ready to welcome a military defeat as preferable to a victory if it is a by-product of the growth and activity of the revolutionary movement. In omitting the role of defeats in accelerating revolutionary developments, he omits the basis for the policy of working for defeats.

One of his prominent American followers, James Burnham, in a recent pamphlet, draws some implications from this position. He rejects entirely the idea of working for military defeats. He makes revolutionary defeatism mean only the revolutionary defeat of the bourgeoisie by the workers.

These are steps back to the false position Trotsky held during the World War. At that time he attacked Lenin's position of defeatism as giving support to those who were supporting Czarism in the war. Lenin showed that Trotsky's position—neither victory nor defeat—meant civil peace and gave support to the social patriots.

Revolutionary defeatism means to work not for the victory of the capitalist government, but for its defeat. This has a two-fold character. It means the struggle of the working class to turn the imperialist war into a civil war against the oppressors. This is from the point of view of the workers fighting inside their country against "their" own bourgeoisie. But revolutionary defeatism means at the same time to work for the military defeat of their "own" army by the "enemy" army. These two aspects are interrelated. One without the other is false and opens the way toward compromise and capitulation to the bourgeoisie. Defeatism is the policy of working for the defeat of our "own" army which

prepares for converting the imperialist war into a civil war.

Defeats accelerate the breakdown of morale, discipline, production and transportation, and sharpen class antagonisms. These are favorable conditions for converting the imperialist war into a civil war to overthrow capitalism and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Marxists make use of defeats to realize that goal by the organization of strikes, demonstrations, etc., and propaganda in the trenches for fraternization with the "enemy" troops. The Marxists work for and make use of military defeats in the interests of the workers.

The revolutionists work for defeats in *all* belligerent countries. Their success in one country assists the workers in the "enemy" countries to disintegrate "their" armies by the same defeatist policy, and overthrow "their" bourgeoisie.

The Communist Fourth International

The struggle against imperialist war for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship is possible only on the basis of a Marxist analysis. To make this analysis and apply it concretely to life, to organize and lead the workers into action, the indispensable instrument is the revolutionary Marxist party—The Communist Fourth International.

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