

# **The Fight Against War**

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**shane mage**

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**YOUNG SOCIALIST FORUM**

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## INTRODUCTION

The following resolution was passed at the Founding Conference of the Young Socialist Alliance held in Philadelphia over April 15-17, 1960. The Conference was attended by over 100 delegates, fraternal delegates and friends.

They came from Seattle to Los Angeles on the West Coast; from the Rocky Mountain area; from the Midwest; from Boston to Baltimore on the East Coast. Delegates were present from over 15 colleges and universities, from a number of trade and high schools, and from a variety of industries.

The Conference marked the founding of the first revolutionary socialist youth organization to function on a nationwide basis in the United States since the 1930's. The passage of a resolution of opposition to the capitalist drive toward war and posing the socialist road to peace at such a conference was quite appropriate.

The Young Socialist Alliance, by passing this resolution, has dedicated itself to mobilizing American youth in opposition to war and to every step that leads in the direction of war - including military conscription, compulsory ROTC, nuclear testing and atomic stockpiling.

Tim Wohlforth

National Chairman  
Young Socialist Alliance

## THE FIGHT AGAINST WAR

War, Clausewitz said, is the continuation of politics by other means. On the simplest level this proposition is incontestably true and applies as fully today as at any other time; when nations go to war they do so because their rulers have decided to use military force to accomplish certain rational and intelligible ends. That these objectives are generally either the robbery and exploitation of other nations or the "defense" of what has already been stolen and exploited changes nothing as to their rational character as political aims.

But on a deeper level this proposition can today be called into question. For centuries war was not merely an instrument of the policy of individual states, but was the basic regulator of the international political system as a whole. Relations between sovereign states depended on the balance of power between them, "power" being measured at different periods in terms of horse-men, foot-soldiers, cannon, battleships, tanks or aircraft, and the ability to produce these weapons. The status quo at every given time reflected a given power balance: a nation claiming that the balance of power had shifted radically in its favor, and that it was therefore entitled to "a rectification" of existing frontiers or spheres of influence, had to back up its claim by the use of its new advantage, by war.

But in the age of the H-bomb and the ICBM is this still true? What use is a regulator whose operation would destroy the mechanism it is supposed to adjust? If a full scale nuclear war would certainly obliterate the contending sides and probably terminate human life on the planet, it no longer is a means whereby any nation can reach political ends. (A state decides to go to war only for rational, political motives - not to commit certain suicide.) In short the very enormity of modern war would make it unthinkable, the armaments race would become the best guarantee of "peace".

Unfortunately, political reality is not so simple. What is internal rationality for a given political or social system does not at all coincide with "objective" rationality from the standpoint of the human race. What political aim could, objectively, justify subjecting the human race to even a slight risk of extermination? But even if the odds were high against survival, a sufficiently desperate government could risk everything for a slim chance of victory. The example of Hitler at the end of his rule shows that this limit, bordering on madness, can be reached by capitalist states. And, as we shall see, the forces that produce a Hitler are still at work within the capitalist system.

Furthermore, even assuming that today the deterrence of mutual terror is an effective bar to world war, the argument that modern weapons make war impossible cannot be considered valid in the long run: the flaw is that it leaves out of account the development of military technology.

If war has become "irrational" it is not because present weapons are so horrible, but because neither side possesses an effective defense against the weapons that would be used by the other. However, if there is one lesson demonstrated by the entire history of warfare, it is that every increase in the technique of offense calls forth a corresponding and greater increase in the technique of defense, and vice-versa. At present the offense has a clear

lead, in as much as anything less than a near-perfect defensive system is inadequate against an H-bomb attack. But who can say that this relationship has become permanent? Whether by the adaptation of existing offensive weapons (anti-missile missiles, high-altitude nuclear explosions) or through a new scientific technological breakthrough comparable to the development of the atomic bomb (imagine, for instance, "force-fields" creating an invisible, impregnable wall around every important city) each country may at some future point perfect its defenses to the point where it will feel able to ward off an atomic attack. And when that comes to pass, the fear of destruction will cease to be an invincible deterrent, war would recapture its rights as the supreme instrument of national policy.

Meanwhile, even while the present imbalance subsists, the sway of the nuclear deterrent is not and cannot be absolute. Nuclear weapons are not the only ones in the arsenal: "conventional" arms, themselves far improved over W. W. II levels, continue to be the main prop of each nation's forces. Useless as they would all be in an atomic war, they're still not just for parades. To the extent that all-out nuclear war is made impossible by the fear of total destruction, to that extent "limited war", war in which both sides refrain from using nuclear weapons, remains possible. The Korean War, in a sense, was the prototype for such "limited wars". Despite the danger that a new Korea anywhere in the world would expand into full-scale conflict, this is a risk that can be calculated. A calculated risk is a very different affair from a certain suicide: limited war remains at every moment a practical political possibility, a choice that can be made by rulers despite the existence of the nuclear deterrent.

Thus, despite the new developments in military technology the stricture deriving from Clausewitz continues to apply with all its force: war is possible, not, or not only, as an "accident" but as a conscious political decision, as a rational outcome of the present world political situation. The causes of the war danger are political (more precisely, politico-economic,) and these causes can consequently be removed only by political means. The elucidation of these causes and of the ways to counteract them is the object of the present analysis.

### The Antagonists

Up to this point our presentation has been entirely abstract. But if war and war preparations can be shown to constitute an essential factor in the equation of world politics, we are still not free to choose with which actual states to fill in other unknowns. In fact, no one can have the slightest doubt that if world war comes its main protagonists will be the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., and that the dominant factor in present-day international politics is the struggle between these two super-powers.

The fact of this struggle is obvious: not so its causes or significance. To many theorists the basic conflict is an ideological one, between "capitalism" and "communism" (partisans of one or the other side tending to describe their chosen system with the word "democracy".) To others, the U.S.-Russian conflict is essentially a power struggle of a traditional "imperialist" type, in which two great empires pursue policies based on their "national interests", not on any considerations of an ideological order.

In the debate between these two theses, proponents of both can score weighty points. Upholders of the "power politics" view can point to the evident cynicism of the statesmen of both sides; to the demonstrated ability of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. to ally themselves against a common enemy (i.e. Nazi Germany) when their mutual interests required it; to the attempts by both sides to establish alliances across "ideological" lines (Russia with a Nasser, U.S. with a Tito); to Stalin's adoption of Russian nationalism instead of Communist Internationalism as the central internal ideology of the U.S.S.R.

On the other hand, those who see the conflict as mainly "ideological" emphasize the evident social and ideological differences between the two power blocs and above all the role of "Communist" movements in the rest of the world as allies of the Soviet Union (most dramatically, the effect of the Chinese "Communist" revolution on the balance between the U.S. and U.S.S.R.).

Posed in these terms this debate cannot but remain inconclusive, since the points made by both sides are valid. We Marxists see the problem in a different way: we analyze the conflict as a power struggle between states of basically different and antagonistic social systems taking place in a determined historical context.

### Capitalist America

The essential starting point for an understanding of the world-political role of the U.S.A. is simply this: that the U.S. is a capitalist state. This proposition is scarcely a belaboring of the obvious: the apologists for the prevailing social order have exerted every effort to create a complete mystification on this score. The American economy, we are told, is not the "old", "European-type" capitalism, but a "new", "modern", "democratic", "people's" economic system, an economy of abundance which has more or less completely succeeded in solving the old problems of class struggle, poverty and economic crisis.

Capitalism today is not the same as the system described by Ricardo or Marx. No doubt, a man of 60 is not the "same" person he was at 10 or 20. But neither has he become a different sort of animal nor freed himself from the physiological laws governing human beings. American capitalism in the course of the last hundred years has evolved into a system in which all the important sections of the economy are securely in the hands of a small number of financial and industrial corporations, linked to one another by innumerable personal, proprietary and economic bonds, and controlling the economy and society as a whole through their scarcely concealed domination of the government and state apparatus. These corporations, "artificial persons", are in turn owned (to the extent of a "controlling interest") by a tiny group of the biggest capitalist families (who despite all the "changes" continue to bear names like Morgan, Harriman, Mellon, Du Pont, Rockefeller...) who form the commanding heights of the self-selecting, self-perpetuating "Power Elite" that rules America.

U.S. foreign policy is dictated by the interests of the ruling class even more openly than is domestic policy, for, whereas in the latter the potential power of the labor movement must be taken into account, where foreign policy is concerned the unions in the name of "national interest", are prepared to support every action of the government.

The foreign policy of the U.S. has, ever since the 1890's and the enunciation of the "Open Door Policy", had as its main object the acquisition and control of markets, raw materials, and fields for investment throughout the world. While the old European imperialist powers pursued identical aims through the imposition of direct, colonial domination the U.S., thanks to its ever increasing economic superiority over European capitalism, could nobly reject "colonialism". All it needed to establish uncontested economic sway was an "Open Door", the absence of a rival political domination.

Nevertheless, the "Open Door" could be opened and kept open only by military force (the war with Spain for Cuba and the Phillipines, the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion, the use of the Marines to make and unmake governments in the "Bananna Republics" of Central America and the Caribbean). Today U.S. military power continues to be used for directly economic purposes (the violent overthrow of the government of Guatemala in order to protect the United Fruit Company, the invasion of Lebanon to safeguard Standard Oil's domination of Middle-East petroleum). But at the same time this "old style" imperialist aspect is transcended by the role of the U.S. as leader of a military coalition of nearly all capitalist nations directed against the bloc headed by the Soviet Union.

#### The Soviet Bloc

This latter bloc styles itself "the socialist camp", an appellation containing a portion of truth and an enormous amount of falsehood. It is true that the Soviet Union was founded by the socialist revolution of November 1917. The Russian Revolution established a statified and planned economy in 1/6th of the world.

Since 1917 the Soviet Union, once the most backward capitalist power, has been able, despite the devastation of World War II and a stormy internal evolution, to become the world's second greatest industrial power. This development constitutes definitive practical proof of the superiority of socialistic economic methods over the capitalist economic system.

Nevertheless, for all its enormous economic successes, the Soviet Union has not become socialist, at least in the sense in which this term was used by Marx and Lenin. For the Marxist tendency of the socialist movement, socialism represents a higher form of society than capitalism: a society in which the people not only will live better than in the most advanced capitalist nation but above all will be far freer than in the most "democratic" of capitalist countries and will exercise full democratic control over all aspects of social, political and economic life.

Clearly, no such social system exists in the Soviet Union (or, a fortiori in the other states of the "socialist bloc"). The workers of the Soviet Union still live at a level well below that of Western Europe (to say nothing of the U.S.). Soviet society is marked by the grossest inequality: workers and peasants live in poverty while the top party officials, factory managers, "people's artists", engineers, generals, et al, live in luxury comparable to that of western capitalists. In order to preserve these privileges in a society still suffering from a dire poverty of consumer goods, the beneficiaries of inequality, the bureaucracy, impose a totalitarian dictatorship over the people and meet all attempts at resistance with repression in all its forms ranging up to murderous violence. In no sense can it



be said that political or economic democracy exists in the Soviet Union.

The U.S.S.R. thus combines drastically contradictory features. Its economic system is progressive, clearly superior to any form of private capitalism. On the other hand, in the domain of political and social relationships the most regressive aspects of capitalism are maintained and even exalted. Nevertheless, for Marxists it is the economic system which determines the basic nature of a society.

The Soviet Union, in sum, is a transitional society BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND SOCIALISM: a society in which a privileged bureaucracy has substituted its own dictatorship for the workers democracy established in 1917 (and in the process, has exterminated virtually all the leaders of the revolution) but in which the economy remains founded on the basic historical accomplishment of the Russian Revolution, the destruction of capitalist private property in the means of production.

The foreign policy of the Soviet Union has, ever since the mid-1920's, been dictated by the interests of the ruling bureaucracy. Consequently, this policy has been one of Russian nationalism, entirely in the spirit of traditional power politics. Nevertheless the nature of the Soviet Union and the crisis of 20th century capitalism have placed a special and unique stamp on the world-political role of the Soviet bureaucracy.

#### The Historical Context

The relationships between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. develop in a context determined by the historical crisis of capitalism. The century preceding 1914 was the epoch of the flowering of capitalism, a time of relative peace, prosperity, gradual improvement in living standards and above all of economic expansion bringing the entire world into the network of capitalist economy. With the onset of World War I the system began to disintegrate. Since 1914 capitalism has gone through two devastating World Wars, undergone a depression of unprecedented depth and duration, and has lost its power over a third of the world.

In 1917 the Russian Revolution was the first great and durable victory of the working class over capitalism. In 1949 the triumph of the Chinese Revolution constituted a second decisive blow, pointing toward the ultimate victory of socialism on a world scale. Nevertheless both Russia and China were backward, industrially weak nations. In the advanced capitalist states of Western Europe, despite repeated revolutionary crises throughout a 25 year span, the workers proved unable to shake off the grip of bureaucratic leadership and to seize power. Consequently Western capitalism was able, after the Second World War, to recover some of its strength and to surpass its best pre-war economic performances by a large margin.

The fundamental cause for the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy was the isolation of the revolution in a backward country. In turn, the bureaucracy has contributed powerfully to the survival of capitalism ever since its rise to power. Its basic line, deriving from the theory of "Socialism in one country" has been to maneuver among its capitalist enemies, allying itself now with one, now with another. In payment for these alliances, the Soviet Union has used its decisive influence over the world Communist movement to put working class movements everywhere at the service of its allies.

Stalin's policy reached its apogee in the World War II "Grand Alliance" with Chiang Kai Shek, Roosevelt, Churchill and de Gaulle. At the conferences of Cairo, Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam the Allies decided the post-war division of the world.

The Communist parties of Europe proved to be the decisive force maintaining capitalism in existence, both by their role in the post war coalition governments and by their perpetual efforts to prevent the workers from taking the path of revolutionary struggles. In payment for this service Stalin was allotted the Eastern-European countries as his share of the loot.

But by 1947 the wave of revolutionary unrest had subsided, and the capitalists now felt strong enough to tear up the previous agreement. With the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan, combining preparation for a new war with an attempt at economic penetration of Eastern Europe, U.S. capitalism called for redivision of the world. The Chinese revolution meant a drastic intensification of the Cold War, and with the Korean war both sides plunged into an all out arms race, keeping the world in a situation where war remained perpetually a sword of Damocles suspended over the heads of the entire human race.

The danger that the struggle between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. will erupt into a third World War is not the equal fault of the two camps. It was the U.S. which used atomic weapons against the civilian population of defeated Japan in order to threaten its Soviet "ally". It was the U.S. whose generals repeatedly speculated on "preventive war". It was the U.S. that several times went to the "brink" of world war. It was and is the U.S. which has surrounded the Soviet Union with a global network of atomic bomber and missile bases.

There are no drives to war in the internal economic structure of the Soviet Union. In the Soviet economic system investment is not regulated by profitability but by more-or-less rational economic planning; therefore a problem of over-investment is unthinkable. Conquest of foreign territories would not be of great advantage to the Soviet Union: bureaucratic plunder of Eastern European countries did help the post-war reconstruction of the Soviet Union, but since 1953 the buffer-zone has in consequence become an economic burden for the Soviet Union. Peace, on the other hand, is a necessary precondition for the growth of a planned economy.

The U.S., on the contrary, had powerful motives to go to war in the 1945-1952 period. It had been the only real victor in the Second World War, ended the war with the world's greatest military power, and for most of the next decade retained a virtual monopoly of atomic weapons and the means to deliver them. By a victorious war it could hope to recapture the territories that had been lost to capitalism in Russia, Eastern Europe and, after 1948, China.

Fortunately, powerful forces held the U.S. back at the brink of war. In 1945 mass demonstrations by the soldiers abroad and an enormous wave of popular sentiment at home forced the government, against its will, to demobilize the great bulk of the army. The European capitalist powers were too unstable to undertake a new war and the British election of 1945 showed the potential strength of the socialist and anti-war aspirations of the European working class. The unexpected power of the Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean revo-

lutions proved to be another powerful factor reversing the 1945 balance of power.

### The World Today

Today the world seems to have retreated far from the brink of war. The structure of international politics remains completely unchanged, the cold war continues, but the hysteria, the spectre of imminent war, are no longer present. Since the end of the Korean War there has been a gradual relaxation of tensions, a more "friendly" relationship between the governments of the U.S. and U.S.S.R..

This welcome development has been the result of new factors that have counteracted the forces that previously threatened to explode. Most striking and obvious of these new factors has been the unimaginably rapid scientific advance of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb well before the U.S. planners had expected, almost caught up with the U.S. in developing a hydrogen bomb, and now has actually taken the lead in missile development. The result has been the present military stalemate, in which destructive power is so closely balanced that neither side can expect to survive, much less win, an all-out war.

As we have seen, this present balance is in no way guaranteed to be permanent. But while it lasts no conceivable political aims can be achieved through world war.

A military-political stalemate, in and of itself, implies no tendency toward a reduction of tensions. It can easily produce the opposite - an intensified arms race. In fact powerful capitalist voices have argued in favor of such a course, on the double ground that, properly mobilized, the much more highly developed U.S. economy can outstrip the military potentials of the Soviet economy, and that the Soviet economy will be severely hampered, or even brought to the breaking point, by the burden of an all-out arms race.

What then are the causes of the decision of the U.S. to permit a reduction of tensions? There are two major factors at work here.

### The Colonial Revolution

First of all, the years since the end of the Korean War have seen a steady spread of revolution throughout the colonial world, from Asia to Africa to Latin America. Each colonial revolution has shown an inherent tendency to go beyond "nationalist" bounds, to call into question the very capitalist structure of its economy. Military intervention has repeatedly shown itself incapable of preserving the old forms of colonial rule.

The essence of imperialism is not political rule but economic exploitation. Capitalist imperialism has learnt that in the 20th century its economic interests in the colonial areas can be preserved only if it can base itself on "the new elites", only if it can make the colonial bourgeoisie a junior partner in the exploitation of its country. The tendency of the colonial revolution to become a socialist revolution, as in the Chinese, can be blocked only by the nationalist bourgeoisie, under the leadership of such figures as Nasser, Soekarno, Peron, Ferhat Abbas, Nehru, Kassem.

In all cases, the nationalist colonial bourgeoisie has been able to consolidate its position only under a "socialist" mask. It is able to do this for two interconnected reasons: its ability to maintain a "neutralist" position in the U.S. - U.S.S.R. power struggle and the willingness of the Stalinists to support it, to put the prestige of the Russian and Chinese revolutions at the disposition of the Nassers.

This situation clearly tends to require a relaxation of international tensions. An intense "cold war" would leave little room for neutralism: forced to side openly with the imperialist camp, the colonial bourgeois regimes would find their mass support cut out from under them while the Stalinist parties could no longer give them their open support. Thus in order to stabilize the social situation throughout the colonial world, in order to contain the colonial revolution within capitalist bounds, the U.S. as leader of the capitalist world has been compelled to accept an easing of the cold war. It is in this way that the revolutionary pressure of the colonial masses, even though they have gained no decisive victories anywhere since the Chinese Revolution, has acted as an effective force for peace.

#### An Economic Impasse

The second major factor compelling U.S. capitalism to seek a let-up in the cold war has been the serious burden of war production. The U.S. economy is now in the latter half of a prolonged prosperity cycle. In this phase long-term inflationary pressure poses problems of continually increasing seriousness. Chief among these problems are a steady increase in wage costs which place a squeeze upon profits that can no longer be counter-balanced by price increases short of runaway inflation; a steady increase in the burden of depreciation and in the price of new capital goods, demanding increased money profits in order to maintain the same rate of real investment; a shortage of new investment capital forcing a continual increase in interest rates; and an unfavorable foreign balance of payments causing a dangerous rate of gold outflow.

These problems are inherent in the very structure of modern American capitalism, and can scarcely be eliminated by any means short of a 1929-type depression. But they all are aggravated by the effects of the \$45 billion military budget. Though, at slightly over 9% of total production, military expenditures are at their lowest relative level since before the Korean War, they still make up over half the federal budget and have decisive marginal significance: an increase or decrease in the war budget determines whether the total budget will show a deficit or a surplus, and foreign military aid more than accounts for the annual loss of gold.

The effect of arms expenditures is felt most keenly in the form of high taxes. The 52% corporation income tax and upper-bracket income taxes cut deeply into available sources of investment capital - the excise tax and lower bracket income taxes cut into consumer purchasing power which could otherwise permit non-cumulative price increases. If taxes are to be reduced so must the war budget. If the government wishes to avoid contributing to the slow inflationary strangulation of American capitalism by higher taxes or by deficit spending, it must not permit war spending to increase.

But, as the Army, Navy and Air Force never tire of pointing out, the arms race requires continually increasing expenditures, with the accelerated

introduction of new, more expensive weapons and the accelerated obsolescence of the existing weapons stock. Stabilization of the war budget is in and of itself a reduction in the tempo of the arms race. And this is scarcely conceivable without a parallel reduction in international tension.

There are nevertheless extremely potent contradictory forces at work, severely limiting the tendencies toward a substantial cut in the war budget. The specific interests of an important section of the capitalist class, which has made huge investments in industries dependent in one form or another on arms production stand squarely in the way of such a course. But even of higher importance is the contradiction between the long-term world political needs of U.S. capitalism and its current economic requirements.

### War or "Peaceful Coexistence"?

U.S. capitalism must be prepared for an eventual re-emergence of its basic drives toward war. In the economic rivalry between the U.S. and U.S.S.R., an indefinitely prolonged "peaceful" evolution would clearly result in the victory of the U.S.S.R.. This is so for the evident reason that the Soviet Union despite its development into a major industrial power, continues to grow economically at an over-all rate better than twice that which the U.S. has attained over a decade of unprecedented prosperity. Capitalist leaders are conscious that, even if the U.S. continues (against all probability) to grow indefinitely at its present tempo, projection of the differential rate of growth will inevitably give world supremacy to the U.S.S.R. and thus spell the doom of capitalism. The only conceivable alternative would be a victorious counter-revolutionary war.

But worse. The laws of capitalist economic evolution are now building up toward a crisis of at least the order of 1929. At this stage of history, however, such a crisis would immediately produce the most profound revolutionary upheavals. For self-preservation, capitalism would immediately be forced to seek its salvation in fascism, that is to say, through smashing of the labor movement, militarization of the economy, and imperialist expansion. In such a case, World War III would be inevitable. Inasmuch as the capitalist system is likely to enter a full-scale crisis well before the Soviet Union has enjoyed the twenty or so years required to outstrip the U.S., this latter variant is by far the most dangerous.

How can this danger be averted? How can the capitalist war drives be blocked? The leadership of the Soviet Union has proposed, as the path to world peace, the policy of "Peaceful Co-Existence".

In the early days of the Soviet Republic Lenin and Trotsky used the concept of "peaceful co-existence". For the Bolshevik leaders it had this meaning: while recognizing that if capitalism was not overthrown by a European socialist revolution a new armed onslaught against the U.S.S.R. would be inevitable, they believed it was possible to postpone this inevitable war for the duration of "a more or less prolonged period of peaceful co-existence".

The theory of "peaceful co-existence" now advocated by the Soviet leadership differs in one essential from the theory of Lenin and Trotsky. Khrushchev maintains that coexistence can last, not for "a more or less prolonged period" but indefinitely - that permanent peace is possible on the basis of

co-existence between the capitalist and Soviet systems.

The reasoning supporting the Khrushchev thesis is this: since the end of World War II the international balance of forces has changed decisively in favor of the "Camp of Peace". The Soviet Union has reached at least military parity with the U.S., and the pressure of the international working class and the colonial peoples has also weighed into the balance against war. The capitalists today cannot start a war without facing annihilation, and time is running in favor of the U.S.S.R.. It will therefore eventually become necessary for the capitalist world to make a general settlement with the Soviet Union on the basis of a program insuring permanent peace through general disarmament, increased trade between the two blocs, and a negotiated settlement of major international disputes. The current detente is, in this view, seen as a major step towards real peace.

Does this theory set forth the way to peace? It is, of course, impermissible to criticize it on the ground that it contradicts what Lenin wrote in 1921. This is no longer the world of 1921, the international relationship of forces has certainly altered drastically since the last war, and there is nothing inconceivable in the theoretical possibility of a situation in which the capitalist system had permanently lost the effective power to start a world war.

The theory of "peaceful co-existence" thus is not to be rejected a priori - but it must still meet the test of application to reality. And this it fails to do.

What does it mean to say that capitalism has permanently lost the ability to make war? Clearly nothing less than that it has been definitively defeated on the world scale. Three Luniks scarcely justify such a conclusion while the Soviet Union continues to lag far behind the U.S. in every branch of industrial development. In a really intense arms race the present military parity could not long endure, for the Soviet military effort already involves major economic dislocations and imbalances, and so could not be accelerated indefinitely. In such a situation there can be no automatic guarantee of permanent peace.

Can the other aspects of the coexistence program ensure the maintenance of peace? If real disarmament were brought about, a new rearmament is certainly scarcely conceivable - but for that very reason, in addition to the reasons brought forward earlier, the idea that U.S. capitalism will accept meaningful disarmament measures appears virtually utopian. Similarly, in regard to a major increase in trade with the Soviet Union, U.S. capitalists like Rockefeller have already made clear their principled opposition. For such class-conscious leaders trade with the Soviet Union amounts to helping in a process which will eventually destroy their own system. Therefore they pose as a pre-condition the acceptance by the Soviet Union of "normal" capitalist practices concerning contracts, patents, credit arrangements. Their terms would involve the virtual destruction of the Soviet state monopoly of foreign trade and the opening of the Soviet bloc to Western economic penetration, eventually leading to the restoration of capitalism.

On the third point of the "co-existence" program, big-power negotiations, the capitalists have no principled objection - quite the contrary. Negotiation is the normal rule of international life through all its phases up to

and even beyond the outbreak of total war. At the ambassadorial level the negotiations between Washington and Moscow stayed open even at the height of the "Cold War".

The essential question is not the form of negotiations but their political content - the political aims of the negotiating parties, the political agreements at which they can arrive. Co-existence is by definition a process of continual negotiation, whether at the summit or at any other level. It is a process which takes place in the terms of power politics.

In these terms what is the real meaning of the Khrushchev "co-existence" policy? We have seen that the world political situation has not as yet changed qualitatively in such a way as to give "co-existence" in the mouth of Khrushchev a different meaning than the same word had in the mouth of Stalin. And this meaning has always been perfectly clear: a U.S. - U.S.S.R. agreement dividing up the world into spheres of influence. The capitalist sector would stay capitalist, the Soviet sector would remain under the yoke of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam agreements were exactly such a "co-existence" pattern. Stalin promised to put the world's Communist parties at the disposal of capitalism to prevent post-war revolution and, as Churchill recognized openly, kept his word with perfect good faith. But the explosion of the Chinese revolution and the reassertion of imperialist war drives as soon as the capitalist system was once more stabilized put a violent end to the Yalta pattern.

In the current conjuncture, what does Khrushchev have to offer as his side of the bargain? The Communist parties throughout the Cold War continued everywhere to defend the capitalist system, and the capitalist side can count absolutely on the continuation of this policy. If the U.S. capitalists today have chosen to accept a certain relaxation of international tensions it is, as we have seen, for specific, clearly defined class reasons. The other side of this is that the moment these reasons cease to apply any coexistence agreement will become obsolete.

### To Win The Fight Against War

The Revolutionary Socialist opposition to "peaceful co-existence" is not based on any denial of the necessity for negotiations between the camps, nor an advocacy of world war as the path to socialist revolution, nor on a fatalistic acceptance of World War III as inevitable, no. We oppose the international policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy because it is based on the idea of "world stabilization", on the preservation of capitalism wherever it now exists.

In reality the preservation of peace depends not on agreements between the rulers of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. but on the evolution of the world balance of forces. In this balance of forces for a long time to come an indispensable part will continue to be played by the menace of a socialist revolution, particularly in the colonial areas. Insofar as a co-existence agreement would tend to free capitalism from this menace it would strengthen the objective forces for war and against peace.

The struggle for peace is fundamentally identical to the struggle for socialism, for in the long run capitalist society will inevitably face the brutal choice: fascism, war, death or socialism, peace, life. In the short run the chance for peace depends on the course of the class struggle on a world scale, on the relative strength of imperialism as against the working class and colonial peoples. As socialists our struggle for peace merges into our participation in these struggles at every point within our power.

#### The Duty Of Socialist Youth

As a revolutionary socialist youth organization, we must combat capitalist militarism at all points, and particularly where it comes into conflict with the immediate needs and interests of American youth. War preparations have been responsible for a large proportion of the violations of civil liberties on the American campus: directly in the form of loyalty oaths, indirectly through pressure on college administrations receiving large research grants from the Defense Department. Compulsory ROTC is a particularly represented form of military intrusion on the first two years of college life for many students. All male youth, not only college students, are menaced by the draft. In fact, as technical progress reduces military manpower requirements the draft bears with steadily greater force upon non-student youth, and this inequality may be expected to produce steadily greater discontent among draftable youth. All youth have already been injured physically by nuclear test explosions, and protests against nuclear tests have found very widespread response among American students. It is our duty to participate in all youth and student struggles stemming from these and similar issues, and, where possible, stimulate and give leadership to specific protest movements.

But in the last analysis our main task in the fight for peace is what we and we alone can fulfill among American youth: a tireless effort to educate young people to a real understanding of the nature of capitalism and its drive to war, of the hypocritical and reactionary essence of Stalinist (and social-democratic) policy, and of the necessity for socialism as the pre-condition for real peace.

adopted by the Founding Conference  
of the Young Socialist Alliance,  
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