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WAR IN CHINA

by
Ray Stewart

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WAR IN CHINA

BY RAY STEWART

WAR rages in China.

The blood of Chinese workers spatters the streets of Shanghai. Shells scream over the city, spreading ruin and destruction. Airplanes drop bombs, shattering homes, killing and maiming defenceless Chinese. Part of the city is a smouldering heap. Crowds of refugees run in terror through the dark. Men, women and children lie dead in the streets; the wounded writhe in agony.

In Shanghai harbor, forty Japanese warships; thirty American warships. The great American battle fleet maneuvers near Hawaii, half way across the Pacific, stocked with provisions for one year. "Ready for any emergency," said the American Admiral as the fleet sailed from California while the shells were exploding in Shanghai. British, French and Italian warships are rushing to Shanghai.

The first shells that fell in Shanghai came from Japanese warships, the bombs from Japanese planes. On American warships and on British, French and Italian warships, are more shells, "ready for any emergency." On the wide decks of the American airplane carriers speeding across the Pacific are hundreds of planes, in the holds thousands of bombs.

"We only used our small bombs," explained the Japanese admiral. It makes little difference to a Chinese worker whether he is killed by a small bomb or a big bomb. The Japanese warplanes have bigger bombs, and so have the Americans and the British and the French and Italians. And they are ready to use them.

The Chinese workers fleeing from their burning homes and the smashing shells, seek refuge in the international settlement, which is a part of Shanghai taken from the Chinese by the Americans, English, French, Italians and Japanese. But at the edge

of the settlement the terror-stricken refugees are met by American, English, French and Italian machine guns and bayonets, which press them back into the flaming city under the exploding shells. The Japanese land troops and guns in the international settlement, under the protection of the other powers; but the Chinese can find no refuge there. The settlement, built on Chinese soil by Chinese workers, is held by the foreign powers as a base for war against the Chinese workers and peasants. In 1927 the American and British forces attacked the Chinese people and bombarded Chinese cities. Today the Japanese lead the attack, closely supported in their war against the Chinese people by the Americans, British and French.

Six hundred miles further up the Yangtse river, the American admiral confers with the representatives of the other powers and discusses methods of combating the "bandit menace." The "bandits" are armed Chinese workers and peasants who are seeking to end foreign domination in China and set up a workers' and peasants' government. Already these worker and peasant troops control vast areas in south and central China and have approached within a few miles of Hankow, giant river port. Three military expeditions sent against them by the Nanking government have been decisively defeated. Now American, British, and Japanese warships cruise outside of Hankow while the representatives of these powers discuss methods of wiping out the worker and peasant armies.

A thousand miles to the north, Japanese troops sweep across the plains of Manchuria towards the borders of the Soviet Union. Already armed Japanese guards hold a portion of the Chinese Eastern Railroad—property owned jointly by the Soviet and Chinese peoples. Japanese troops occupy the city of Harbin and Japanese officials and Russian tsarist émigrés plot more extensive operations near the Soviet border; plot to cross the Soviet border and seize eastern Siberia.

Meanwhile the armies and navies of the Americans, British, Japanese and French watch each other suspiciously. Each power

fears that the others may attempt to strengthen their position in China and seize a portion of Chinese territory, of Chinese loot, which it craves for itself. The Americans especially fear that the Japanese may attempt to seize Shanghai and the rich Yangtse valley. The robber powers eye one another carefully and prepare to fight one another, if need be, in the scramble for the largest portion of the spoils.

On the Japanese warships and on the Japanese transports rushing to Shanghai are boys from the shops and fields of Japan; on the American warships and on the British warships, boys from the shops and fields of the United States and England.

In the newspapers of America and England and Japan, in the newsreels, war headlines and war pictures, troops marching, battleships, airplanes, flags waving, everything to stir up patriotism. The American press and movies show the Japanese as "aggressors," as the "greedy Japanese." In the Japanese press and in the Japanese newsreels, the same war headlines and war pictures, troops marching, battleships steaming away, flags waving, stirring up patriotism, drawing boys from the shops and fields to fight the Chinese or to fight the Americans, "greedy Americans," building naval bases in the Pacific with which to attack Japan.

All this is preparation to spread the war in China into an even larger war. In the last war ten million men and boys were known to be killed, three million missing, and twenty million wounded and mutilated. Now preparations are under way for an even greater slaughter.

But while the Japanese newspapers and newsreels stir up patriotism for war against the United States, and American newspapers and newsreels prepare for war against Japan, in the newspapers and newsreels of Japan and America and England, there is one common note—Chinese "bandits," Chinese Communists, Soviet plots. While they prepare for war against one another—robbers fighting over loot—the press and movies of

America, England and Japan, reveal the common enemy of all the robber powers—the Chinese workers, the Chinese Communists, revolutionary workers everywhere, the workers' and peasants' government of the Soviet Union, the Red Armies and Soviets of China. They will bargain and conspire for the division of the spoils in China; they may fight among themselves for plunder; but in the end they will join in a war against Communism, against the Soviet Union, to put down the workers in China, in the United States, in Japan and elsewhere.

The last great war was presumably against "German militarism." But before it was over the Americans, British and French had joined with the Germans, to invade Soviet Russia, to suppress Communism in Finland and Hungary, to put down the starving and rebellious workers everywhere. So it begins again. The desperate struggle among robber nations, fighting for loot, and combining to crush the workers.

Empires Fight for Loot

The shells crashing into Shanghai, the battlefleets and troopships speeding across the Pacific, the airplanes dropping bombs on Chinese workers,—these are only the latest chapter in a long story.

For many years the great nations have been plundering China and fighting among themselves for the spoils. The big bankers, who control the industries in England and France and Japan and the United States and other countries, making more money than they can spend on all their fine houses and yachts and jewelry, making more goods than they can sell to the underpaid workers and the farmers in their own countries, take some of this extra money and these surplus goods out to the far lands of the earth; to India, Africa, South America and China. In these backward countries things can be bought cheap. Here there are slaves and workers no better off than slaves, starving Indians, Africans and Chinese driven into the mines and crowded into the factories to make more profits for the bankers and

bosses of England, France, Japan and the United States. Here there are raw materials which the bankers and bosses need for their plants at home. Here there are markets for the finished goods which pour forth from their machines. Here huge profits can be made.

The bankers send their agents to these lands of cheap labor and cheap goods to buy mines, to build factories and railroads, to invest money which they could not use as profitably at home, money taken from the labor of workers and poor farmers in their own countries. Part of the money goes in bribes to local generals, politicians and landlords. Part of it goes to the priests and missionaries to convert the "heathen" and tell them all about the good bankers and bosses from the faraway countries who are coming out to build mines and factories for them to work in. Only a small part of the money need go to pay the wages of the native workers. With the help of the local landlords, generals and politicians, the workers can be driven into the mines and factories and fields to work for the foreign bosses at a starvation pittance. In Shanghai little girls work all day long in factories owned by foreign investors. And so from the slave labor in the fields and mines and factories of India, Africa, South America and China come cheap goods to force down prices and wages in other countries. And at the same time there come more profits and more surplus goods for which the bankers and merchants must find investments and markets elsewhere.

This business of taking the profits sweated out of the factories and mines and fields of one country to invest it in the cheaper labor of another country, this search for low-priced materials, for markets, all for more profits with which to repeat the process, is part of the system of capitalist imperialism.

In the race for plunder the bankers and bosses drive their nations into war. Each greedy power seeks to capture the richest places to loot. There is a race among the imperialist powers to the far lands of the earth. Each tries to get there first, to be the first to buy up the native politicians and generals, to exploit the native workers. The second comers try to crowd in and demand a share of the loot. They offer larger bribes to

the native bosses or they bribe another lot of politicians and generals, and set one group fighting another. This fighting sooner or later gives one of the great powers an excuse to step in and "to restore order." The marines are sent out, the warships shell defenceless villages, the "insurrection" is suppressed; elections are "supervised"; "order is restored," and in the end the bankers and bosses of some nation come out with more loot, more workers to exploit, more cheap raw materials to sell at home, more markets.

The bankers and bosses bribe and cheat and conspire, one lot against the other, each trying to take advantage of the other. Sometimes several powers combine against other powers. Such combinations are called "alliances" or "understandings." But they are alliances only of thieves for booty. They are "understandings" only in that each understands the dirty business of the others. Sometimes they make agreements to divide the loot. One says to the other: you take the northern part of this country and we will take the southern part, and we will combine "to restore order" and suppress rebellious natives. Such deals are called "partitions" or "spheres of influence." And out of such deals come more bribery and cheating and fighting. Because no power is satisfied to remain within its "sphere of influence"; each tries to expand its territory, to edge into the sphere of another. Or a third that was not in on the original deal comes along and tries to crowd in.

Today there are no new far lands, no new distant markets to seize. All the undeveloped countries that can be exploited by the giant banks and trusts of "advanced" countries have already been grabbed by one power or another. All that the imperialist plunderers can now do is to rob their rivals. Therefore, the struggle is sharper, fiercer than ever. What cannot be won by bribery and cheating must be won by force. Then come the battleships and the transports and the airplanes, submarines, poison gas, the shells crashing into Shanghai. War! War to destroy rival robbers or to put down rebellious slaves. That is the inevitable result of imperialism.

Decay of Capitalism

This system of robber imperialism is rapidly decaying. The whole imperialist world is being shaken by a crisis. Factories are shut down, banks crash, stores go bankrupt; workers are thrown out of jobs and forced into breadlines; the wages of workers still employed are cut; farmers are unable to get enough from their labor to feed and clothe their families.

Gigantic machines capable of turning out huge quantities of goods are idle while millions of workers eager to man them are forced to walk the streets looking for jobs. Warehouses are glutted with food, shoes, clothing awaiting a market while hungry ragged men and women beg for bread. The workers and farmers are unable to buy back the very goods which they produced. This is the crisis of capitalism, a greed for profits which begins by starving its workers and ends by destroying itself.

The same story throughout the capitalist world. The rich robber powers, as well as the backward countries which they exploit, are in the grip of the crisis. The British treasury cannot pay its debts. Germany is bankrupt. Hoover tries desperate remedies like the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to bolster American capitalism by taxing the workers. Bankruptcy, decay, starvation and death wherever the system of capitalist imperialism prevails.

Only one country in the world is not suffering from the crisis—the Soviet Union, where the workers and farmers have overthrown the bankers and bosses, taken possession of the factories and mines and fields and set up their own government. There the greedy scramble for profits, which brings chaos, misery and crises, does not exist. There goods are produced for use and not for profits. There production is planned.

A New World

While capitalism is shutting down its factories and mines, the Soviet Union is building new factories and mills, opening new mines, constructing new railroads. American industrial produc-

tion declined nearly 40% during the first two years of the crisis. The automobile, iron, steel and construction industries suffered a drop of more than 50%. During the same period, Soviet industrial production made enormous gains. In 1929 the output of Soviet industry increased 24% over the preceding year; in 1930, 24%; in 1931, 21%.

In the United States eleven or twelve million workers are jobless. In the Soviet Union there are jobs for all. While American wages are being cut, Soviet wages are rising rapidly. In the autumn of 1931 when United States Steel, General Motors, and other American companies were cutting wages, Soviet metal workers received a 23% wage increase; Soviet coal miners a 15% increase; Soviet railroad workers a 22% increase; Soviet marine workers a 12% increase. At the same time the working day was steadily reduced and the seven-hour shift now prevails in almost all Soviet industries.

While farmers in the United States are reduced to starvation, and sink deeper into debt, the farmers of the Soviet Union are rapidly improving their standards of living and substituting large mechanized, scientifically operated, collective farms for their small individual holdings.

The contrast between these two worlds—the capitalist world and the Soviet world—grows sharper day by day. The capitalist world is crumbling and doomed to certain death; the Soviet world gains strength as fast as the capitalist world loses it.

Two Worlds in Conflict

These two worlds are in fundamental conflict. World capitalism has never disguised its fear and hatred of the Soviet Union, where the workers threw out the capitalists and the large landowners and seized power. It has always tried to destroy the workers' and peasants' government of the Soviet Union and undo the revolution which has removed one-sixth of the earth's surface from the operation of capitalist exploitation and has inspired the workers and peasants of the world in their struggles against the bankers and bosses.

In the years immediately following the war, world capitalism sought to destroy the workers' and peasants' government through armed intervention. These efforts failed. World capitalism then placed its hopes in counter-revolution within Russia. Capitalist statesmen, including Hoover, confidently predicted the collapse of the Soviet system and the restoration of capitalism in the U.S.S.R. These hopes were shattered by the triumphant progress of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. Now world capitalism again seeks armed intervention—on a larger scale than ever before—as its only hope of crushing the workers' and peasants' government.

French and Polish newspapers can scarcely conceal their anxiety for an armed offensive against the Soviet Union. France has skillfully built up an elaborate system of anti-Soviet alliances and has advanced large loans to small vassal countries on the Soviet frontier like Poland and Rumania for the construction of armaments, strategic railways and military ports. She is now maneuvering to bring Germany into this international anti-Soviet line-up. Evidences of the growing hatred of the U.S.S.R. constantly appear in the American press. Recently Major General Holbrook, commander of the first division of the United States Army, addressing a war veterans' reunion, predicted the likelihood of a war against the Soviet Union in which the United States and Germany would be military allies. General Holbrook said:

It is well to remember that the political power in control of Russia has declared war on the United States and is today advocating the overthrow of this government. . . . We will face a new alignment in the next war. We will forget our foes of the world war and welcome them as allies. Foes of the recent conflict will work together against a common enemy and for the preservation of our government, our homes and our firesides.

The economic crisis is speeding up the imperialists' preparations for a war against the Soviet Union. The imperialists hope that a war will solve their difficulties; that war orders will set their munitions, steel, chemical and automobile factories running. The mere talk of war sends stocks upward. Furthermore, the

imperialists realize that delay offers the Soviet Union an opportunity for building its industries, for strengthening itself against imperialist intervention.

The successes of Socialist construction stir the hatred and fear of the capitalist class; but inspire the workers and poor farmers suffering under the iron heel of capitalism. The working masses in city and country are refusing to starve in silence; they are growing increasingly rebellious. During the first two years of the crisis, a social upheaval occurred in Spain; the British navy mutinied; the revolutionary movements in a number of capitalist countries, notably Germany, gained enormously in strength.

At the same time a wave of revolt swept across the colonial and semi-colonial countries from which the capitalist class of the world draws a large portion of its wealth. Chinese Red armies, led by Communists, gained control over one-sixth of China's enormous land area. Indo-Chinese workers and peasants rose in armed rebellion against their French rulers. The Indian revolutionary movement grew. The Chilean navy mutinied, and was suppressed only after a prolonged struggle. Armed peasant uprisings against American rule occurred in the Philippine Islands. Revolutionary movements spread rapidly in other colonial and semi-colonial countries.

If the workers and farmers in the capitalist and colonial countries are showing an increasing resistance to starvation and repression, the capitalist class shows that it is more determined than ever to preserve the system on which it thrives. Bloody attacks on the working class in the "advanced" countries, an armed offensive against colonial revolutionary movements and diligent preparations for a war against the Soviet Union are the three cardinal points on the program of world capitalism.

China at the Crossroads

China stands at the crossroads between these two conflicting worlds—the dying world, of capitalist imperialism, industrial chaos, mass starvation and the rising world of Socialist planned

economy. Already China has within it the elements of both worlds. In Shanghai, Peiping, Tientsin, Hankow and other cities are the troops of the imperialist powers and the armies of the Chinese generals and bosses allied with them, starving, torturing and murdering the Chinese workers and farmers and attempting



to perpetuate in China the ruthless profit system. At the same time, from the factories and fields of China, rise the workers and the farmers struggling to free themselves from imperialism, striving to turn out the warlords and the bosses and the imperialist robbers, and to create a Soviet government embracing the vast expanse of China.

Imperialist Interests in China

The fierce struggle for the control of China began in the middle of the nineteenth century. The imperialists of America, Britain, Japan and France were strongest and grabbed the largest share of the booty—Chinese labor, Chinese markets, Chinese resources. Tsarist Russia and Germany were also active participants in the struggle, but the victorious revolution of the Russian workers and peasants in 1917 meant the end of Russian imperialism and Germany was stripped of its loot by rival powers after the world war.

With a land area far larger than that of the United States, a population of more than four hundred millions, rich natural resources and a backward undeveloped economy, China constitutes an enormously rich field for exploitation. The Chinese market is an important outlet for manufactures of the advanced capitalist countries feverishly seeking an outlet for their wares. From 1901 to 1905 inclusive, Chinese foreign trade averaged less than \$400,000,000 a year. In 1929 the foreign trade of China exceeded a billion and a half dollars. At the same time increasingly large amounts of foreign capital were invested in Chinese factories, mines, railways, trade and government securities. Total foreign investments in China are estimated at more than three billion dollars. More than 90% of this enormous sum is in the hands of British, Japanese and American capitalists.

To capture these markets, to secure the profits from these investments, the imperialist powers have bombarded Chinese cities, seized large portions of Chinese territory, set up their own courts and legal systems on Chinese soil, secured control over Chinese finance, currency and essential Chinese railways, mines and industries; forcibly reduced China to political and economic slavery.

In all this murder and robbery the United States has participated. American warships have shelled Chinese cities, American courts are established on Chinese territory, American marines and soldiers have long been garrisoned in Peiping, Tientsin and

Shanghai. The warships and troops which recently rushed to Shanghai were only "reinforcements" to protect the greed of American bankers and merchants and giant industrial trusts and monopolies.

China has been the ultimate goal of American imperialist expansion across the Pacific. First the United States acquired Alaska, then Hawaii, far out in the Pacific, then the Philippines, still farther out almost to the shores of China, then Guam and a lot of little islands. Some of this territory was rich in itself; but all essentially stepping stones for American imperialism on its way to China. California is too far for American warships and airplanes to use as a base in the fight for the loot in China. It was necessary to have naval bases on these islands far out in the Pacific Ocean, great stores of gasoline and coal and munitions, drydocks for warships, fortified harbors for battleships and submarines. From Alaska, from Hawaii, from the Philippines, the United States can strike at Japan or at British or French possessions in or near China.

American bankers and trusts have invested about \$250,000,000 in China. These investments are mostly concentrated in the vicinity of Shanghai. In this rich region the American imperialists own factories, banks, power stations and telephone lines. The Standard Oil interests, controlled by the Rockefellers, and the Electric Bond and Share Co., dominated by Morgan, are the principal American investors in China. The same bankers, the same trusts and monopolies which rob and shoot down starving workers in the United States, rob and shoot down Chinese workers in China.

Chinese trade is also of great importance to American imperialism. In 1930 American trade with China amounted to \$190,000,000. More than three-fifths of this trade was carried on through the port of Shanghai.

In this region, American capitalists have been making great gains at the expense of their British rivals. In 1910 only one per cent of Shanghai's trade was with the United States, and the United States was far behind Britain, Germany, Japan and France. In 1928 the American share in Shanghai's trade had

risen to 16% and by 1930 the United States had outstripped all of its imperialist rivals.

President Hoover himself has had experience in exploiting Chinese workers. About 30 years ago, Hoover was an agent for mining companies with large interests in China. The *Washington Merry-Go-Round*, a book published recently, describes Hoover's method of handling Chinese workers as follows:

Once, expounding his views on labor troubles to a friend, he (Hoover) told how he had always found that chaining a Chinese coolie to a stake for a day in the hot sun was conducive to good discipline and a minimum of strikes.

British and Japanese imperialists are the largest investors in China today. British investments total about \$1,250,000,000. This vast sum is invested chiefly in factories, mines, railroads, land, and Chinese government bonds. A large part of these British investments are in the island of Hongkong which Great Britain seized from China; but a considerable portion is invested in Shanghai and other cities in the Yangtse valley. In this region, American, British and Japanese imperialism compete sharply. Chinese markets are also of great importance for Britain.

Japanese investments are about equal to the British. Three-quarters of the Japanese investment are concentrated in the Manchurian provinces. Japan now dominates the entire economic life of this region, owns the principal railways, mines, factories, buildings, blast furnaces and power plants. Japanese investments are also large in the Yangtse valley.

Chinese trade is of decisive importance to Japan. Imports from China constitute about 10% of all Japanese imports; exports to China about 16% of the total. Japan depends on China for a large portion of the iron and coal essential to Japanese industries. Korea and the island of Formosa, both rich in resources, were seized from China and are now possessions of Japan.

The French are primarily interested in the extreme southern provinces of China. Late in the nineteenth century, the French

imperialists seized large portions of Chinese territory in this region. These are now incorporated in the French colony known as Indo-China. Today France is trying to seize Yunan province in the south and add it to its colonial possessions in Asia.

The battle for territory, slaves, markets and resources in China is more ruthless than ever. Each imperialist power is trying to push its way into the others' "spheres of influence"; each is trying to rob the others. The growing weakness of the British empire offers the other powers an opportunity for rich loot; but Britain still has its tremendous navy and its naval bases in the Pacific and is ready to fight rival robber powers which threaten its possessions. The sharpest rivals for the domination of the Pacific are the United States and Japan. Both of these powers are openly preparing for an armed clash to settle their differences in the Pacific.

The Revolution in China

Foreign penetration has resulted in revolutionary changes in China. Fifty or sixty years ago China was a semi-feudal country without modern industry. It had no factories, railways or modern mines. Today China is still, for the most part, a primitive, semi-feudal agricultural country with the great mass of its population working on tiny farms without modern tools. But in many cities, especially in seacoast and river ports, factories have sprung up. Many of these were erected by foreign capitalists, to make enormous profits by working low-paid Chinese labor twelve, fourteen and sixteen hours a day; others were erected by Chinese businessmen for the same purpose.

Today there are about fifteen hundred modern factories in China in addition to a large number of semi-modernized plants. It is estimated that they employ three or four million workers. These industrial workers form the backbone of the revolutionary movement which is now sweeping China.

Allied with the workingclass is the great mass of the Chinese peasantry. These peasants and their families constitute more than 70% of the Chinese population. They work small patches of soil which they own themselves or rent from landlords. Even

in the best years they live on the verge of starvation. They are robbed by their landlords, usurious money-lenders, government tax-collectors and piratical warlords who roam the country. Hunger wipes out thousands of them every year.

The Chinese Masses Rebel

The early nineteen twenties witnessed mass revolts against exploitation. Strikes against low wages, against the twelve and fourteen hour day, broke out in a number of cities. Trade unions sprang up and grew like wildfire. Peasant organizations sprouted throughout the countryside. The striking workers found themselves in conflict with foreign factory, mine and railway owners and learned that the foreign powers were ready to back up their capitalists with warships and cannon. Peasant organizations found themselves in armed conflict with the warlords and tax collectors supported by the foreign imperialists. Even in these early stages of the Chinese revolutionary movement, the Chinese Communist Party played a leading rôle. This Party, organized in 1920, grew rapidly and led the struggles of workers and peasants.

At first certain sections of the Chinese business class participated in the struggle against imperialism. Chinese factory owners suffered from foreign competition. But their participation in the fight against imperialism was timid and restrained by a fear of the rebelling masses.

In 1926 and early 1927 the Chinese nationalist armies drove northward from their base in the city of Canton and gained control of the Yangtse valley. There was a tremendous wave of revolutionary mass enthusiasm. Membership in the trade unions and the peasant leagues grew enormously. Hundreds of thousands of workers struck for better living conditions, and shut down the mills of native as well as foreign factory owners. It was at this critical stage that the business elements in the so-called Peoples' Party, the Kuomintang, fearing that their own interests were threatened, betrayed the revolution and allied themselves with the foreign imperialists against the Chinese workers and peasants. These elements, headed by Chiang Kai-

shek, seized power in April, 1927, and set up a government at the city of Nanking on the Yangtse river. They immediately attempted to suppress all Communist and revolutionary elements and to conciliate the imperialist powers. Since 1927 the Nanking régime has slaughtered hundreds of thousands of Chinese workers and peasants. Thousands of mass leaders and revolutionary writers have been subjected to barbarous tortures before being put to death. Many have been disemboweled; others buried alive.

The Chinese Soviets

These persecutions have failed to check the revolutionary movement. Today in the large seacoast and river cities where the Nanking government maintains large armies and where foreign imperialist warships ride at anchor, the revolutionary movement is forced to operate underground. But in the interior the revolutionary workers and peasants not only operate openly but govern huge sections of the country. Under the leadership of the Communists, they have set up Soviets in many sections of south and central China. In these Soviets or councils, the workers, peasants, soldiers—the Chinese masses—combine to govern themselves and to build the new world in China. It is estimated that the Soviets control one-sixth of the area of China and govern a population of about sixty or seventy millions. Soviets are functioning in large parts of Kiangsi, Honan, Anwhei, Hupeh, Hunan and Fukien provinces. In addition, there are soviet districts in the provinces of Kwangsi, Shansi, Shensi and Szechuan.

On November 7, 1931 (the fourteenth anniversary of the Russian workers revolution), the Chinese Soviets held their first national congress and adopted the constitution of the Chinese Soviet Republic. The constitution declares the aim of the Soviets to destroy imperialist and Kuomintang rule in China, seize political power for the Chinese workers and peasants, destroy the remnants of feudalism, restrict the development of capitalist enterprises and develop state economy. The constitution also declares that the Soviets aim to establish a high standard of living for the masses, enact laws for the protection of labor and the

establishment of an eight hour day, a minimum wage, and social insurance against unemployment and other hazards. The constitution provides that the landholdings of the large landlords be confiscated and divided among the poor peasants. The Soviets also announced that they refuse to recognize the concessions and special privileges seized by the imperialists and that they propose to nationalize the banks, customs houses, ships, mines, factories and railways owned by them.

Part of this revolutionary program has already been carried out in the territory under Soviet rule; but the constitution recognizes that its provisions cannot be completely realized until the rule of the Kuomintang has been overthrown and imperialist domination of China terminated.

The Chinese Soviets maintain a large and well-disciplined Red Army which, with the enthusiastic support of the workers and peasants, has won victory after victory against Nanking's forces. This Chinese Red Army is estimated to number about 150,000 men. In addition there are about 200,000 organized peasant troops and Communist Young Guards who cooperate with the Red troops.

The Nanking regime has made several unsuccessful attempts to wipe out the Red troops and crush the Soviets. With a great deal of fanfare and publicity Chiang Kai-shek launched three large military expeditions against them. In each case the government troops were decisively defeated. Instead of being crushed the Soviets are spreading rapidly and winning the support of millions of additional workers and peasants. The Red Army continues to gain victories and as this is being written Red troops march within a few miles of Hankow. [For further information on Soviet China see: *The Chinese Soviets*, by M. James and R. Doonping, in this series of pamphlets.]

The War Breaks Out

The war now raging in China is being fought along two widely separated fronts: in the Manchurian provinces in the north, and in the Yangtse valley in central China.

Fighting in Manchuria broke out September 18, 1931, when Japanese troops seized Mukden, important industrial center in south Manchuria and drove out the Chinese warlord Chang Hseuh-liang. By the middle of November the Japanese troops marched far to the north, crossed the Chinese Eastern Railroad and took the city of Tsitsihar. Shortly afterwards, other Japanese detachments swung south from Mukden and occupied the territory as far down as the Great Wall which separates Manchuria from China proper. The city of Chinchow, which Chang Hseuh-liang had made his headquarters after he had been driven out of Mukden, was occupied by the Japanese on January 2, 1932. Within a month the Japanese resumed their offensive in northern Manchuria, and seized the branch of the Chinese Eastern Railroad which runs from Harbin south to Changchun. On February 5, Japanese troops marched into Harbin, most important city in northern Manchuria and headquarters of the Chinese Eastern Railroad.

Japan's campaign in Manchuria has been waged with all the brutality inherent in modern warfare. Japanese airplanes bombed defenseless villages and maimed and murdered peaceful Manchurian peasants just as American bombs maimed and murdered Nicaraguan peasants in 1927 and British planes are murdering Indian peasants today.

Japan's aims in this war against the Chinese people are quite clear. Manchuria and Korea are the base on which Japanese imperialism rests. Japanese capitalists depend upon Manchuria's rich mineral resources. They need in addition the vast rolling plains of Manchuria which are extremely fertile in wheat, beans, corn and barley. The South Manchurian Railroad is the most important Japanese holding in Manchuria and is valued at about \$340,000,000. Japan also controls the foreign trade and principal industries of Manchuria.

Japan has dominated the southern part of this rich area since it waged its successful war with Tsarist Russia in 1904-05; but Japanese domination has never been quite complete. In the first place, Japanese citizens were denied the formal right to buy land, except the land already owned by the South Manchurian Rail-

road. Secondly, Chinese interests began to construct a number of railway lines which competed with the South Manchurian. Thirdly, Chang Hseuh-liang, Manchurian warlord, did not at all times yield to Japanese dictation.

The Japanese military campaign was conducted for the purpose of wiping out these restrictions, and fully and firmly establishing Japanese rule in Manchuria. It is now doing this by setting up a vassal state, controlled by Japanese bayonets. This puppet state, including the vast areas of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, will be ruled by Chinese warlords completely subservient to Japanese imperialism.

To complete the conquest of Manchuria, Japan seeks to suppress the growing unrest among the Manchurian people. The population of Manchuria, which increased from two million at the beginning of the century to approximately 30,000,000 in 1930, consists almost entirely of Chinese pioneer farmers who left other Chinese provinces and settled on the more fertile and less populated Manchurian plains. Some of these pioneers were drawn into industry. These Manchurian workers and peasants are growing increasingly restless under Japanese imperialist domination. Press despatches recently reported that peasant bands are harassing the Japanese troops. Japan cannot tear Manchuria away from China without wiping out the armed worker and peasant bands fighting for Chinese independence.

A War Base Against the Soviet Union

But the Japanese campaign in Manchuria is not aimed against the Chinese workers and peasants alone. It is part of the world preparations for imperialist war against the Soviet Union. Japan is seeking to gain control of northern Manchuria in order to establish a base for intervention in eastern Siberia. Just as France and Britain created a ring of puppet states around the Soviet Union's western frontiers, so Japan is setting up a strong base for anti-Soviet operations in the Far East. Thus the encirclement of the Soviet Union is complete—Poland, Rumania,

Lithuania and other puppet states in the west; Manchuria in the east.

The Japanese bankers and bosses and generals make no attempt to hide their plans for war against the Soviet Union. They openly proclaim them at public meetings and in the press. G. Bromley Oxman, President of DePauw University, who recently returned from Japan, says:

Early in December a Japanese general addressed the heads of schools in the Tokyo section. Similar meetings were held throughout the Empire. . . . The general said in substance, "Our minds are made up. We are going through with this Manchurian matter. . . . The five-year plan of Russia will be completed in a year or two, and it will probably be a success. Eventually we will have war with Russia. . . . While we are strong, we must drive a wedge to the north, thus separating China and Russia, thereby ensuring our position when the struggle comes."

On December 12, 1931, the *New York Times* carried the following report from its correspondent in Harbin:

. . . it becomes evident that Japan's present military adventure into Manchuria is primarily aimed against the Soviet Union. Although it may be that Japan will not engage in hostilities with Russia at this time, it is almost certain that the principal inspiration of her present policy is not the hope of adjusting treaty and other disputes with China, but rather the urgency of so establishing herself in Manchuria that she can be in a position to meet Russia with a chance of success whenever the conflict occurs.

Many foreign observers, and not a few of the Japanese themselves, believe that Japan will force a war on Russia in the near future, believing that if such a war is inevitable Japan should push her advantage now rather than wait until Russia can complete her Five Year Plan and become more efficient mechanically and industrially.

This despatch was published more than a month before the Japanese troops seized a section of the Chinese Eastern Railway (Soviet-owned in part) and entered Harbin. The Japanese drive towards the Soviet border and the frequent conferences between Russian Tsarist generals and Japanese agents confirm the *Times* report. According to more recent despatches, the Japanese and

their Tsarist allies are planning to push into Inner Mongolia in the spring of 1932 and extend their base for anti-Soviet operations.

The full extent of Japan's imperialist ambitions are revealed in a secret memorandum which General Honjo, Japanese military commander, sent to Minister of War Minami, August 3, 1931. According to reports in the European press, this memorandum said:

In order to strengthen the position of our country and its power, it is necessary immediately to take advantage of the difficult world economic position, as well as of the circumstance that the Five Year Plan in the Soviet Union has not yet been completed and that China is not a united country. All these factors must be utilized for the purpose of the more intense occupation of Manchuria and Mongolia and for realizing the active aims of the former Siberian expedition. The unity of China, the existence of the Soviet Union and the penetration of America in the Far East, all this does not accord with our interests. If we desire to prevent the penetration of America in the Far East, we must strengthen our defensive power and obtain our full material independence. Before we go forward against America, our troops must take up a decisive position in China, occupy the Far Eastern region of the Soviet Union and secure these countries for ourselves. The influence of America in the Philippines must be destroyed and this group of islands brought under our control. . . .

Thus the Japanese military conquest of Manchuria reveals its manifold aims: subjugation of the Manchurian population, exploitation of Manchurian natural resources, preparation of a strategic base for war against the Soviet Union, and strengthening of Japanese imperialism for war against its rival, the United States.

These aims are not the aims of the Japanese workers and farmers. They are the aims of the bankers and bosses who control the Japanese government and who, like the bankers and bosses in other countries, are hurling the world into a new war in their frenzied scramble for booty. The workers and farmers of Japan are robbed and starved by the same capitalists who are shooting down workers and farmers in China. Two of the five million industrial workers in Japan are jobless; the other three million

work long hours in factories and mills at a starvation pittance. Strikes and bloody street battles between workers and police have taken place in recent months in leading Japanese industrial centers. Walkouts during the first half of 1931 involved 85,000 workers, the largest number of strikers in any six months' period in the history of the country. In order to quell the growing rebelliousness of the workers, the Japanese government has outlawed the Communist Party, which leads the battles of the working-class, and has jailed more than two thousand of its members.

Despite this terror and the suppression of revolutionary labor organizations, the Japanese workers are beginning to realize that they and the Chinese workers are fighting the same enemy—the bankers and the bosses, the system of capitalist imperialism. The real attitude of the Japanese masses towards the imperialist invasion of China is revealed in the anti-war demonstrations recently held in Tokyo and other cities and in their struggles against Japanese imperialism.

War in the Yangtse

The Chinese masses answered the Japanese invasion of Manchuria with widespread strikes and boycotts. Japanese goods piled up in the warehouses and wharves and could find no market; Japanese exports to China dwindled; many Japanese factories were compelled to stop production. At the same time, Chinese workers and students besieged the government offices at Nanking and demanded that the government, which had betrayed the Chinese people and done nothing to defend them from the Japanese attack take decisive action for the defence of China.

At the end of January, the Japanese launched their offensive in the Yangtse valley for the purpose of crushing anti-Japanese boycotts and agitation and strengthening Japan's position in the rich Yangtse provinces. The Japanese attack was made on an extensive scale. While Japanese guns and planes were bombarding Shanghai, Japanese warships cruised up the river and shelled the Woosung forts and another group of war vessels continued

up to Nanking where they shelled the Chinese capital. Simultaneously Japanese cruisers were despatched to Chinese cities along the coast where the boycott was in progress. In practically all cases, the Kuomintang authorities in these places accepted all Japanese demands and suppressed boycott organizations and anti-Japanese newspapers.

Although the Nanking government and Chinese warlords betrayed China and surrendered to the Japanese imperialists, the workers and soldiers in Shanghai and other cities formed revolutionary defence councils and heroically resisted the Japanese invasion. The Nanking government ordered its troops to withdraw from Shanghai and make no effort to resist the invaders. The Chinese soldiers refused to obey these orders and joined the workers in the defence of the city.

In the meantime the imperialist powers were getting worried over the situation in the upper Yangtse valley. With Hankow virtually surrounded by Red workers and peasant troops, representatives of the imperialist powers met and discussed methods of suppressing Chinese "banditry". According to press reports from China, Rear Admiral Williams, head of the American Yangtse River patrol, took a leading part in these discussions.

United States and the War

What was the policy of the United States, Great Britain and the other imperialist powers towards the Japanese advance in Manchuria and the Yangtse valley?

It is generally supposed that the United States strongly opposed the Japanese offensive from the beginning. One would think that this would be so in view of the sharp American-Japanese rivalry in the Pacific. Nevertheless, the American notes to Japan, recently published by the State Department, reveal that this was not the case. *At no point did the United States offer any genuine opposition to the Japanese occupation of Manchuria.* It was only after the Japanese troops seized Chinchow, advanced to the Great Wall, and threatened to move into

China proper, that the American notes became a little sharp in tone.

It is also important to note that the American government viewed Japanese military operations in Manchuria with especial calm when they were centered in the north near the Soviet frontiers. Newspaper reports from Washington during this period indicated that American officials were looking forward with some hope to an open war between the Soviet Union and Japan, and brief war "booms" stirred the declining stock and commodity markets. Washington was obviously disappointed at the Soviet Union's refusal to be drawn into a war with Japan.

It is possible to understand America's attitude towards the Japanese invasion in Manchuria only when one recalls General Holbrook's statement, President Hoover's strongly anti-Soviet views and the hatred and fear with which American capitalism regards the Soviet Union. American capitalism supports Japanese penetration in Manchuria and Mongolia not because it loves Japanese capitalism but because it hates and fears the Soviet Union.

Immediately after the World War, the United States, together with the other capitalist powers, invaded the Soviet Union. In 1929 the United States sought to "internationalize" (a capitalist diplomatic word for grab) the Chinese Eastern Railroad. For the past fourteen years American capitalism has consistently tried to disrupt Soviet trade and industry.

American capitalism's long record of anti-Soviet hostility explains why the United States government permitted and encouraged Japan's campaign in Manchuria. The columns of the capitalist press confirm this view. On October 29, 1931, Ralph Hendershot, financial editor of the "liberal" *New York World-Telegram*, wrote:

The Chinese-Japanese squabble, even though it develops into a war, may not be as detrimental as it appears. It might even stimulate trade a bit, and if Russia becomes involved even in a minor way, she may be forced to give up her Five Year Plan, which has caused no little concern in this country.

The aims of capitalism are here revealed: War against the Soviet Union to crush the new Socialist world; war to revive industry in the United States.

Even now the United States is profiting from the Japanese invasion. From July to December, 1931, Japan bought more than a million bales of cotton in the United States against a half million bales in the same months of 1930. Most of this cotton is being used by Japan in the manufacture of munitions. In addition, Japan is purchasing large quantities of trucks, iron, steel, gasoline and airplanes.

As regards Japan's invasion of the Yangtse valley the Washington government has frequently expressed its sympathy for Japanese attempts to exterminate Chinese "bandits". As we have already seen, the American officials in Hankow are playing a leading part in planning a widespread anti-Communist campaign in the upper Yangtse valley.

The American government's position coincides (as is natural) with that of Wall Street. A report published in the *New York World-Telegram* (February 2, 1932) describes Wall Street's attitude in the following terms:

Wall Street remained definitely sympathetic towards the Japanese adventure in China, regarding it as basically a bit of international policing which would benefit business all over the world. This attitude centered on the suppression of Chinese bandits rather than upon the invasion of territory.

Two days of inquiry in the financial district failed to disclose one strong criticism of Japan's seizure of Manchuria.

"I think China has almost completely lost prestige and sympathy," said a member of an international banking firm. . . . "The opinion in Wall Street is that China is so disrupted that other nations cannot rely on her for treaty obligations or look to her for protection from bandits . . . Japan's action in Manchuria undoubtedly will give security to foreign investments there and may open up territory which has been closed in the past."

Significantly enough *the first American warships despatched from Manila to China were ordered to the upper Yangtse River*, where the Red troops are operating, rather than to Shanghai. American as well as Japanese capitalists feel that their interests

require the suppression of the Chinese Soviets. The imperialists feel that they can no longer rely on Nanking to do the job and that direct "policing" by foreign armies and navies is now necessary.

This does not mean, however, that the United States views Japan's expansionist ambition with any degree of complacency. The United States has long been preparing for a war with Japan and is now strengthening her naval bases on the northwestern coast of the United States and developing aviation in Alaska in preparation for a titanic clash with Japan for supremacy in Asia.

In so far as Japan confines her military operations to attacks on the Chinese workers and peasants and to preparations for a war against the Soviet Union, the United States is prepared to support it. On the other hand, the American bankers and business men, with the vast armed forces at their command, will sharply combat any attempt on the part of their Japanese rivals to extend their influence in China, particularly in the Yangtse valley. The American battle fleet is now concentrated in the Pacific, holding its annual maneuvers at Hawaii. This vast display of force is a warning to Japan that American imperialism is ready, if necessary, to use armed force against Japanese imperialism in the scramble for booty in China.

These rivalries, however, do not prevent the imperialists from proceeding with their war against the Chinese masses and their preparations for an armed attack against the Soviet Union. The French and British bankers and bosses, like those of the United States, support the Japanese campaign in the Yangtse and the Japanese efforts to build a war base against the Soviet Union in Manchuria. Despite their sharp rivalries, the robber powers are allied in a war against the revolutionary workers of the world. The reality of such an alliance was clearly revealed at the recent sessions of the League of Nations where the capitalist statesmen supported the Japanese offensive in China and tried as hard as possible to persuade the Nanking politicians to withdraw the feeble opposition which they, under pressure from the Chinese masses, pretended to put up.

Raymond Carroll, New York *Evening Post* correspondent, who

reported the League meetings in Paris for his newspaper, wrote on November 21, 1931:

Why not state the truth, that Japan emerges victorious not only in Far Eastern battles, but here as well, because the great western nations, behind their League masks and under their diplomatic camouflage secretly want Japan installed upon the Asiatic mainland, a dependable sector of a protective ring around the Soviet.

What Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Roumania do for conservative Europe in their functions as buffer states against Soviet Russia, it is argued—and settled for that matter—Japan, entrenched in the Asiatic mainland, would perform at the gateway of the Reds' "backyard."

A New World War?

The war in China is spreading at a tremendous speed. It may soon engulf the whole world in another slaughter, more enormous and bloody than the last world war. It will be a war against the Chinese people; a war against the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union; a war among the imperialist robbers themselves in a struggle over loot.

American soldiers and sailors, recruited from breadlines, factories and farms, may soon be hurled into a war against workers and farmers in China, the Soviet Union or Japan. Even now American soldiers and sailors are being called on to defend "American property" in China; to defend the interests of the capitalists who shoot down starving workers in the United States as well as China and doom tens of millions of workers to unemployment, low wages and starvation.

American workers and farmers have nothing to gain but misery and death from imperialist war. They have nothing to gain by fighting the wars of the Rockefellers, Mellons and Morgans. The capitalists of the United States made billions of dollars in profits out of the last war; American workers and farmers reaped nothing but hunger and death.

American workers have everything to gain by fighting against imperialist war and by defending the workers and peasants of

the Soviet Union and Soviet China who are struggling to end capitalist exploitation and build a new world—a world of and for workers.

The Socialist Party and the pacifists say that they “oppose war”; they appeal to the League of Nations to “stop war”. The American Socialist Party appeals to the “United States government to use all possible pressure in concert with other governments to bring about a peaceful settlement between China and Japan.” In other words the Socialists regard the very imperialist robbers who are hurling the world into a new war as apostles of peace. This policy only deceives the workers and farmers and prevents them from conducting a real fight against imperialist war. The men who lead the Socialist parties of the world “talked peace” before 1914, too, and ended by supporting the war. They are doing the same thing today—talking peace and actually fooling the workers and helping the imperialist robbers make war.

The Communist Party alone is organizing the workers and farmers for a real struggle against war. In Japan, and England and France and the United States—throughout the world, the Communists are mobilizing the masses against the preparations of capitalism for a new world slaughter. They call upon the workers and farmers of the United States, as well as the rest of the world, to organize anti-war committees in the factories, mines and countryside; to mobilize all workers and farmers organizations against imperialist war; to fight against the attack on the Chinese people and for the defence of the Soviet Union, the first workers’ and farmers’ government.

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