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DEVOTED TO THE THEORY OF MARXISM

After Munich :

THE IMPERIALIST CONFLICTS

And The

PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

MEXICAN SECTION CONDEMNS TROTSKYITITES

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From the (Trotskyite) Mexican Section.

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THE IMPERIALIST CONFLICT IN EUROPE

The Czech crisis has passed from the front pages. But the news of Hitler's march eastward and his more aggressive steps against Great Britain and France are recorded. The papers tell us that, "War has been averted", but by now most thinking people realize it has only resulted in a short breathing spell.

Yes, essentially the crisis has passed only to give place to a worse one. Its solution was no solution, but the posing of a worse problem.

The Organization of the World

The Munich Conference in no way signifies a final line up for a struggle against the Soviet Union or for the coming imperialist war, although that was its aim. The Munich Conference at best represents the type of "Locarno", rather than the four power bloc that Britain has hoped to obtain--a bloc against the October revolution and American Imperialism. It was not Britain that obtained the upper hand in Munich as she did in Locarno. It was German imperialism that gained her immediate objectives at the expense of the Anglo-French Bloc. England's compromise attempted to cannalize the needs of Germany in the direction of Russia, in order to obtain a breathing spell. But England is not the only power weaving the pattern of history and already this plan is going astray.

The United States and the Soviet Union

American imperialism also has its finger in the pie. The type of conference that Roosevelt called for and the four power conference realized are two different types of gatherings. Roosevelt wanted the Czechs and Russians in the conference. But the Munich Conference--unlike the Spanish Non-Intervention Conference of the four powers, which were forced to call in Stalinism to help beat down the SOCIAL REVOLUTION in Spain--instead, because such a revolutionary situation did not exist in the Czech Republic and Stalinism could be dispensed with, isolated the Soviet Union and ATTEMPTED a bloc against her. For, the contradiction of world capitalism has, as in the past, been such that an imperialist united front against the Soviet Union is not yet consummated.

Neither could this four power bloc be consummated against American imperialism. Instead, German imperialism objectively was aided by the antagonism between Great Britain and the United States. She utilized this primary imperialist antagonism in world capitalism for her own interests, in this case mainly against the Anglo-French bloc. The United States has not yet said the last word. Neither has the Soviet Union.

Our fourth Plenum document published in the May, 1938, Fourth International predicted part of the coming events revolved around the Munich Conference.

The words and deeds of these two powers against the consolidation of a real four power bloc in the future will be entirely different. The economic position of the United States enables her to answer the threat, and further weaken the British rival by the largest military and war preparations in her history, an answer by greater preparedness, more firmness, and a more aggressive policy. For the Soviet Union under Stalinism the opposite road is the only one left open.

The Stalinists have been isolated. The danger of imperialist intervention is greater than ever. The gateway to the Soviet Union is now OPEN through Hitler's seizure of Sudetenland and the crushing of the Czech republic. Prior to the capitulation of the Anglo-French the door was at least closed to the near East.

The Soviet Union is weakened by the Hitler march eastward. A Marxist leadership in the S.U. would reply by proletarian firmness, preparation for working class pressure and proletarian revolutions, but Stalinism can answer only by more capitulations.

New steps to the right are inevitable, internally and internationally to "avoid", to "answer" the increased threat of Hitler and the other imperialists. Since the pressure on the Soviet Union has been increased ten-fold, and since Stalinism capitulated to previous pressures, more capitulation to IMPERIALISM IS CERTAIN, capitulation against the proletarian interests. One road is not excluded, a road which the Revolutionary Workers League pointed out in the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, in the theoretical article on the Franco-Soviet pact, in November, 1936. We then laid down the possibility of a capitulation and agreement with Fascism. This is now one of the possible variants.

The Collective Security Policy of Stalinism

One thing is sure. What the Marxists have been saying for the past number of years has become a reality so the average worker can see it once it is pointed out. The Stalinist Peoples Front is bankrupt. The Franco-Soviet Pact was a scrap of paper as we said from the very beginning. The League of Nations' policy was to no avail and the price paid was capitulation. Collective Security can only be had on a basis favoring imperialist interests. IN THE STRUGGLE OF DEMOCRACY VS. FASCISM IT IS TREACHERY TO SUPPORT ONE IMPERIALIST AGAINST THE OTHER. Not "democracy" but independent working class action against Fascism is the only road to proletarian liberation.

The Gateway to the East

With Sudetenland in Hitler's grip, with the Baltic and Balkans becoming Germany's sphere of influence the imperialist threat against the Soviet Union is the main objective of Germany, but England's position, England's empire is also threatened. Let us consider this

area Hitler has won:

The Gate of the East and West

Situated at the juncture of Eastern and Western Europe, a fertile and easily-traversed plateau between rugged mountains, Bohemia and Moravia have long occupied a central role in European affairs. Most western of the Slavs, they were from the first the outpost of the West. As gateway to Baltic and Balkans alike, they were the avenue of feudal expansion to Poland, Hungary, Prussia, Servia and even Lithuania.

Indeed, years before even England, in 1416, arose the Hussite movement--one of the first national bourgeois reformation-revolution. And in their turn, the Czech bourgeois were to be too fortunate. By 1634, the Utrouquists had established hegemony, stabilized their revolution, established a modus operandi with the feudal world. Occurring prematurely, the Bohemian Revolution doomed itself. An "industrializing" land dominated by landlords, doomed to stagnation because it could not break the feudal chain about it, Bohemia fell easy prey to the Counter-Reformation, and in 1620 was wiped from the map.

Outpost Of The CZAR

Within the Austrian Empire, the Czechs took on an ever more degenerate role. Vanguard of counter-revolution in 1848 (1), they took on an admittedly reactionary position (2). Not until 1889, with the rise of the Young Czechs, did Czech politics break with the landlords. Nor was this break so great. Let the "liberal" Masaryk bear witness: "After a Russian triumph, which they (the Czech nationalists in 1914) never doubted, a great Slav Empire was to arise...A section... desired, indeed, a degree of autonomy, with a Grand Duke of sorts as Viceroy or imperial Lieutenant in Prague...As for Masaryk, he alone doubted, so he tells us. Hatred for Czarist reaction? Of course not. He feared that Russia would create not a Slav, but a "Balkan" or "Orthodox" Empire, and leave poor Masaryk and Benes out in the Austrian cold (3).

The Czechs attained their national ambitions in 1914, but at what a cost! A gerrymandered collection of subject peoples, an industrial belt cut off from its Southern market, a geographic impossibility to be maintained only by the armies of France and the funds of England. An impossible situation for Czech, Slovak, German, Pole alike, but ideal for Anglo-French plans. Did they not have an industrialized area, a natural gateway dividing Eastern Europe, obligingly held by the most servile national bourgeoisie of Europe... and absolutely unshakably under their thumb!

Fear Of Proletarian Revolution.

Many are still asking the question, why did the Anglo-French capitulate to Hitler when they knew war to save their empire, sooner

or later, is inevitable, and their chances for victory against Germany are favorable? This question can easily be answered. Victory "against" Germany was favorable. But VICTORY FOR THE ANGLO-FRENCH BLOC WAS MOST UNLIKELY. Because the struggle considered only in the light of the British vs. the German bloc would be a vacuum. Not only must one take into consideration the role of the United States, but more important, that this basic imperialist antagonism, to say nothing of the role of growing Japanese imperialism which would make greater gains in Asia while others are at war in Europe, was a far more dangerous threat.

The real danger behind the Munich Conference, the shadow that they all feared, was the series of PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONS IN THE WAKE OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR, even if one did not break out before the imperialist war to prevent it.

In Spain, the Anglo-French proved by their actions that they feared the social revolution in the Iberian peninsula a thousand times more than they feared Franco and Fascism. In the coming world war they have this same fear on a larger scale. This is what Hitler used to club them into submission. But their conferences will not solve these questions. Let the imperialists meet and agree every day--the social revolution is gaining momentum no matter what they do.

Spain and France

The Munich conference not only has changed the map of eastern Europe, but will further change the relation of imperialist forces, and have important repercussions in the Spanish Civil War and France.

The stalemate created in Spain by the imperialists with the aid of the Stalinists, in order to bleed the workers and peasants white to prevent a social revolution, can now be consummated by a further sell-out and conclude their treacherous game--unless the workers and peasants again upset their apple cart. "Peace" in Spain is no peace for the workers and peasants behind the Loyalist lines. It is the same horror in different form, and with guns in hand, not yet bled white, with proper leadership and a favorable juncture they can still help change the relation of forces in Europe.

In France the class antagonisms will be intensified due to the Munich conference. France, no longer able to throw the Franco-Soviet pact in the British face will be pressed harder by British Imperialism as well as Germany and Italy. With the collapse of the Franco-Soviet pact and the Peoples Front, there will be polarizations both to the right and left, but WITH THE RIGHT GAINING MORE THAN THE LEFT, unless a Marxian force is able to explain the results of the Munich Conference and give a line of march toward the social revolution. Yesterday Daladier replaced Blum, today Daladier will be too "left". The bourgeoisie will attempt to replace him by a more right wing force.

The Jewish-Arabian Question

The "Peace" of Munich not only condemns to a living death more millions of the Jewish population of central Europe but also strengthens the German and Italian Fascists and Nationalist forces in the Near East in their struggle against the British interests. Already the Palestine conflict reveals this. England will complete the sell-out of the Jewish people as she did the Czechs. The real losers will be the workers and peasants, both Jewish and Arabian, who have become pawns of the imperialist conflict in the Near East. The Zionist movement, tied to British imperialism is now flirting with United States. Their betrayal of the Jewish people is like that of Stalinism. Their "democracy vs. Fascism" concept is as bankrupt as Stalin's policy.

The Union of Soviet Republics of the Near East, a joint struggle of the workers and peasants, ~~and~~ Arabian and Jewish, against imperialism on AN INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS LINE IS THE ONLY SOLUTION of the Palestine problem and the problem of the Arabian people.

Realignment in Asia

The defeat of the "Have" Anglo-French bloc at Munich already has its repercussions in the Orient. Japan has given the military group more power and has driven southward toward another British stronghold. The imperialist line up, started its "new regroupment" ~~xxx~~ with the Soviet-Japanese border trouble. The Munich Conference accelerated this shift. A world wide regroupment of the Asiatic markets is now feverishly taking place.

What Will Be the Results of the "Peace" of Munich

1. The "Peace of Munich" is a capitulation of the Democracies to Fascism, because they feared the proletarian revolution a thousand times more. It resulted in a sell-out of the Czechs, in further isolation of the Soviet Union. The fear of the proletarian revolution enabled Hitler at the Munich Conference to objectively take advantage of the primary imperialist antagonism between the Anglo-Americans for Germany's needs.

2. The Soviet Union under Stalinism will extend its bankrupt "Democracy vs. Fascism", its bankrupt Franco-Soviet Pact, its bankrupt League of Nations policy, its bankrupt collective security policy, with further capitulations to world imperialism. It is possible for Stalinism to avoid a struggle with Germany, and to divide the imperialist front by giving further concessions to both Germany and the United States.

3. The "Peace" of Munich has opened the gateway to the east for Hitler. It has resulted in the greatest armament race the world has seen. It has solved nothing fundamentally. War, imperialist war, is inevitable, unless a proletarian revolution cuts it short.

4. The Imperialists will now proceed with greater pressure to smash what is left of the danger of the proletarian revolution in Spain, by another foul compromise. In France the forces of the workers and Fascism in class conflict will increase.

5. Economic decay cannot be prevented, war cannot be averted by the support of democracy against Fascism. Only independent working class action, only the social revolution can smash fascism and put an end to capitalism.

The working class must transform the Munich Conference fear of a proletarian revolution into the words of the Communist Manifesto, let the proletariat arise and crush the capitalist resistance and establish a United Socialist Soviet of Europe.

Capitalist Decay

Bourgeois democracy, a suitable political form for developing, expanding capitalist productive forces no longer suffices to hold in check the antagonisms that rent assunder the whole structure of world capitalism IN DECAY. New political forms suitable for ORGANIZED SCARCITY, for restricted production, for a closer unity of government and production WITH CLASS PEACE between proletariat and bourgeoisie assured from the top, must replace it. Centralization and more government regulations are stop-gaps, but Fascism is the ideal political and state structure corresponding to DECAY CAPITALISM. The rise of capitalism brought forth the Jacobins. Decay capitalism has brought forth its opposite, Fascism. That is the reason DEMOCRACY, bourgeois democracy crumbles under the hammer blows of Fascism. Only the working class can answer and defeat Fascism.

The Road Out.

Against the chaos, the proletariat stand in sharp relief, the only force capable of commanding the situation and bringing a solution to Europe and mankind.

The proletariat as the only progressive class in society counterposes to the different imperialist "solutions" the United States of Soviet Europe.

Forward to the Social Revolution.
Forward to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat
FIGHT CAPITALISM TO FIGHT FASCISM.

WORLD POSITION OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

The developments of the past months, especially in Europe, have confirmed the shift of the US position to a "balance of power" in world politics. On the basis of the collapse of the League of Nations, that is, the whole "collective security" system established at Versailles, Europe has returned openly to the intrigue and diplomacy of "power politics."

In the contradictory developments towards a new alignment of the powers (which have received further impetus and concretization in the "Munich Peace Pact") none of the powers nor any group of them dares to take decisive steps without taking into consideration first the position and enormous weight of American imperialism, and being assured at least of its neutrality. We can expect that in the coming period the US will begin to play a more direct role than heretofore.

In this sense the strategy of US imperialism can be said to have achieved its aim of building up, through the Dawes and Young plans, etc., a German counterbalance to the weight of Great Britain in Central Europe. Hitler's coming to power, however, has seen Germany turn from the US to a more independent policy directed at utilizing the friction and antagonism between Britain and America. However, ultimately Germany cannot play the role of a third power in relation to US and England for a contest of world hegemony.

Needs World Political Hegemony

US imperialism's essential problem is not altered. In order to maintain herself and her dominant economic position, she must win a world political hegemony commensurate with her world economic empire. This need, and her geographical isolation and economic and financial weight, determine her strategy and policies.

America's position throws her against Great Britain as her greatest competitor and rival. The struggle between these two titans is world wide in scope.

Despite all pretensions to "peace", to "isolationism", America is impelled into the position of the greatest driving force for war. In our period of world capitalist decay the capitalist nations are forced to sharper methods to maintain their positions, let alone expansion. The US, herself, because of her superior position has been able to use "peaceful" means of economic and financial penetration, where the pressure and new contradictions arising out of America's drive forces other economically weaker nations to open military aggression to gain their ends.

At the same time, in preparation for the coming war, Roosevelt is conducting a tremendous armaments drive, organizing the country

for the struggle to come. Already one of the first results of the Munich conference is the intensified armaments drive and the new huge increases which the press reports as under way.

The US and Europe.

The reorganization of the European structure takes place on the ~~the~~ basis of the general decay of the system. The reorganization will solve nothing. The "Peace of Munich", which replaced Anglo-French with German domination of middle Europe, has spurred the new alignments in Europe. Britain and France, in order to maintain a hold are sinking large loans in the Balkans, etc. America after the war likewise dumped millions into Europe with no return on the investment in order to prop up the decaying system against the proletarian revolution. But the Anglo-French "loans" are of a different character. They are in the nature of blackmail by the smaller European countries on the threat of desertion of the London-Paris Axis to Nazi hegemony. They reflect the weakened position of the Anglo-French imperialists in Europe.

Throughout the "Czech" crisis, American imperialism refused to come to the aid of Great Britain, or even to promise "moral" support. America's aim was to weaken Britain, to disrupt any attempt for a four power bloc that might be used against her. Germany utilized this antagonism between the two giants.

Similarly, Roosevelt's proposal for a conference was in acutely quite different from the Munich affair. Roosevelt aimed at inviting all the concerned nations, including Russia and Czechoslovakia. It would have thrown a monkey wrench into Britain's plans. The Munich pact itself did not accomplish Britain's aim. Neither did it achieve a line-up for the war; a basis was laid for new alignments. The British concessions in the Munich "Peace" strengthened Hitler, but a four power bloc under British hegemony using Germany as a spearhead for an attack against the Soviet Union and for British maneuvers against the US was by no means assured. Britain has emerged from the situation in a weakened position in regard to the US.

Nevertheless, if Britain can force Hitler into an attack against the Soviet Union, before Germany can consolidate its gains and turn its attention to the East, Britain's hand would be greatly strengthened in relation to Hitler.

In such a war against the Soviet Union, the US would most likely come in at a later stage with Great Britain, German and the other imperialists. Even in such a case where Britain and the US would be on the "same side", the struggle between these two would continue on a sharper political and economic plane, postponing the open military struggle to a later date.

The powerful weight of American imperialism is aimed towards another variant--pressure on Germany for a bloc in which the Soviet Union would be the tail. Under this variant both Russia and Germany must be brought to make concessions: Russia further to the right, and Germany to the "left". American pressure on Germany is being brought to bear from all angles: Roosevelt's "liberal" statements in regard to the oppressed minorities and the Jews; Brazil's recall of her ambassador from Germany (recognized by the Nazis as engineered by the US through the financier Bernard Baruch); the German spy trials in the US, etc.

The Soviet Union.

The Munich pact, signifying the collapse of the Franco-Soviet pact and of the whole international policy of Stalinism and of the Second International ("collective security", "defend democracy against fascism", etc.) has greatly weakened the situation of the Soviet Union. The next period is likely to see a further right shift in the Soviet Union, a sharper orientation on American imperialism, with new and greater concessions made by Stalinism, even though this right shift may be covered with "left" tactics.

The US in Latin America.

On her "home" ground, in Latin and South America, the US has been encountering stiffer and stiffer competition. Besides the struggle with Britain, German and Italian influence has been gaining ground. The Nazi putsch in Chile, despite its failure, revealed this growing influence. German trade in Chile, on the barter system, is threatening to displace that of America. The Krupp interests are aggluing for a concession of the Chilean forest reserves near the Straits of Magellan, of strategic importance for the control of the Pacific.

In Peru, despite American domination, German trade is second in importance. A German airline is now being worked out with terminals in Berlin and Lima.

To meet this general pressure American imperialism has made a concentrated drive, as shown especially in Brazil, where by loans and subsidies she was able to offset the German advance of the past two years and bring on a virtual rupture of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Mexico presents a complicated problem for American imperialism. Its main lines have been dealt with at the last plenum and in League material since. The pressure of the revolutionary upsurge has forced Cardenas far to the left in an attempt to head off and channelize the pressure. In so doing Cardenas seems to have come into conflict with the US. Essentially, however, American imperialism and its puppet Cardenas have recognized the need for such measures, and the US has not taken strong action because of this. America has for years aided the Mexican government with money and subsidies to stave off

the proletarian revolution and still continue to do so. Largely because the proletarian pressure has been successfully channelized, temporarily, does the US insist as much as she does. On this basis Cardenas will probably make some arrangement to pay for the expropriated lands. The pressure which the US has put practically assures this outcome, or the substitution of Cardenas by a new puppet. Those who support the bourgeois Cardenas government in its expropriation gets are giving support to its acts to head off the proletariat and in reality are supporting American imperialism.

"Good Neighbor" Policy.

The Good Neighbor policy, however, has once again been exposed for what it is--the use of "peaceful" means of financial and economic penetration backed up by the economic might of American imperialism, and behind this its military might standing ready as a last resort. To counterpoise the "Good Neighbor" policy to the use of force is to confuse the question of METHOD of domination with the FACT of domination. The "Good Neighbor" policy and force and the navy go hand in hand as the means whereby American imperialism insures its domination throughout Latin America.

The Pacific as an American Sea

The general line of the US to link-up the Latin and South American countries for war was given a boost in the recent "labor" conference in Mexico where delegates from labor organizations internationally as well as Latin and South America pledged their support to "democracy against fascism".

The entire Pacific seaboard has long been envisaged by the US military strategists as America's first line of defense. The US is striving to secure strategic naval and airplane base stations in the Pacific in order to make the Pacific an American sea, as the Caribbean is already an "American Mediterranean".

The U.S. and Asia

Japanese-Soviet relations have been increasingly strained by Japan's advances in China. If Japan succeeds in occupying North China she will have driven a wedge between China and Russia, and laid bare Outer Mongolia and a thousand miles of Siberian territory. This coupled with the European situation, encourages a further Stalinist orientation on the US.

At the present time Japan is striking hardest at Britain in China. She is preparing to assume control of the key industries in North China. Thus in Peking a "North China Telephone and Telegraph" company has been set up incorporating and taking over practically the entire power industry. Much the same is developing in Hankow. A Japanese monopoly over the wool industry has been established. Japan is now striking at Canton and has severed relations between Canton and Hongkong. Japanese strategy continues on the line of utilizing the

contradictions between Britain and America, striking mainly at Britain (today).

As we stated some months ago, the more territory Japan occupies the more she will be driven to borrowing capital (mainly from London and Wall St) with which to exploit these areas. Pushed out through the door America and Britain will come in through the window. Meanwhile Britain is suffering heavy blows. Japan will not be able to eliminate Great Britain and US from the asiatic markets. The dollar and the pound, especially the dollar, will, because of Japan's economic weakness, force great concessions from Japanese imperialism in Asia.

The increasing importance of Alaska, and Canada (practically a colony of the US, economically) has recently been emphasized by Roosevelt's speech. He treated Canada and the US as a unit. The highway from Alaska through Canada to the US indicates the strategic situation of Alaska to US defense plans. The Behring Straits are not much wider than the English Channel. Attack from Asia through the air at Uncle Sam's back door would be far more simple than a direct attack across the Pacific. America is fortifying and building air defense bases to meet this contingency.

The Near East.

The developments in Palestine and the Near East revolving on the surface around the Arab Jewish struggle and Britain are at bottom a struggle over this highly important economic and strategic area. The Zionist movement outside of America has in the main supported the British partition plan. The US has never favored the Zionist movement, largely a British dominated force, and has instead used the American-Jewish Committee and the American Zionist movement. Significantly, these are opposed to the partition plan. In the Near East, too, America's role is to strike at Britain, weakening and undermining her wherever possible. Roosevelt's liberal statements on the Jews and refugees have won him a certain sympathy and he has been able to intervene in the situation, using the Jews against England.

General Foreign Policy.

In the struggle within the camp of American imperialism over foreign policy Roosevelt has been able to straddle the fence (the differences therefore cannot be too great). In the main the differences are those of tempo, one group advocating working with England for a time, a second main group driving for a more sharply independent line with a more open and rapid struggle against Great Britain. It is on this basis that the Roosevelt policy of "arming for peace", "no alliances", "Parallel action", etc., has received greater unanimity in the bourgeois camp than any other sphere of administration policy.

The unprecedented gold supply in the US (14 billion dollars) is

The unprecedented gold supply in the US (14 billion dollars) is being accumulated as a pressure means and as a reserve for the war. America will enter the war with a trump card of 14 billion dollars in her hand. She will be able to finance her needs and outlast any of the other nations.

In relation to this general question from another angle, it should be noted that the US has taken steps to correct certain errors made in the last war. The "Neutrality" Act is aimed at this, even though the specific form may be changed. It embodies the "cash and carry" idea; this is, that the US will sell to those countries who pay cash and carry the materials away in their own ships. The US is attempting to prevent a repetition of the War Debts question, and also to see to it that if ships are sunk they be the ships of other countries. The "Neutrality" Act in its present form would objectively aid England were she in a war with Germany, since England would rapidly bottle up Germany, and England would be the only country able to transport the goods. In the long run, however, the drain on British gold and the strain on her shipping would tend to undermine her.

The US has also taken steps to avoid the 1916 situation and to have an armed force, and especially an officers cadre, ready for the war, as well as to reorganize the country on a war basis in the shortest possible time.

The US will try to repeat her strategy of entering the war late after the others are exhausted. She may, despite their antagonisms be on the same side with Britain, in which case the struggle between these two would still continue and in heightened form, but a final "solution" left for a later date. In such a situation the US would probably emerge on top, except for the question of the proletarian revolution. Perhaps before the war, and certainly out of the war, all the plans and strategies of the bourgeois foreign officer will be junked and thrown into the wastebasket by the proletarian upsurges that constitute the positive and fundamental aspect of this period of wars and revolutions.

P. C. Draft for the
C. I. Plenum.

REVOLUTIONARY DEFEATISM

It is far more difficult to expose the centrists who use the term revolutionary defeatism without an ounce of practice and action for it, than it is to expose the other types of opportunists who openly reject revolutionary defeatism. The dispute between the Centrists and Marxists over the question of revolutionary defeatism revolves around two main concepts. The first of these is presented by the Centrists as follows: Revolutionary defeatism means that the revolutionists defeat their own imperialist government in the imperialist war. The Marxists reject this concept as unclear, and present the other concept as follows: The revolutionists WORK FOR the defeat of their own imperialist ARMED FORCES through revolutionary class action.

Two important differences exist between these two positions. We assume that the Centrists mean to carry out their action by revolutionary means. Their good intentions, nevertheless, under this false theoretical position can only result in opportunist deeds.

The first important difference is over the question of the revolutionists DEFEATING the imperialists against the position that the revolutionists WORK FOR THE DEFEAT. If it were a question of desire or wish, we too would like to be strong enough to carry through the defeat and we too would like to see the seizure of power without bloodshed, but the question cannot be settled by desires. On the premise that revolutionists DEFEAT their imperialists the followers of this slogan, and especially the leaders inevitably fall into the trap that it is foolish to think that at "this stage" of the war, we, the revolutionists, are strong enough to carry this into action. It results in a failure to carry out in action the line of revolutionary defeatism. But on the basis that revolutionists WORK FOR the defeat of their imperialist army, action is started at once, no matter how small. The actual defeat of the imperialist army is not primarily carried through by the revolutionists (revolutionists defeat their own imperialists), but instead it is primarily the objective conditions which the action of the revolutionists utilizes (work for the defeat of the imperialist army) that bring about the defeat and create the REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION.

The revolutionists work for the defeat of their own imperialist government and armed forces by REVOLUTIONARY CLASS MEANS even if it momentarily means the victory of the enemy imperialists. The new situation created by the defeat, is the objective prerequisite for the proletariat's seizure of power and the real defeat of "our" capitalists, and the capitalists that come to their aid. The Centrists reject the concept of working for defeat if it means the enemy "victory".

The second important difference between the centrist and Marxist positions on revolutionary defeatism revolves around the question of what is to be defeated. The Centrists always state that they will defeat the imperialist GOVERNMENT in the imperialist war; while the

Marxists clearly state that the revolutionists, through revolutionary class action work for the defeat of the government and its ARMED FORCE.

There can be an overthrow of a government in periods of war that does not stop the war; and does not have that purpose. Rather the change in the government is to carry on a more effective prosecution of the war along different lines. The overthrow of Czarism and the establishment of the Provisional Government brought to power social patriots who ATTEMPTED to prosecute the war more effectively.

But on the other hand, the defeat of the armed forces of the imperialists automatically carries with it the defeat of the government. The defeat of the government does not of necessity carry with it the defeat of the armed force. To OVERTHROW CAPITALISM in times of imperialist war, as well as in other times, the proletariat must defeat the ARMED FORCES.

To defeat the armed forces does not mechanically mean to defeat a front line trench. Modern war is based upon the whole economic structure, the whole population as well as the actual manpower under arms. Blows within the economic structure are often more fatal than defeats at the front. Revolutionists carry on their activity to stop the imperialist slaughter and for peace, and work for the defeat of their own imperialist armed forces in all spheres of the social-economic and military machine of imperialism.

Marxists work for the defeat of the government and its armed force. Centrists use the formula--to defeat the government, leaving out the question of armed forces, to cover up their position of replacing the government with a "left" bourgeois government.

The objective results of the Trotsky line, regardless of the subjective wishes of its leaders will result in the above betrayal. The Trotskyites call for the organization of a Labor Party and call for the support of such a Labor Party. Of course they want a "revolutionary" labor party vs. a reformist labor party. In their Transition Program they say it is permissible to support a "left" government, a Labor Government (Peoples' Front) on the road toward a Workers' Government, a Soviet Government.

The Trotskyites promise for the support of a "left" government before the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is support of a Bourgeois Government. Such a Government can be supported within the Centrist formula of the defeat of the Government, leaving out the question of ARMED FORCES. This would mean the defeat, say, of the New Deal Roosevelt government and replacing it by a Labor Government. It would play the same role the Kerensky government played in the last imperialist war regardless of the good intentions of the followers who were duped then and who will be betrayed now under Trotsky's formula.

In addition to the formulation presented of two opposite positions as expressed by the Marxists vs. the Centrists there is another important difference that deals with the question of the slogan: "Turn the imperialist war into a Civil War."

Many class-conscious workers think that the slogan to turn the imperialist war into a civil war equals the position of revolutionary defeatism. The centrists spread this illusion. But this is false. The slogan to turn the imperialist war into a civil war merely tells WHAT is the revolutionists' purpose, but it in no way explains HOW this is accomplished. Well meaning revolutionists can shout and print leaflets using the phrase, "turn the imperialist war into a civil war," and never move an inch toward the goal, in so far as effectiveness in the class struggle is concerned.

What the workers must know and what the Marxists point out is that an imperialist war can be turned into a civil war ONLY by the line of revolutionary defeatism. HOW to turn the imperialist war into a civil war equals the line of revolutionary defeatism.

We have more than once dealt with the question of what constitutes a revolutionary situation, pointing out what new factors must be brought into the situation. We must explain the difference between a CONDITION of imperialist war, and a break-down, which is transformed into a revolutionary situation, that is a condition of civil war, of class war at its highest stage.

So long as the capitalist government at war can prevent the defeat of its armed forces (decisive defeat) that is, so long as it can keep its social, economic, and political structure in proper order the CONDITION OF IMPERIALIST WAR EXISTS. But with the defeat of the armed forces of the imperialist nation, the condition within the country is transformed and when these mature the factors that TURN THE IMPERIALIST WAR INTO A CIVIL WAR. Therefore, the workers through revolutionary class action must work for the defeat of their own imperialist armed forces.

The correct slogan of "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war" is a PART of the broader question, the question of Revolutionary Defeatism. Only within this framework has the slogan any meaning and action for the workers. Revolutionary Defeatism has nothing in common with spies, etc., who work for the "enemy" imperialist to defeat "our" imperialist. Revolutionists work for the defeat of their own imperialist force THROUGH REVOLUTIONARY CLASS ACTION. This means on the axis of the POLITICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL INDEPENDENT ACTION OF THE WORKING CLASS against ALL the imperialists. The independent working class action insures the growth and strength of the proletariat, not only to overthrow its own capitalist government because of the military defeat, but also, with its vanguard, to immediately wage a class war against INTERVENTION of the "enemy" capitalists who unite with "our" capitalists to overthrow the WORKERS STATE.

Out of the Franco-Prussian War and the defeat of the French forces developed the Paris Commune, and out of the Russo-Japanese war and the defeat of the Czarist armies came the Russian Revolution of 1905. Out of the World War, and the defeat of the weakest link, Russia, by Germany imperialism in 1917 came the February and October Revolution of 1917.

Those "revolutionists" who rejected the line of revolutionary defeatism in the imperialist war became traitors in action, while those who fought for revolutionary defeatism, subordinating every day to day action in the class toward that end were the forces that led to the establishment of the victorious October revolution and the building of the Communist International.

In the coming imperialist war the same dynamics, already tried and tested must be carried out and the imperialist war must be turned into a civil war through the line of revolutionary defeatism.

pc. Document for the Sixth Plenum.

Editors Note:

We are making public a document of the Mexican Section of the Trotsky Movement. This document reveals the difficulty the centrist leadership has in pushing its false policy down the throats of revolutionists who fight capitalism instead of supporting the Mexican Government as the Trotskyites demand.

This letter is a step in the correct direction, but unless the leadership of the Mexican section understand clearly that the bureaucratic methods flow from the principle errors the letter deals with they will end up in capitulation. We are of the opinion that as long as the Mexican section fights for its political principles; (against support of a CAPITALIST STATE, against subordination to the Mexican bourgeois, against principle capitulation to the reformist movement in Mexico, as has been the case in the United States where they support the Labor Party, etc.) they will be able to consolidate the Marxists.

Upon the basis of a principle fight against the Trotskyite centrist paper Fourth International, the Mexican section must break politically and organizationally with reformism and centrism, and unite with revolutionary marxism on an international scale.

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A LETTER TO THE MILITANTS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

(To all the Sections that attended the International Conference of September, called by the International Secretariat).

Dear Comrades;

The Old Mexican section of the IV International, International Communist League, received from the Eastern American Bureau for the Fourth International, a clipping of the Socialist Appeal, published in New York, dated October 22nd, 1938, containing the resolution that the international Congress of September "worked out on the Mexican question".

The old International Communist League (Liga Comunista Internacionalista) called its members to discuss the resolution of the conference for October 29th, and in the name of that Plenary session, as well as in the name of each one of the militants of the Fourth International in Mexico who could not make their voices heard at that time, we are addressing you at this time to tell you the following:

The International Conference in September decided to challenge all the series of slanders and falsehoods that the Eastern American-

ican Conference had broadcast in advance and which we have repudiated. The International Conference has declared its solidarity with comrade Diego Rivera and the leaders of the American section, without taking into consideration the arguments that through various channels were presented at the Conference and which are known to all. This Conference which, according to the "Socialist Appeal" of Oct. 22, 1938, lasted only one day ("in one full day") leads us to believe that the Mexican question was voted upon without discussion.

It is with profound disgust that the Leninists in Mexico have felt the blow of the International machine, when we learned of a resolution which places above the interests of the laboring class and in particular above the interests of the Leninists Bolsheviks in Mexico, the personal and political interests of an individual who does not represent the movement of the Fourth International in Mexico.

We declare that the International Conference has been deceived by comrades Cannon, Shachtman and Co., who in behalf or in representation of Rivera, made a resolution to be passed which tramples upon the fundamental principles of proletarian democracy in the 4th International. We, the proletarian militants of the 4th International in Mexico have been cynically mocked at.

We, the Mexican Leninist Bolsheviks declare that the international machine crushes, in the case of Mexico, our revolutionary will. The machine reveals through each of the words of the resolution its definite purpose to protect Rivera from all the errors committed during his stay at the political Bureau and at the Central Committee of our organization, (errors which we have denounced with full precision), to throw mud on comrades Fernandez and Galicia; for whatever their mistakes might have been, they were not the ones directly responsible for the work, since over and above them there were the will, the political line and the money of Rivera. It is infantile to try to make the Mexican Leninists believe in the heavenly purity of the man who had in his hands the direction of the organization up to the month of last February.

We are not going to bring out here the divergencies that we had with Rivera and the machine, because we have not changed a single one of the statements made and communicated to you in due time.

We declare that there is a serious danger that the militant Bolsheviks in Mexico will be compelled to crawl before the Domestic bourgeoisie and its government and that, as a result, the independence of the revolutionary movement will be destroyed.

We declare that there is a danger that the Mexican militant Bolsheviks will be forced to enter into compromises with the traitor leaders of the opportunist reformist movement, not on a basis of a revolutionary united front pacts, but in pacts which are known to the secret diplomacy.

We have pondered over these questions and each one has expressed his wishes and willingness to oppose the corruption of our international movement and to fight that poison in every field. There have been comrades who have suggested the necessity of working for the Fourth International outside the control of the International Secretariat; However, we have decided, in a disciplined and conscientious manner, the following:

THE LIGA COMUNISTA INTERNACIONALISTA DE MEXICO (Internationalist Communist League of Mexico) SUBJECTS ITSELF TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND SENDS ITS PROTEST TO ALL THE MILITANTS OF THE 4th INTERNATIONAL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

Without in any manner giving up the political principles for which we have fought for years, and without believing that Rivera and Shachtman are right, we abide by the International Conference in a disciplined manner and accept the program worked out by same, in the hope that we expect, or rather that we earnestly wish, that democratic centralism will in the future substitute the bureaucratic methods which are beginning to be felt in the Bolshevik ranks in Mexico.

With full responsibility and perfect knowledge of the meaning of our action, we are acquainting the comrades of the international organization with our firm decision to continue in the work of the Fourth International, loyal to its discipline and its program. However, we denounce and condemn the anti-democratic methods of which we have been the victims and call upon all our fellow comrades throughout the world to oppose most firmly the conduct of our international leaders when they attempt to do in other countries what they have already done with the Mexican section. We were born in to the Communist fight by opposing the infallible bureaucracy within the Stalintern - a monolithic machine. And we are not ready or willing now to allow the Stalinian bureaucracy to grow within our own ranks. The future of our international organization depends not only on its program, but also and principally on the tactics of fight and democratic centralism as its organic norm. It is for that reason that the Mexican Leninist Bolsheviks in Mexico ask you to join us in our protest, in the firm decision that we will show in practice the correctness of our conviction and the false position of the comrades whom we have denounced internationally.

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

Mexico, D.F., November 5, 1938.

VOTED BY THE IMMENSE MAJORITY OF THE ORGANIZATION.

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