

# Revolutionary Policy Alone Can Defeat Imperialist War

## Statement of the National Committee, Workers Party, U.S.

1. The armies of Italian Fascism, after months of deliberate preparation, have now launched their attack upon the Ethiopian peoples. Driven by the intolerable strains of internal social and economic contradictions, Mussolini and the Italian bourgeoisie seek a solution in open imperialist aggression against the last of the independent nations of Africa.

2. The outbreak of war in Africa demonstrates that the conflicts of world imperialism have reached the stage of armed struggle for a re-making of boundaries, and a re-division of territories and colonial possessions. Though the Italian campaign in Ethiopia may not lead immediately and directly to a world struggle of the imperialist powers, this delay can prove no more than temporary. **THE WAR IN ETHIOPIA MUST BE UNDERSTOOD AS THE PRELUDE TO THE NEW IMPERIALIST WORLD WAR.**

### Expose the Bandit League

3. In the preparation for the Italian seizure of Ethiopia, the League of Nations has once more demonstrated beyond any possible doubt its true role. The League is not in any sense whatever "the defender of peace." It is the legal and hypocritical cover for the maneuvering of the dominant imperialist powers. Since Ethiopia first invoked League assistance in December, 1934, the negotiations have served to permit uninterrupted preparation for the war by Italy, and to deter defensive preparation by Ethiopia. The League has been utilized above all to serve the ends of British imperialism. Behind its cover, the agents of Great Britain, France and Italy have haggled over the price in terms of treaties, guarantees, protection, and territories, which each was willing to pay to preserve its own interests. The threat of League sanctions has been made not to save Ethiopia—which the League report

itself offered to sacrifice—but to safeguard British colonial possessions and lines of communication, and to try to close the opening for Germany in Central Europe. The League of Nations is the agency, not of peace, but of imperialist aggression.

**THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR DEMANDS THE UNREMITTING EXPOSURE OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.**

4. No less than the European powers is United States imperialism bound by the iron chain of cause and effect to the events in Africa and to the new world conflict which they herald. The sentimental dream of U. S. isolation, Roosevelt's promises that the U. S. will remain "free and untangled," have no more force than the unctuous phrases of Wilson in 1916. The U. S. will, on the contrary, play the dominant and decisive role in the new imperialist struggle. Behind its pacifist covering, the Roosevelt government is pouring more funds into its war machine than any other nation in the world. Both navy and army are constructed on a purely offensive strategic basis. The U. S. bourgeoisie, waiting and preparing, expects to intervene in the later stages of the world struggle, when the other powers are mutually exhausted, to achieve the world domination of U. S. finance-capital.

**THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR IS ABOVE ALL THE STRUGGLE AGAINST U. S. IMPERIALISM.**

### Against Stalinist Betrayal

5. THE U.S.S.R. cannot avoid implication in the world conflict. The very life of the workers' state is threatened by the approach of war. A central task of the struggle against imperialist war is the defense of the U.S.S.R. But, in the last analysis, this defense can be

based only upon the revolutionary advance of the international proletariat. Stalinist diplomacy, on the contrary, to an ever increasing degree, serves solely to disorient the international proletariat, break up the struggle against imperialist war, and thus undermine the real defense of the U.S.S.R. Basing itself not upon the international working class, but upon military pacts with bourgeois states, upon diplomatic deals, appeals to pacifist and liberal anti-war sentiment, and the maneuvers of the League, Soviet foreign policy promotes the most disastrous illusions in the minds of the workers, and acts in effect to further the interests of French and British imperialism.

**THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR REQUIRES THE CONSTANT EXPOSURE OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF STALINISM.**

6. One of the most dangerous illusions fostered by the diplomacy of the Soviet Union, in company with demoralized liberals, reformists, and pacifists of all shades, is the notion that the world is now divided between "peace-loving democratic" nations and "war-loving fascist" nations. This notion is part of the preparation for support of the "peace-loving nations" in the coming war. Marxism rejects and dispels this illusion or any form of it. The idea that there are peace-loving as opposed to war-loving capitalist nations, like the idea that one or another nation is "guilty" in an imperialist war, is at best formalistic ethical sentimentality, not political realism. The causes of war are to be found in the internal structure of world capitalism, operating within all nations. The national state of every capitalist nation, without exception, is the political instrument of the class enemy, the first and inplacable enemy of that nation's proletariat. The revolutionary party can make no distinction between "good" and "bad" capitalist states. It is the enemy of every capitalist state, to the death.

### **Against Social Democracy**

7. At the outbreak of the last imperialist war, the Second International revealed its internal degeneration by betraying the working class to the class enemy, by espousing the cause of national defense and patriotism, by a truce with the bourgeoisie in the interests of "national unity," by going over to social-patriotism and social-chauvinism. Already, *before* the outbreak of the new war, the leaders of the Socialist and Labour International have announced a repetition of the betrayal, are already preparing to turn over their following to the war-makers. In England, the British Labour Party, by calling for government applied sanctions and the closing of the Suez

Canal, once again takes the position of national unity—that is, solidarity with the class enemy—before the war danger, and of fully developed social-patriotism. In France, the leaders of the S.F.I.O. (Socialist Party) have taken the same position—to defend the interests of the bourgeoisie against "Hitler aggression," and now to "implement the League Covenant" by government sanctions. In August, the Executive Committee of the Socialist and Labour International adopted a program of full-blooded social-patriotism.

**THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR MEANS THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL.**

### **Combat Social Patriotism**

8. During the past year, the Communist International has passed from a policy which weakened and disoriented the revolutionary struggle against war to an active espousal of the policies of class truce and social-patriotism. By the Franco-Soviet Pact, the Stalin-Laval communique, the conduct of the Soviet Union in the League of Nations during the development of the Ethiopian crisis, and above all by the Seventh Congress of the C. I., the Communist International stands unmasked as the heir of social-democracy's betrayal on the issue of war, announcing itself as ready to do the hangman's job of turning over the proletariat of England, France and the U. S. to their national bourgeoisie in the coming war, in return for paper promises of protection for the borders of the Soviet Union. In England, the Communist party applauds the position of the Labour Party; in France, the Communist party supports enthusiastically the worst betrayals of Blum and Herriot; and throughout the world the Communist International prepares the sacrifice of the working class on the altar of imperialism.

**THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR MEANS EVERYWHERE RELENTLESS STRUGGLE AGAINST STALINISM.**

9. Throughout the world the only organized forces conducting and advocating the revolutionary struggle against imperialist war are the parties and groupings of the Fourth Internationalists. The Workers Party of the U. S. carries on this struggle in the closest solidarity with its comrades in all countries.

Against the betrayers, the Workers Party rejects every form of social-patriotism and social-chauvinism; it rejects every conception of national unity and national defense; it rejects all ideas of truce with the bourgeois state, democratic or fascist; it exposes the role of the League of Nations as the pawn of the im-

perialist member states; it rejects the sentimental illusions of pacifists and petty bourgeois liberals; above all, it directs its attacks against the enemy at home, against U. S. imperialism.

The Workers Party places no reliance on the "peaceful" intentions of bourgeois-democratic nations, nor upon spineless "united fronts" of liberals, ministers, bourgeois women's clubs and "anti-war" professionals.

## Defend the Ethiopian People

The Workers Party calls for the defense of the Ethiopian peoples against Italian aggression, for the defense of the U.S.S.R., for unremitting struggle against the coming imperialist war. But for this defense and this struggle, the Workers Party calls at the same time for the sole means by which they can be, in fact, conducted: for the independent and autonomous action of the working class. It is the international working class, especially the Italian working class, together with the oppressed colonial peoples, who are the true allies of the Ethiopian peoples—not "peace-loving" Britain, nor the League of Nations, nor Stalin-Laval, nor Roosevelt, nor their own Christian Emperor and semi-feudal chieftains. It is the independent sanctions of the working class, its own boycotts, strikes, defense funds, mass demonstrations that can aid the battles of the Ethiopian peoples, not the sanctions of finance-capital and its puppet states. And likewise for the defense of the U.S.S.R. and the struggle against the approaching war, it is only the independent action of the working class together with its allies under its leadership which gives hope to the working and exploited masses—a struggle not in collaboration with the bourgeoisie through the national state, but in ever sharper attack *against* the bourgeoisie and the national state.

The struggle against war is not and cannot be conceived as an "independent" struggle, having a special status above class conflicts. It is an integral part of the revolutionary struggle for workers' power. The struggle against imperialist war means the day by day building of working class strength, means—not

suspension of the class conflict until the war crisis passes—but the intensification of class conflict and the preparation to turn the imperialist war into a civil war for the overthrow of the bourgeois state and the victory of the workers.

## Build the Fourth International

More clearly than any other phase of revolutionary activity does the struggle against war attest *the international character of the revolutionary movement*. It is an international struggle and must be conducted in terms of an international strategy, through an integrated international organization. Thus the struggle against war poses, in the most intense form, the central task of the present period: the building of the Fourth International, the dynamic generator to drive forward the revolutionary advance of the working class. Threatening as is the oncoming of the new war, relatively weak numerically as are the forces now ranged against it, there is no reason to despair. Out of the last world war came the first great step of the world revolution. Yet, in 1914, the internationalists were an organized force in only one nation, and the betrayal of social-democracy came to the great mass of the workers as a shock that was unexpected and not prepared for. Today, organized groups of revolutionary internationalists exist in nearly every nation, and are actively forging the parties of the Fourth International; today the Second and Third Internationals have announced their betrayal *beforehand*, and we will thus not be trapped by surprise; and today we have the rich experience and lessons of the past generation to draw from.

**THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR IS THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM; THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM IS THE STRUGGLE FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, FOR THE WORLD REVOLUTION.**

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