

# COLLECTIVE SECURITY<sup>99</sup>

## MEANS WAR!

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4/12/38

Slogans for the next war are already being shouted. Not in the name of war, however, but under the guise of attempting to maintain peace. We are told that the danger of war today comes solely from the "fascist assassins", Germany, Italy, Japan, and the only way to stop these "mad dogs on their path to world destruction" is the concerted action of all the great "peaceloving" democratic nations. But basically these great peaceloving democracies, England, France, U.S. are no different economically from the fascist powers. And the causes of war are still economic, -- the unfolding of imperialistic processes, the conflict in the search for world markets and the internal contradictions of each nation.

True, the fascist nations are weaker economically than the others and consequently are compelled to resort to more desperate measures to maintain themselves. To remedy this the advocates of "Collective Security" say "we must place economic sanctions upon these countries and keep them from getting supplies which may be used in war industries, -- coal, iron, magnesium and potash." But will the fascist driven to extremes, accept this denial of raw materials stoically? By no means! Deprived of peaceful methods of obtaining goods they will turn to the only other way -- the way forced upon them by people who profess a desire to keep the peace -- the method of war.

If economic sanctions are ineffective (as in the case of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia) they cannot "post-pone" war. Effective sanctions, rigorously enforced, would simply precipitate war.

It is sheer folly to think that an imperialist nation has any interest other than its imperial ones or that it can fight in any but an imperialist war. Civil war in Spain had been in progress for one year and a half when Roosevelt became vitally interested in "aggression" and rightously indignant over invasion. But by then another war was in progress. Japan was in China and Japanese aggression was endangering American imperialist interests and prospects. As a result of this Roosevelt adopted a vigorous policy which has only lately become clear. Negotiations for an Anglo-American Alliance, not in the form of an official treaty, but limited to a naval understanding, are under way. This agreement provides for joint naval actions in demonstrations or in war. The American fleet (British also) is now cruising somewhere in the Pacific under sealed orders. This agreement with the great "peaceloving" British Diplomats who allow Spain to be bled to death, Austria to be seized by Hitler and Czecho-Slovakia to be partitioned, was presented in the form of "Collective Security", of "quarantining the aggressor" for its moral and political effect.

The U.S. gov't hasn't the least intention of entering into an indiscriminate democratic bloc against fascism. Because U.S. has internal "democracy" does not mean that it will ally itself with other democracies. Imperialist interests, not forms of gov't, determine alliances. However the U.S. gov't finds it is fine for demagogic propaganda to use the peoples' resentment against fascism for its own imperialist ends.

Since the Eden resignation the naval agreement has been played down and denied; for Britain has become the champion of fascism on the continent. Britain will champion Germany's demand for colonies. These events have made it ridiculous to talk of a "democratic bloc" with England and have rendered that slogan useless.

Advocates of "Collective Security" further maintain that their ~~not spread~~ also stop the spread of fascism. First, fascism does not "spread". It arises out of the peculiar economic and social conditions in individual countries. It is not a contagion, but the result of a breakdown of the economic structure of a capitalism which is no longer able to maintain itself democratically. Secondly, the day war comes, fascism will also come. The War Department has prepared plans for Mobilization Day which give the President and the War Department complete and absolute power over labor and the armed forces. The control over industry, however, provides for no seizure of property without "just compensation". Rose Stein by referring to the last war in her book "M-Day", points out the significance of this to organized labor.

"Trade union organizations," she says, "in practically all of the belligerent countries were asked to suspend union regulations promptly for the rest of the war. This meant the abolition of strikes and the surrender of rights and privileges affecting hours, wages and conditions of labor. It was a demand of colossal proportions and one which brought to light the impermanence and inherent weakness of even labor's most conspicuous gains under a production system that is basically hostile to it. Gains which labor fought and struggled generations to attain were swept into discard at the first sign of emergency."

With the unions will go free speech, freedom of press and freedom of assembly. The M-Day plan takes care of all of these.

The O'Connell Bill which would give the President complete power in naming the aggressor in case of war, plays right into the hands of the reactionaries. Colonel C. T. Harris, in charge of the Planning Division and representative of the War Department at congressional hearings stated: "My position is that in time of war you should write a blank check to the President." Landon, Knox, Simpson, Browder, and now O'Connell have already written out their checks.

Earl Browder, one of the foremost advocates of collective security, replying to Bruce Bliven's objection that his policy is peculiarly "Russian", says: "We will not quarrel with Mr. Bliven as to how the policy could be best 'framed in American terms'; we are willing to leave that to the President...". And this is the President whose administration has repeatedly attempted to arouse a war fever, first over the Pancy incident, then the American consul who

was slapped by a Japanese soldier, and the Nazi spy scare. This is the President who so willingly supports the American oil magnates in Mexico. Concerted action is meaningless without superior forces to back up that action. Consequently the administrations three billion dollar arms program finds no opposition here. But with the rearmament program comes a domestic and foreign reaction. Billions spent on arms are being spent at the expense of socially useful public works. There are not enough resources for social welfare, benefits, relief, if we spend so much for war armaments.

We have seen that "Collective Security" which purports to stop war and fascism only brings them in its wake. One of the greatest deterrents to the imperialist nations engaging in war is no longer present. Where previously a hostile, and opposing working class vigorously affirmed its refusal to support any war its government might undertake, the advocates of collective security would like to see a docile and cooperative working class smiling sweetly, and saying: "We will fight your war; send us out to be killed: you are on our side for you too oppose fascism."

We of the Student Anti-War Committee do not believe in a utopian and illusory Isolation. We substitute for faith and trust in an imperialist government-independent working class action. Working class of all nations must aid Spain and China and not dissipate their energies in beseeching their government to do so. Longshoremen should refuse to load ships going to the Rebels or to Japan. Workers in factories should indicate to their bosses that they will not manufacture goods to aid Franco or Japan. This is the only effective way to aid workers and peasants of China and Spain.

We believe that the most effective way to stop war is to make the imperialists afraid to start it.

Student Anti-War Committee CCNY

#### A Program of Action:

1. Against Roosevelt war preparations-- All war funds to the unemployed!
2. Against imperialist alliances-- Collective Security means war!
3. For the Oxford Pledge-- Refuse to support any war that the government of the United States might undertake!
4. Labor Action to stop war shipments to Franco, Italy, Germany, and Japan.
5. Aid to workers and peasants of Spain and China
6. Stop Mobilization Day plans!
7. Anti-imperialism begins at home-- Free the American colonies!
8. Strike against Imperialist War on April 27th!