

10/20/37

In Defence of China

The war that now rages in the Far East is not a conflict between two imperialist powers. In no sense of the word, can one speak of China as an imperialist country with war-like aims against Japan.

China is a backward country, which has not yet been industrialized, which has not yet developed to the point where it feels compelled to seek foreign markets and spheres of influence for capital investment.

The present war has been carried into China by Japanese imperialism. And for that reason the resistance given to the Japanese aggression by China is, from the Chinese viewpoint, a war against imperialism.

Needless to say, a repulse of the Japanese forces by China would not end imperialist exploitation in that country. There would still be the hold of French and British and American capital.

So closely is the rule of the Chinese wealthy classes intertwined with the interests of foreign capital that it will be virtually impossible for the Chinese masses to liberate themselves from imperialist oppression without simultaneously dispossessing their own Chinese ruling class. Because this is so, Socialists would like to see the independent forces of the workers—unions, peasant's organizations, workers' troops—strengthened in the course of the war against Japan, so that the war shall not end with the defeat of Japanese aggression but shall move on to the abolition of all imperialism and exploitation in China.

Whether or not there is such a revolutionary movement in China, however, does not essentially change the fact that there is now being waged a struggle against Japanese imperialism.

In such a struggle, Socialists are not neutral. Socialists are anti-imperialist. This anti-imperialism is not limited to the utterance of pious phrases against international exploitation by finance capital. Socialist anti-imperialism also necessitates an active—oftimes military—struggle against imperialism, such as is now taking place in China.

Socialists, therefore, call upon the workers to throw their strength to the side of China in the present struggle.

Such a call for aid to China does not involve a demand upon the US Government to intervene actively against Japan. To do so, would not only mean to involve the US in a war, but in a war which would strengthen US imperialism, would strengthen dictatorship in America, would entail suppression of the workers at home.

But just as workers must oppose an active intervention on the part of the US in behalf of China, so must workers oppose any act of the government which tends to injure the cause of China.

And the present action of the government in preventing American ships from carrying supplies to the Far East seriously injures the cause of China. It is no accident that the Japanese Government hailed this action and that the Chinese Government deplored it.

It is especially hypocritical for the US Government to claim that it had to do this in order to carry out the Neutrality Law. For weeks and months the US Government withheld the application of this law, despite the fact that there was obvious and very open war in China. For weeks and months, the US Government carried through an international farce, proclaiming that there really was no war in China. For weeks and months Roosevelt forgot the Neutrality Law, because he was not quite certain how its application would affect America's imperial interests in the Far East.

And now, of a sudden, the President remembers some aspect of the law—although he forgets other aspects of the law.

In this Far East conflict a direct and heavy burden falls upon the shoulders of the workers, especially in the Maritime Union. There is the task of halting all shipping that would aid Japan; to do this by strike action.

Workers' sanctions against Japan!
The lifting of the Government blockade against China!



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DEFEND CHINA!

Because of the reasons stated in the editorial reproduced here from the SOCIALIST CALL, the Young People's Socialist League calls upon the workers and students of New York to

BOYCOTT JAPANESE GOODS

Let this boycott be the answer of the American people to the imperialistic aims of Japan. Let this form of workers' sanctions stop the Japanese war makers in their attempt further to divide and rule China.

The boycott hits the Japanese imperialists where it hurts most - their pocketbooks. It is within your power to apply the most effective type of pressure - the economic boycott!

Only workers' action will effectively aid China. The American government, agent of American imperialism, has in the past participated in subjugating China. It will act, not for reasons of "pity" or "peace", but to safeguard capitalist interests in the Far East. And for that, and that alone, it is ready to embark upon a war with Japan or any other commercial competitor. That is the reason American warships and soldiers have been and now are stationed in China.

What you can do:

We suggest the following, to make the boycott most effective:

1. Before buying any toy, novelty, notion, any item, look for the label, "MADE IN JAPAN!" If you find such items, tell the salesperson or owner why you refuse to buy them.
2. Urge your local stores to halt all purchases of Japanese goods.
3. Since most of our silk comes from Japan, find substitutes for silk dresses, stockings, slips, etc.
4. Have your organization or trade union support this boycott.
5. Join our picket lines to enforce the boycott.
6. Demand the withdrawal from China of American warships and soldiers.

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