

THE
WAR
AND THE
WORKING
CLASS

BY

GEORGI DIMITROFF

GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

TWO CENTS

Published by
Workers Library Publishers, Inc.
P. O. Box 148, Station D, New York, N. Y.

209
Printed in the U.S.A.

THE WAR AND THE WORKING CLASS OF THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

BY GEORGI DIMITROFF
General Secretary of the Communist International

I.

Throughout all the years following the first world imperialist war the Communists, basing themselves on the teachings of Lenin and Stalin, incessantly explained to the working people that capitalism, by its very nature, gives rise to wars, that the contradictions between the imperialist countries were not eliminated by Versailles and by the other imperialist peace treaties, but, on the contrary, that these contradictions would break out after some time with new and still greater force.

Lenin taught that wars are the inevitable accompaniment of imperialism. The plunder of foreign lands, the conquest and spoliation of colonies, the seizure of markets serve as the cause of wars between the capitalist states.

Stalin repeatedly uttered warnings regarding the danger of a new imperialist war and disclosed the causes giving rise to it. In his report at the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) in 1930, he said:

"The bourgeois states are furiously arming and re-equipping their forces. What for? Of course, not for a friendly talk, but for war. The imperialists need war because it is the only means

of dividing the world afresh, dividing anew the markets, sources of raw materials and spheres for capital investment."*

In a talk with Roy Howard on March 1, 1936, Stalin stressed the point that the chief cause of wars lies in capitalism, in its imperialist, predatory manifestations. He said at that time:

"You remember how the first World War arose. It arose out of the desire to redivide the world. Today we have the same background. There are capitalist states which consider that they were cheated in the previous redistribution of spheres of influence, territories, sources of raw materials, markets, etc., and which would want another redivision that would be in their favor. Capitalism in its imperialist phase is a system which considers war to be a legitimate instrument for settling international disputes, a legal method in fact, if not in law."**

The events of the recent period completely confirm the correctness of these far-sighted warnings uttered by Stalin. They also testify to how correct the Communists were when they pointed out that the peoples would, in the very nearest future, be hurled into the flames of war, if the international working class should fail, by its united and resolute militant actions, to curb in time the instigators and provokers of war. They also testify to how timely were the tenacious efforts of the Communist International, directed toward the establishment of a powerful fighting front against war.

The second imperialist war, which began with the onslaught on the peoples of Ethiopia, Spain and China, has now developed into a war between the biggest capitalist states. The war has been transferred to the heart of Europe, and threatens to become a world slaughter.

In its character and essence, the present war is, on the part

* J. V. Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. II, p. 256, International Publishers, New York.
** *The Stalin-Howard Interview*, p. 6, International Publishers, New York.

of both warring sides, an *imperialist, unjust war*, despite the fraudulent slogans being employed by the ruling classes of the warring capitalist states in their endeavor to hide their real aims from the masses of the people.

The character of a war, as Lenin taught, "depends not on who attacked and on whose side the 'enemy' is, but on *which class* is waging the war, what policy is being continued by the given war."

Now, as in 1914, the war is being waged by the imperialist bourgeoisie. This war is the direct continuation of the struggle between the imperialist powers for a new repartition of the earth, for *world domination*.

Only the blind can fail to see, and only out-and-out charlatans and deceivers can deny, that the present war between Britain and France, on the one hand, and Germany, on the other, is being waged for colonies, sources of raw materials, for domination over sea routes, for the subjugation and exploitation of foreign peoples. As is well known, Great Britain is a huge empire with a colonial population of 480,000,000, while France possesses colonies inhabited by 70,000,000 people. Germany, which as a result of the first imperialist war was deprived of its colonies, is now putting forward claims for a division of the colonial booty in the hands of the British and French imperialists.

The bourgeoisie of England and France, however, have no intention of letting their huge possessions slip out of their hands. They want to hold undivided sway over hundreds of millions of colonial slaves, to maintain their imperialist positions, to ensure the possibility of new conquests, to enfeeble their rival and to place it in a position of dependence on them. Herein lies the essence of the present war. The clash of arms between the warring states is for hegemony in Europe, for colonial possessions in Africa and in other parts of the globe, for oil, coal, iron, rubber, and not at all in defense of "democracy," "liberty," "international law," and the guarantee of the independence of

small countries and peoples, as is howled by the bourgeois press and the Social-Democratic deceivers of the working class.

The interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie also determine the position of the majority of the capitalist states not directly participating in the war. Their neutrality policy is hypocritical through and through and above all is this true of the neutrality of the biggest capitalist state—the U.S.A.

The American bourgeoisie did not lift a finger when Japan attacked China. What is more, they are in actual fact the chief contractors of war supplies to Japanese imperialism. Under the flag of neutrality the American imperialists are inflaming war in the Far East, so as to enfeeble Japan and China, and then, basing themselves on their might, to dictate their conditions to the belligerent countries and firmly to establish themselves in China.

Under the flag of neutrality the American bourgeoisie are encouraging the further inflammation of the European war, becoming in fact an arms factory for Great Britain and France, and raking in enormous war profits at the expense of the blood of the peoples of the warring countries. They are aiming to drive their rivals out of the world markets, to strengthen their imperialist positions and to consolidate their domination on the seas and oceans.

Just as hypocritical in character is the neutrality of the other non-belligerent capitalist countries. Their bourgeoisie are doing everything to pile up as big profits as possible out of the war. Therefore, even if they stand for peace for their own country, they encourage war between the other states. They use their neutrality as a commodity with which to haggle, endeavoring to sell it to the highest bidder.

Many of these neutral states, and above all Italy, are waiting for the time when, as the war goes on, the chances of victory for one side or the other become clear, so as to take the side of the strong, and to dig their teeth into the vanquished and to tear away their share of the booty.

Thus the position both of the belligerent and of the "neutral" states shows with the utmost clarity that *the responsibility for the war lies with the bourgeoisie of capitalist countries and primarily with the ruling circles of the belligerent states.*

II.

Two stages can be clearly discerned in the course of the second imperialist war. In the first stage, Italy, Germany and Japan came forward directly as aggressor states. They took the offensive, while the other capitalist states—England, France and the U.S.A.—retreated, in the endeavor to avoid a decisive clash with their rivals and to turn their expansion in another direction, against the land of socialism. Now, on the other hand, the imperialists of Britain and France have passed over to the offensive, have hurled their peoples into war against Germany, endeavoring in every way to win a number of other states to their side.

Whereas previously the above-mentioned European states were divided into aggressor and non-aggressor powers, that is, into those who were directly the war-makers and those who for the time being did not come out openly as aggressors, although behind the scenes they encouraged aggression against other countries, now this division does not correspond to the real position. This difference has disappeared. What is more, *it is the British and French imperialists who now come forward as the most zealous supporters of the continuation and further incitement of war.*

What has given rise to this change in the position of the chief imperialist rivals, a change of very substantial significance from the point of view of understanding the events now taking place?

As is well known, present-day Germany grew up on the basis of slogans of revenge against Versailles and of being the shock troops of international reaction against "world bolshevism,"

against the U.S.S.R. The National-Socialist regime received every kind of support from British and French imperialism, precisely so that it could fulfil its "historic" anti-Bolshevik mission. It made wide use of the constant concessions made by Britain and France and, taking the law into its own hands, liquidated the Versailles Treaty, created an armed force, laid its hands on Austria, Czechoslovakia and Memel and won certain positions in Spain.

As long as the British and French imperialists hoped to turn Germany's expansion eastward, they encouraged in every way its aggressive strivings, doing this at the expense of other peoples under the flag of the "non-intervention" policy. They renounced collective security and transformed the League of Nations—their own creation—into a laughing stock. They also accepted with great satisfaction the conclusion of the much noised "Anti-Comintern" pact between Germany, Italy and Japan and the establishment of the so-called Berlin-Rome-Tokyo "triangle." The culminating point of this policy was the well-known deal at Munich, from whence the heads of the British and French governments returned home as the "saviors of peace," exultant that they had at length succeeded in turning the aggression of Germany against the U.S.S.R.

But by that time the Soviet Union constituted a gigantic force. Rallied around the tested and victorious Party of Lenin and Stalin, the Soviet people, by successfully fulfilling two huge five-year plans, had established a powerful socialist industry, had carried through the transfer of small peasant economy to the path of socialism, and had achieved the consolidation of the collective farm system. On this basis there was guaranteed the indestructible defensive capacity of the land of socialism, resting on the moral and political unity of its people, on the splendidly equipped Red Army, and the most profound Soviet patriotism. By the construction of socialist society and by its wise Stalinist peace policy, the Soviet Union immeasurably increased its importance on the international arena and won tremendous con-

fidence and love among the masses of the people of all countries, including Germany itself.

Therefore when, in the opinion of the imperialists, a suitable moment had arrived for Germany to fulfil its role as shock troop against the U.S.S.R., Germany could not make up its mind to do so. It had first to reckon with the economic and military might of the Soviet Union and with the moral unity and solidarity of the Soviet people, ready to defend their socialist country to the last drop of blood and capable of crushing any enemy; second, the rulers of Germany were compelled to take account of the fact that they would fail to rally the majority of the German people to a war against the great land of socialism.

In such a state of affairs, Germany was faced with the dilemma—*either* to fall into the position of underling of British and French imperialism, to go to war against the Soviet Union and risk its neck in this war; *or*, to make a decisive turn in its foreign policy and to take the path of peaceful relations with the Soviet Union.

As the facts show, the leaders of Germany selected the second path.

At the same time the ruling circles of Britain and France, on their part, while spending months of negotiations with the U.S.S.R. for the alleged purpose of establishing a common front against aggression, were in actual fact using every means possible to prevent this front from being established. Until the very last moment of the negotiations they did not in the least give up their striving to bring Germany and the Soviet Union into collision. This is also confirmed, by the way, by the *White Paper* published by the British government itself regarding the negotiations between the British ambassador, Neville Henderson, and Hitler on the eve of the German-Polish war.

But the British and French imperialists miscalculated. *They staked on an anti-Soviet war but lost.*

The Soviet Union, operating a *socialist foreign policy*, by con-

cluding a Non-Aggression Pact with Germany, frustrated the insidious plans of the provokers of war, ensured peace between the two biggest states in Europe and strengthened its influence over the entire course of international development.

After the conclusion of the German-Soviet treaty, the bourgeoisie of Britain and France, no longer having any hope of war by Germany against the U.S.S.R., turned to the path of armed struggle against their chief imperialist rival. They did this under the pretext of defending their vassal-reactionary-landlord Poland—the very Poland which the British and French imperialists had established as an outpost against the land of the Soviets and by whose hands they wanted in 1920 to strangle the young Soviet republic. The very same Poland whose potentates deprived Lithuania of Vilna and who not so long ago tore a piece out of the territory of Czechoslovakia. *They staked on Poland but here also they lost.* The Polish state, which constituted a prison of peoples with its regime of reaction and terror, oppression and plunder of millions of Ukrainians, Byelo-Russians and Polish working people themselves, at the very first military blow, disclosed all its internal rottenness and fell to pieces in some two weeks.

In these conditions, the Soviet Union, pursuing its own independent policy, a policy dictated by the interests of socialism which coincide with the interests of the working people of all lands, undertook resolute measures to ensure peace throughout the east of Europe. By the entry of the Red Army into West Ukraine and West Byelo-Russia, the Soviet people rendered aid to their brothers groaning under the yoke of the Polish gentry, extricated 13,000,000 working people from sanguinary slaughter, emancipated them from capitalist slavery, opened up before them the road to a happy life and secured them freedom of national and cultural development. By concluding the German-Soviet "Amity and Frontier" treaty the U.S.S.R. not only eliminated the immediate danger of war for its peoples but also created a barrier against the extension of the imperialist war.

By concluding mutual assistance pacts with the small Baltic countries, which were constantly menaced with the danger of falling victim to the big imperialist states, the U.S.S.R. established the guarantee of their national independence and secured their defense against imperialist aggression, and strengthened the defensive capacity of its own country.

The transfer of the city of Vilna and the Vilna region to Lithuania once again clearly shows the exceptional attention displayed by the land of socialism toward the national interests of small peoples. There never has been nor is there today in the world any state, other than the Soviet Union, which has, of its own accord, ceded a whole region to a small people living on its borders, out of regard for the national interests of this people.

At a time when imperialist war is raging in Europe, when the bourgeoisie are inflaming chauvinism, inciting one nation against another, the Soviet Union establishes good neighborly relations with the surrounding states, being guided in this by the Stalinist policy of peace and friendship of nations. By its entire policy the U.S.S.R. is rendering an inestimable service to the cause of world peace, in which the peoples of all lands are interested.

But the imperialists of Great Britain and France, having taken the path of war, do not want to leave it. On the contrary, they are dragging the peoples further and further onto the fields of battle, covering up in every way the real character of the war. With this end in view they are setting into motion all the means of the ideological deception of the masses.

The older generation of workers who experienced the first world imperialist war well remember how at that time the press of Britain and France sought day in and day out to prove that the governments of these countries were waging war only in "defense of the fatherland," against "Prussian militarism," while the German press in its turn sought to convince people that the war was being waged against "Russian tsarism." In actual fact, however, as is well known, what was taking place was a struggle

between two groups of imperialists for the repartition of the earth.

Now the ruling classes of Britain and France who today, as at that time, are pursuing imperialist aims, have altered the means and slogans of ideological deception in accordance with the situation of today. Speculating on the anti-fascist sentiments of the masses, they put forward the slogan of "anti-fascist" war and proclaim that their war against Germany is a "war of democracy against fascism," a war against "Hitlerism," a war for the freedom of nations.

But what fine apostles of "anti-fascist" war these are, who for so many years gave every indulgence to those against whom they are fighting today, and who disrupted the united front of the people's struggle against fascism and war, when the entire international situation advanced this struggle as the most important task of the moment. What fine "fighters for the freedom of nations" these are, who for centuries have kept millions of colonial slaves in bondage and who play with the fate of small nations as bargaining counters in their imperialist deals. What fine "defenders of democracy" these are who in their own countries are destroying the last remnants of the democratic rights of the popular masses, closing down their newspapers, removing their elected representatives and persecuting all who raise their voice against the present anti-popular war.

The French bourgeoisie is now reviving the blackest days of counter-revolutionary terror. Since the days of the sanguinary suppression of the Paris Commune, France has not experienced such a drive of reaction against the working class. The banning of the Communist Party of France, the arrest of the revolutionary representatives of the French proletariat in Parliament—the most consistent fighters against reaction of every kind—serves as a clear proof of how false and hypocritical are the declarations regarding the democratic anti-fascist character of the war.

The reactionary bourgeoisie hurls itself against the Communists because *it fears the truth about the war more than fire*, be-

cause the Communist Party is the only party that can organize the struggle of the proletariat and all working people against the imperialist war.

The bourgeoisie is doing everything to compel millions of people to go to war and to die for a cause that is alien to them. But the proletariat, the working people, have nothing to defend in this war. It is not their war, but the war of their exploiters. It brings them suffering, privation, ruin and death. Were they to support such a war they would merely defend the interests of their enslavers and oppressors, they would be supporting capitalist slavery.

For the working class there is only one true stand—irreconcilable, courageous struggle against the imperialist war, struggle against the culprits and vehicles of this war primarily in their own country, struggle to end this predatory war. This is the most just of causes, one dictated by the fundamental interests of the proletariat and all working people.

III.

The war that has unfolded between the imperialist countries has radically changed the international situation.

The war is leading to an acute sharpening of all the basic contradictions of the capitalist world. The longer it goes on, the more does it sharpen the contradictions between the imperialist states. It is sharpening the contradictions between the metropolitan countries and the colonies, between the dominating and the oppressed nations. And the most important thing is that it is laying bare the class relations in bourgeois society and sharpening to the uttermost limits the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the whole world of the exploited and the handful of exploiters.

The war is disclosing all the bankruptcy of the capitalist system and is giving rise to a most acute and profound crisis of capitalism.

The imperialist war is calling forth a regrouping of the class

forces in the capitalist countries. In the camp of the bourgeoisie, the group interests of its different sections are receding before the common class interests of the bourgeoisie. The previously existing division into various opposing groups, into more reactionary and less reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie, is yielding place to their common interest in conducting the war and preserving capitalism. "National Unity" is being established from the extreme reactionary to the extreme "Left" wing of the bourgeoisie, including the top leaders of the petty bourgeois parties. But at the same time the other pole is witnessing the beginning of the accelerated departure of the war-ruined masses from the position of support for bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties to the position of struggle against the imperialist war and against the bourgeoisie waging it.

Decisive significance in the administration of the state, both in the warring and in the majority of the other capitalist countries, is being assumed by the most bellicose, chauvinistic, most reactionary elements of the financial bourgeoisie. A regime of military dictatorship is in fact being established, although frequently masked by various outward decorations, for the suppression of the indignation of the masses against the war and for the safeguarding of the bourgeois system against possible convulsions. Everywhere in the capitalist world, not only in the warring countries, a furious reactionary drive is taking place against the working class and the toiling masses.

Thus, that which in the period preceding the present war was characteristic of the regime of the fascist countries is becoming—in the conditions of the war let loose—increasingly prevalent in the countries of so-called bourgeois democracy.

In these changed conditions *the tasks facing the working class also assume a new character. Whereas formerly the task was to concentrate all forces on the struggle to avert the imperialist war, to curb the warmongers, now the mobilization of the widest masses for the struggle against the war already being waged, and to bring it to an end, is the prime task of the moment.*

Whereas formerly it was a question of barring the road to the onslaught of capital and fascist reaction, now the working class is faced with the task of conducting a most resolute struggle against the regime being established of unbridled terror, oppression and plunder of the popular masses; it is faced with the task of insuring that the ruling classes are prevented from placing the burdens of the war on the backs of the working people.

Whereas formerly the efforts of the working class were directed primarily to the defense of the daily interests of the working people and to guarding them against the plunder and license of the capitalist exploiters—and it was impossible, by virtue of the absence of the necessary preconditions, to place the abolition of capitalist slavery on the order of the day—now, to the extent that the crisis called forth by the war grows deeper, this task will face the working class with ever-growing acuteness.

The changed situation and the new tasks of the working class also demand a corresponding change in the tactics of the Communist Parties. The united proletarian and people's front tactics pursued in recent years made it possible for the proletariat and the laboring masses temporarily to hold up the offensive of capital and imperialist reaction in a number of countries. It helped the Spanish people to conduct an armed struggle for two and a half years against internal reaction and the foreign interventionists. It made it possible for the proletariat of France to secure considerable social gains. The people's front movement awakened wide masses of people in town and country to activity, and rallied them to the struggle to uphold their own interests against the reactionary cliques. This movement rendered it possible to postpone for a time the outbreak of the European war.

The tactics of the united people's front are fully applicable even now in China and also in colonial and dependent countries, the peoples of which are conducting a struggle for their national liberation.

But these tactics, *in the form* in which they were conducted prior to the present war, are no longer suitable for other coun-

tries. The necessity of changing the tactics is conditioned by the change in the situation and the tactics facing the working class, and also by the position occupied in connection with the imperialist war by the leading circles of the parties that previously took part in the people's front.

The tactics of the united people's front presupposed joint action by the Communist Parties and the Social-Democratic and petty bourgeois "democratic" and "radical" parties against reaction and war. But the top sections of these latter parties have now openly passed over to the position of active support for the imperialist war. The Social-Democratic, "democratic" and "radical" flunkys of the bourgeoisie are brazenly distorting the anti-fascist slogans of the people's front, and are using them to deceive the masses of the people and to cover up the imperialist character of the war. Under the flag of "national unity" they have in fact established a common front with the capitalists, a front stretching from the Conservatives to the Labor leaders—in England, and from the Cagouards to the Socialists—in France.

The top leaders of the Social-Democratic parties and the reformist trade unions shamelessly took up front-rank posts in the camp of the imperialists from the very first day of the war. As long as the ruling classes of Britain and France had hopes of directing Germany's expansion against the Soviet Union and of utilizing the reactionary regime of the German bourgeoisie against the revolutionary working class movement, the Social-Democratic leaders stood for the policy of concessions to the desires of Germany. They preached "integral pacifism," fulminated against those who exposed the men of Munich, preached "peace at any price" and proposed the peaceful regulation of questions concerning the distribution of sources of raw materials, spheres of influence and colonies.

But when it became clear that German expansion was taking place not in the direction of the Soviet Union, but against the spheres of domination and the colonies of Britain and France, and that, on the other hand, the Soviet Union had no intention

of pulling the chestnuts out of the fire for them, the "socialist" pacifists became transformed into the most furious instigators of war. They directed the poisonous sting of their slander against the land of socialism, against the revolutionary workers and the Communist Parties.

The leading circles of the Second International are fulfilling the most filthy and criminal role in the blood-dripping slaughter machine of the war. They are deceiving the masses by their homilies regarding the anti-fascist character of the war and are helping the bourgeoisie to drive the peoples to the slaughterhouse. The ruling classes well know that the masses of the people will not believe the British lords, the French bankers and their press when they try to convince them of the anti-fascist character of the war, and allege that it is being waged in defense of Poland and in the interests of their own peoples. In the war of 1914-1918 already the bourgeoisie was aware that without the assistance of Social-Democracy it would be unable to set alight the flames of chauvinism, to deceive the masses with the slogan of "the defense of the fatherland" and to drive them to the field of death for the sake of its imperialist interests. Now it is again placing great hopes on Social-Democracy.

The behavior of the leading circles of the Second International and their social-chauvinistic position in the war also throws a vivid light on the whole of their previous policy, the policy of stubbornly sabotaging unity in the ranks of the working class and its struggle directed toward averting the imperialist war. The Communist International did everything to unite, to rally together the forces of the working class for this end. It addressed to the Second International and the International Federation of Trade Unions a proposal for united action by the international proletariat against the Italian onslaught on Ethiopia. It proposed joint action by all working class organizations to repulse Japanese imperialism when it attacked the Chinese people. On numerous occasions, as everybody knows, it addressed a similar proposal for joint action in defense of the Spanish people. The

Communists persistently pointed out at that time that the policy of "non-intervention" was leading to the kindling of a new imperialist war. At the time of "Munich" the Communists strove to secure the establishment of a real front of the peoples, with the participation of the U.S.S.R., against the provokers of war. But the Social-Democratic leaders systematically disrupted all these efforts of the Communists.

It now becomes clear to all who do not wish to close their eyes to incontrovertible facts that it is precisely the Social-Democratic leaders—all these Blums and Paul Faures, Citrines, Atlees, Greenwoods, and De Brouckeres—who bear the *direct responsibility* for the fact that they, by disrupting the united actions of the international proletariat capable of preventing war, rendered it possible for the bourgeoisie to doom millions of people to destruction for the sake of its mercenary interests.

It is Blum and his confederates together with the British and French bourgeoisie who strangled Republican Spain by the policy of "non-intervention," supported the Munich "peace-makers" for the purpose of war against the Soviet Union, and who now are demanding that the working people should go to their death for the restoration of the bankrupt reactionary state of the Polish landlords and capitalists.

It is he and his confederates who disrupted the united working class and People's Front in France and opened up the floodgates to the most furious bourgeois reaction against the working class. It is they, together with Jouhaux, who are now stabbing the French proletariat in the back, by splitting its united trade unions and placing them at the service of the war. It is Blum and his confederates who are now dragging the workers and peasants to shed their blood and die for the maintenance of the colonial domination of the British and French imperialists over the peoples of India, Morocco, Indo-China.

It is the Blums, the De Brouckeres, the British Labor leaders, together with the bourgeoisie of France and Britain who are taking up the discredited banner of the "Anti-Comintern" which

the German National-Socialists were compelled by the force of circumstances to give up. It is the Social-Democratic Ministers of a number of countries who refused to sell arms to the Spanish people for its heroic struggle, and who now, behind the mask of neutrality, are assisting the war contractors in every way in their trade in the weapons of death, and are inflaming the anti-Communist and anti-Soviet campaign.

It clearly follows from the above that *the Communists can have no united front whatsoever with those who are in a common front with the imperialists and support the criminal anti-popular war*. The working class and all working people have nothing in common with the Social-Democratic, "democratic" and "radical" politicians who are betraying the vital interests of the popular masses. *Between the masses of the people and these lackeys of imperialism lies the abyss of sanguinary war*.

But in the conditions of the war and of the crisis which it has called into being the need for working class unity and for rallying the wide masses of the working people around the working class rises more acutely than formerly. Millions of working people in the capitalist world, and above all in the warring countries, are vitally interested in bringing about militant working class unity and establishing a real popular front against the war let loose by the capitalists, against raging reaction and the unbridled plunder of the masses. And the Communists will not only not cease the struggle for unity of the proletarian ranks and for rallying together the masses of the working people, but will also increase their efforts tenfold in this direction.

However, the question now of bringing working class unity about and of creating a united popular front is raised in a *new fashion*. In the period preceding the war, the Communists strove to bring about united working class action by agreements between the Communist and Social-Democratic parties. Now such an agreement is no longer thinkable. In the present situation, working class unity can and must be achieved *from below*, on the basis of the development of the movement of the work-

ing masses themselves and in a resolute struggle against the treacherous leaders of the Social-Democratic parties. And this process will be facilitated to a great degree by the comradely relations that have been established in recent years between the Communists and a considerable section of the Social-Democratic workers in the joint struggle against reaction and the war-makers.

It will also be facilitated by the fact that the Social-Democratic parties, under the weight of the criminal policy of their leaderships, will increasingly disintegrate, and the healthy proletarian section of these parties will join with the Communists in taking the path of struggle against the imperialist war and capitalism.

In the preceding period the Communists strove to secure the establishment of a united popular front by agreements with the Social-Democratic and other petty bourgeois "democratic" and "radical" parties in the person of their leading bodies, on the basis of a common platform of struggle against fascism and war. But to the extent that the top leaders of these parties have crossed over wholly and completely into the camp of the imperialists, while certain of them, such as the French Radicals, are directly in charge of the conduct of the war, there can be no question of such agreements. Now the mustering of the working class, of the basic masses of the peasantry, of the urban working folk and of the progressive intelligentsia can and must be brought about apart from and against the leadership of these parties, on the basis of the struggle against the imperialist war and reaction in a united front *from below*. *Such a united fighting front of the masses cannot be brought about without a most resolute struggle against the Social-Democratic, "democratic" and "radical" flunkeys of imperialism, for the elimination of the influence of these agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class movement and for their isolation from the masses of the working people.*

IV.

History now faces the working class of the capitalist countries with tasks of enormous importance. They have to extricate

millions of people from the abyss of war, to save their countries and peoples from ruin, devastation and destruction. Only the working class, taking the lead of the basic masses of the peasantry and the working people of the cities, is in a position resolutely to resist the bourgeoisie and imperialism, to put an end to their sanguinary criminal work and to do away once and for all with the causes giving rise to imperialist wars.

These tasks, which face the working class, are quite capable of fulfillment. Now, the forces of the international proletariat have grown immeasurably by comparison with the first imperialist war. Its vanguard detachment—the working class of the U.S.S.R.—has established an impregnable fortress of socialism. The existence of the Soviet Union multiplies the might of the working class of all the capitalist countries and fortifies their confidence in their own strength.

As distinct from the first imperialist war, the trust of the working masses in the bourgeoisie, in capitalism, has already at the beginning of the present war been considerably undermined and will continue increasingly to be undermined. The Social-Democratic leaders will not succeed for long in deceiving the masses, as they were able to do during the first imperialist war. Their treacherous policy, their anti-Communist, anti-Soviet drive, is already causing acute discontent in the ranks of the Social-Democratic parties themselves. As the war goes on, the indignation of the masses will grow and the anti-war movement will become increasingly extensive. The most furious persecution by the bourgeoisie is not in a position to hold up and stifle the struggle of the working people against the imperialist war.

The historic role of the Communist vanguard of the working class is at the present moment to organize and to take the lead of this struggle. If the Communists are to be able successfully to fulfil this role of theirs, they must show an example of the correct understanding of the essence of the present war and utterly smash the legend regarding its alleged anti-fascist, just

character, so assiduously spread about by the Social-Democratic leaders. *Explain, explain and once again explain the real state of affairs to the masses*—this above all at the present moment is the most important condition for the mobilization of the masses for the struggle against the imperialist war and capitalist reaction.

The unfolding of a really wide movement against the imperialist war and reaction can only be successful if the Communists act and conduct the struggle in the very midst of the masses, keep a sharp watch as to their state of mind, take careful heed of their voice, and take their needs and sufferings to heart. The Communists must not run ahead. They must put forward slogans that correspond to the concrete situation, slogans that can be understood and grasped by the masses, they must always take the lead of the movement of the masses and lead them on to the solution of the maturing new tasks.

The present exceptionally serious situation demands of the Communists that they do not give way at all to repression and persecution, but come forward resolutely and courageously against the war, against the bourgeoisie of their own country, that they act in the way Lenin taught, in the way taught now by the great, wise leader of the working people, Stalin.

The Communist Parties must rapidly reorganize their ranks in accordance with the conditions of the war, purge their ranks of rotten, capitulatory elements, and establish iron Bolshevik discipline. They must concentrate the fire against opportunism, which is expressed in slipping into the position of "defending the fatherland," in support of the fairy tale about the anti-fascist character of the war, and in retreat before the acts of repression of the bourgeoisie. And the sooner the Communist Parties achieve all this, the better will they be able to carry through their independent leading role in the working class movement and the more successfully can they fulfil the tasks now facing them.

As the war goes on, all the Communist Parties, all working class organizations, all active workers are put to the supreme test. Individual weak elements, faint hearts will drop away at sharp

turns. Elements alien to the working class, careerists, renegades, who have tacked themselves onto the Communist Party, will be thrown overboard. The Communist Parties as a whole will undoubtedly stand the test. They will become still better steeled in the coming battles. New hundreds of thousands of fighters for the working class cause will fill the ranks of the army of communism.

The Communist Parties and the working class of the capitalist countries will be inspired by the heroic example of the Russian Bolsheviks, by the example of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, which in 1914-1918 showed the proletariat the true way out of the war and subsequently secured the victory of socialism over one-sixth of the globe.

By holding aloft the banner of proletarian internationalism, and strengthening the bonds of fraternal solidarity between the working class of all countries the Communists will thereby help all working people to fulfil their historic mission.

The imperialists of the warring countries have begun the war for a new partition of the earth, for world domination, dooming millions of peoples to destruction. The working class is called upon to put an end to the war after its own fashion, in its own interests, in the interests of the whole of laboring mankind and thereby to destroy once and for all the fundamental causes giving rise to imperialist wars.

October, 1939.

MAKING SENSE

Today the fine art of "making sense" is something that has been lost to most newspapers.

The Wall Street press has rushed to "interpret" every phase of the present crisis in Europe. Their interpretations have been Chamberlain's interpretations. And with clock-like regularity, history has proved every one of these interpretations false.

The DAILY WORKER has established an enviable record for making sense throughout the whole crisis. From the day the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was signed, up until tonight's headlines, you will find that the DAILY WORKER is a paper that consistently tells the truth. And the truth "makes sense."

Be the first to KNOW. Read the DAILY WORKER.

Write for Free Sample Copy Today

DAILY WORKER

50 East 13th Street, New York, N. Y.

Special Introductory Offer

6 Weeks—1 Dollar

(Except Manhattan, Bronx, Canada and Foreign)

The Soviet Union's Role for Peace!

Molotov's Report to the Supreme Soviet

By V. M. Molotov

Premier and Commissar For Foreign Affairs, U.S.S.R.

Price 2c

WORKERS LIBRARY PUBLISHERS

P. O. Box 148, Station D, New York, N. Y.